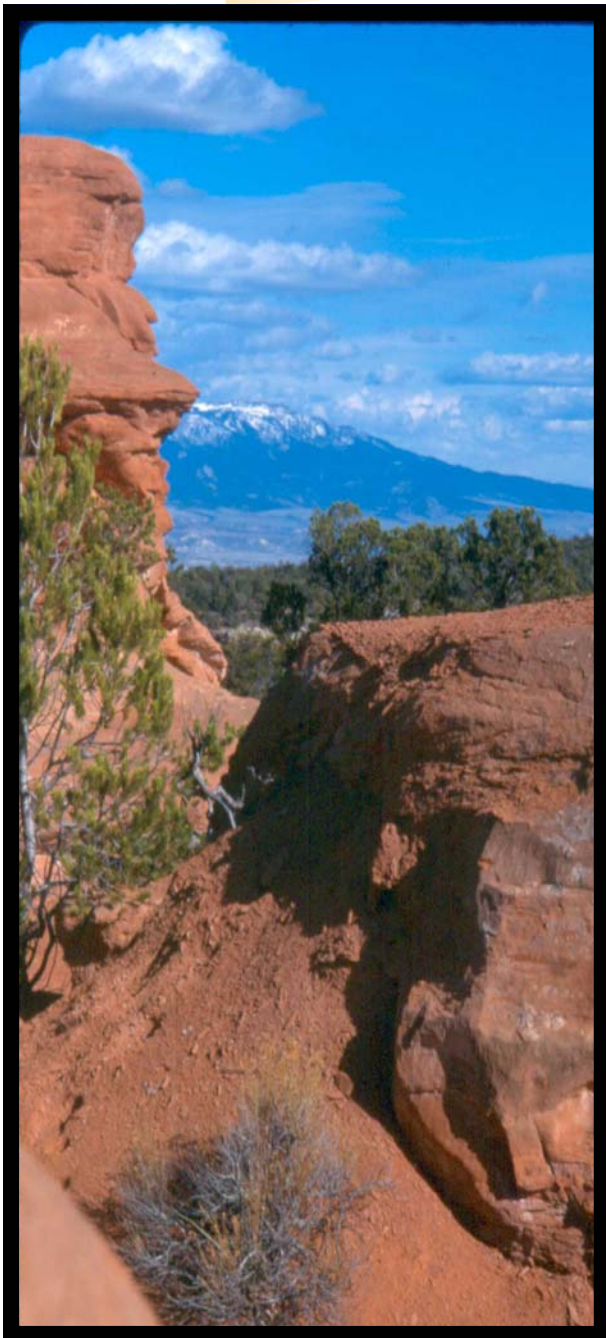


WELCOME TO MESA COUNTY, COLORADO



MESA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Craig J. Meis

District 1

In office since January, 2005

Current Term expires December, 2009

(970) 244-1605

Tilman M. Bishop, Chair

District 2

In office since January, 2003

Current Term expires December, 2007

(970) 244-1604

Janet Rowland

District 3

In office since January, 2005

Current term expires December, 2009

(970) 244-1606

COLORADO NATIONAL MONUMENT



Colorado National Monument preserves one of the grand landscapes of the American West. Bold, big and brilliantly colored, this plateau and canyon country, with its towering masses of naturally sculpted rock, embraces 32 square miles of rugged, up-and-down terrain. This is a special place, where you can contemplate glorious views that stretch to distant horizon; where you can discover solitude deep in a remote canyon; where you can delight in wild country where desert bighorn roam and golden eagles soar. The establishment of the Monument in 1911 was largely due to several years of campaigning by one man, John Otto, who explored the canyons and single-handedly built many miles of trails through the area.

The high-country of Colorado National Monument rises more than 2,000 feet above the Grand Valley of the Colorado River. Situated on the edge of the Uncompahgre Uplift, the park is part of the greater Colorado Plateau, which also embraces such geologic wonders as the Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon and the Arches. It is a semi-desert land of pinyon pines and Utah junipers, ravens and jays, desert bighorns and coyotes. Magnificent views from highland trails and the Rim Rock Drive, which winds along the plateau, stretch from the colorful sheer-walled canyons and fascinating rock sculptures to the distant Colorado River valley, the purple gray Book Cliffs, and the huge flat-topped mountain call Grand Mesa.

HISTORY*

In ancient times Western Colorado was a flood plain with a humid climate. It was home to dinosaurs whose bones are still an attraction for tourists and scientists from around the world. The first known humans in this valley were Fremont Indians living here from 250 to 1300 AD. The Fremonts were hunters, farmers and artists. Their pictographs and petroglyphs still fascinate visitors.

In the 1800s this area was home to the Northern Ute and Ute Chief Ouray was a revered leader. Two traveling Spanish friars named many of the region's mountains and rivers. The discovery of gold and silver drew prospectors and towns were founded to meet the needs of miners and their families. By 1883¹ Mesa County was created from neighboring counties and Grand Junction was named the County seat.

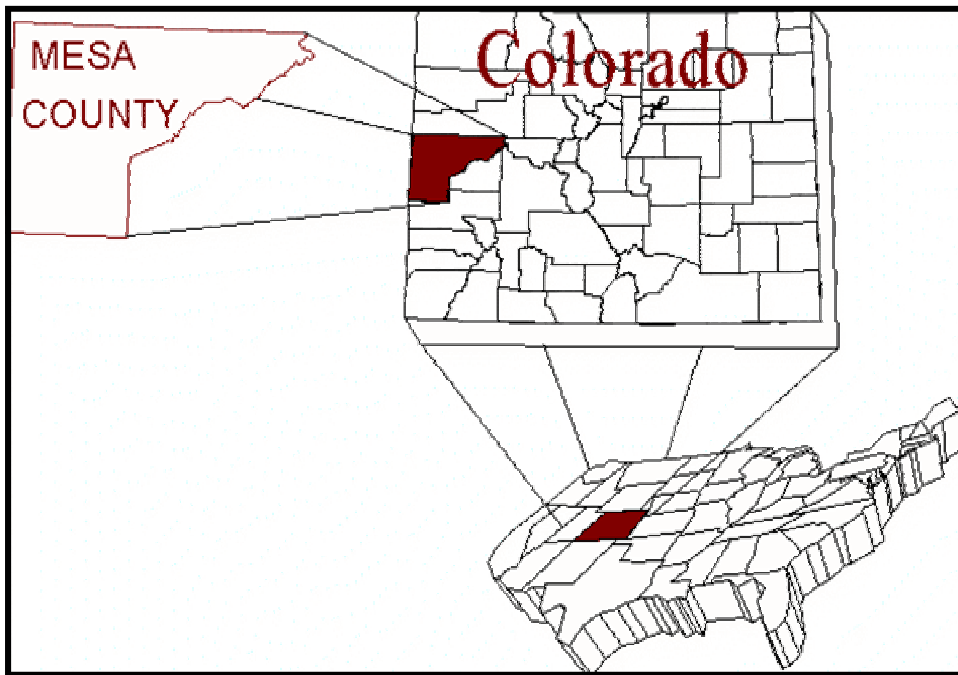
Today Mesa County is home to more than 120,000 people in 15 communities. The largest of these is Grand Junction, followed by Fruita and Palisade. Other towns and unincorporated areas of the County include Clifton, Fruitvale, De Beque, Collbran, Mesa, Mack, Loma, Gateway, Glade Park and Whitewater.

Grand Junction was staked in the early 1800s through a land rush settlement. It was first called Ute, then West Denver and finally, Grand Junction because of its location at the confluence of the Gunnison and Grand (now called the Colorado) Rivers. Grand Junction began to thrive when the main line of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad came into the area in 1887. Soon after, major irrigation transformed the Grand Valley into a fertile agricultural area. Today Grand Junction is home to a number of light manufacturing and service industries, three hospitals, a regional airport and a number of recreational opportunities.

*History excerpt provided by Mesa County: Our Picture of Health 1998

¹ Incorporated as a statutory County February 11, 1883

GEOGRAPHY



Located on the western border of Colorado, 250 miles west of Denver, is Mesa County. The County, one of the sixty-four counties in Colorado, encompasses 3,309 square miles, of which approximately 72% is public owned and is controlled primarily by the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. The County seat, the City of Grand Junction, is the largest city in Western Colorado. The Grand Junction area serves as the banking center, health care service provider and retail trade center for a large geographical area in western Colorado and eastern Utah.

The landscape of Mesa County has many unique features as it is located in a river valley surrounded by contrasting natural landmarks such as the Colorado National Monument to the West and the Grand Mesa National Forest at the East end. These natural wonders provide diverse and abundant year-round recreational activities for all to enjoy.

The Colorado National Monument is a beautiful geological display of towering red sandstone monoliths set against deep, sheer walled canyons which are dotted throughout the 20 thousand acres of the park. Here, in a desert landscape, there is a variety of wildlife sharing the area with those who enjoy hiking, biking, campfire programs, bird watching, camping and picnicking.

For those who enjoy the cooler environment that a forest provides, Mesa County is blessed to have the Grand Mesa National Forest. The Mesa, as the locals refer to it, is the largest flat-topped mountain in the world which has more than 200 lakes available to challenge the best angler and is home to Powderhorn ski area. Year-round activities can be found at the Mesa, including hiking, mountain biking, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, camping, boating, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and snowshoeing.

Mesa County, which is frequently referred to as the Grand Valley, is noted for its wide variety of agricultural produce, often boasting the best peaches money can buy. Mesa County's mild climate is a sharp contrast to the eastern slope of Colorado. Mesa County's residents enjoy mild winter temperatures with lows averaging only 14°F (-10°C) in January and the year-round low humidity is savored by all. Both conditions of moderate temperatures and lower humidity create perfect growing conditions for grapes. There are a number of area wineries and vineyards, many who offer interesting tours and delightful samples.

GROWTH

Due to the vast diversity Western Colorado provides, the County has become a popular place for relocation and recreation. From 1990 to 2000 Mesa County's population grew by 24.8%, putting it in the top 10% of counties nationwide in terms of population change. The Colorado Department of Local Affairs projects that Mesa County's population will grow to 143,591 by 2010 (22.8% growth from 2000) and 224,820 by 2025 (92.3% growth from 2000). Growth and land issues continue to be a very important topic in Mesa County. Much of the residential growth is taking place in unincorporated areas of the Grand Valley, placing increased demands for urban services on County departments and requiring the extension of the infrastructure to rural areas. In keeping with the spirit of the famous western writer, Zane Grey, Mesa County developed its own "Code of the West." This code, although not all inclusive, is meant to be

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs projects that Mesa County's population will grow to 143,591 by 2010 (22.8% growth from 2000) and 224,820 by 2025 (92.3% growth from 2000).

a guide educating and informing new residents of what to consider when purchasing or developing in unincorporated Mesa County. Property access, preservation of agricultural land, road development, emergency services, telephone, sanitation, water, or mail delivery (as examples) are all factors to study when moving to a rural area. This "Code" reminds citizens that receiving services from local government can be more difficult and expensive as growth occurs outside of a municipal central location.

CULTURE AND ACTIVITIES

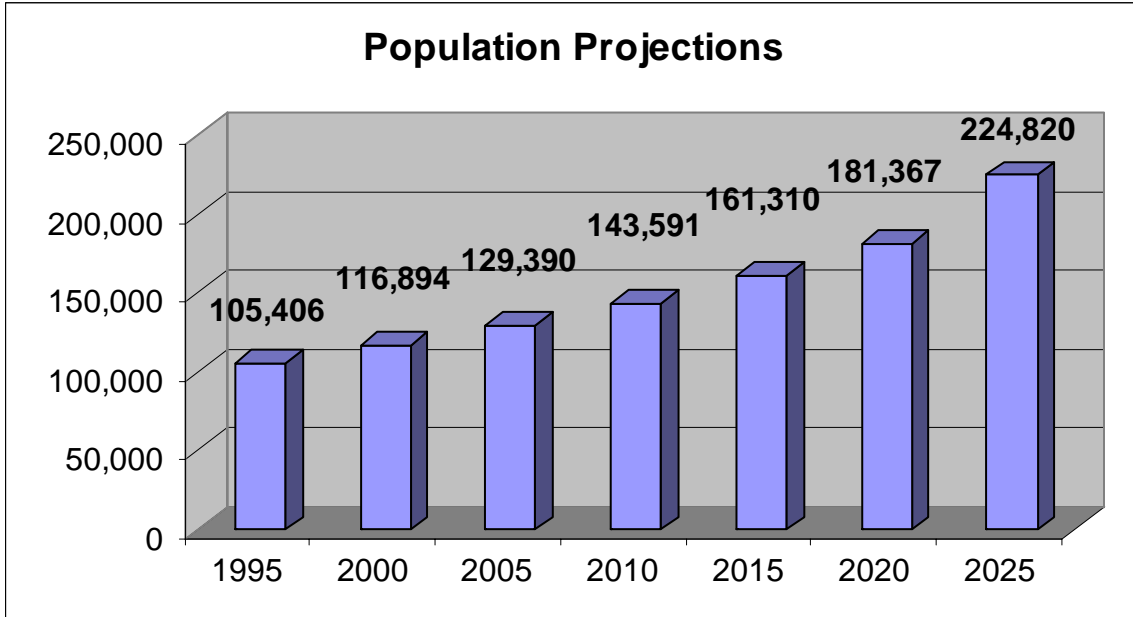
The Grand Valley enjoys an array of cultural events, performing arts, museums and is home to Mesa State College. Mesa County's residents and visitors alike savor an abundance of diverse activities for all ages to enjoy. The City of Grand Junction boasts a number of recreational programs for citizens as well as numerous golf courses, swimming pools, parks and tennis courts spread throughout the area.

Among Mesa County's most popular events:

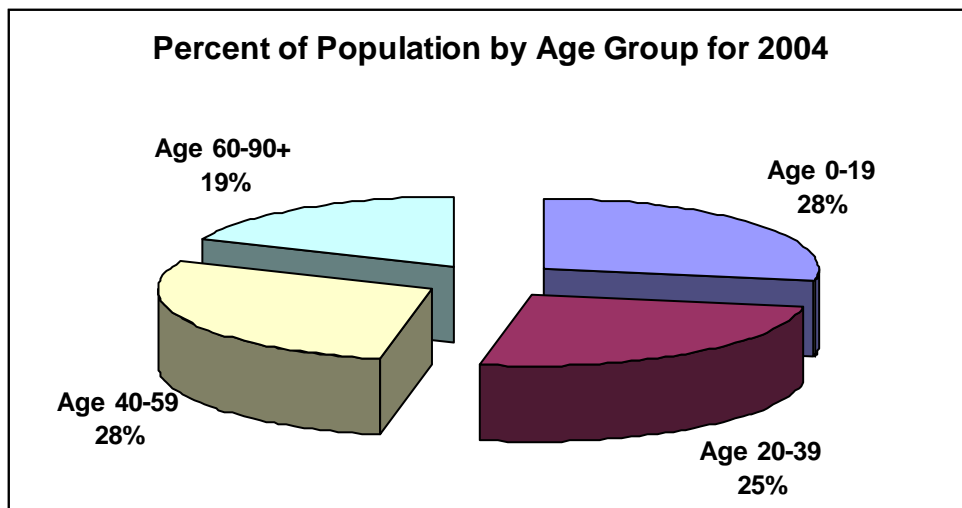
- Fruita Fat Tire Festival
- Country Jam
- Rock Fest
- Colorado Stampede Rodeo
- Grand River Indian Artist Gathering
- Western Colorado Botanical Gardens
- Color Sunday on the Grand Mesa
- Celtic Festival and Highland Games
- Grand Junction Symphony
- Renaissance Fair
- Oktoberfest
- Art Expo & Downtown Art Exhibits
- Rim Rock Run
- Winter Festival & Parade of Lights
- Mesa County Fair
- Dinosaur Days
- Palisade Peach Festival
- Colorado Mountain Winefest
- Apple Jubilee Festival

DEMOGRAPHICS

Mesa County has experienced a steady increase in population during the past decade. Estimates from the Division of Local Government, State of Colorado, project Mesa County's population at approximately 126,830 for 2004.



Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs



Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs

DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Education

H.S. Diploma or More - % of Adults 25 + (2000)	85.0%
Bachelor's Deg. Or More - % of Adults 25% (2000)	22.2%

Marital Status **

Married	60%
Single	21%
Separated, Divorced, Widowed	19%

Homeownership **

Own Home	74%
Rent/Other	26%

Population *

Collbran	602
De Beque	462
Grand Junction	44,782
Fruita	6,640
Palisade	2,645
Urban 2000	103,583
Mesa County 2000	119,975
Females ^	58,584
Males ^	61,427
Growth (%) since 1990	30.4%
Total Households ^	48,427
Household Size (avg)^	2.47

Households with Children **

Under 5 years old	39%
5 - 11	47%
12-17	48%

Income

Per Capita Personal Income (2001)	\$25,366
Median Household Income (2000)	\$35,864
Poverty Rate	10.2%

Type of Dwellings

Single Family	83%
Apartments/Townhouses	12%
Mobile Home/Trailer	5%

Ethnic Diversity *

Caucasian or White	84.5%
Hispanic	10%
American Indian	1%
Asian	.5%
African American or Black	.4%
Other	3.6%

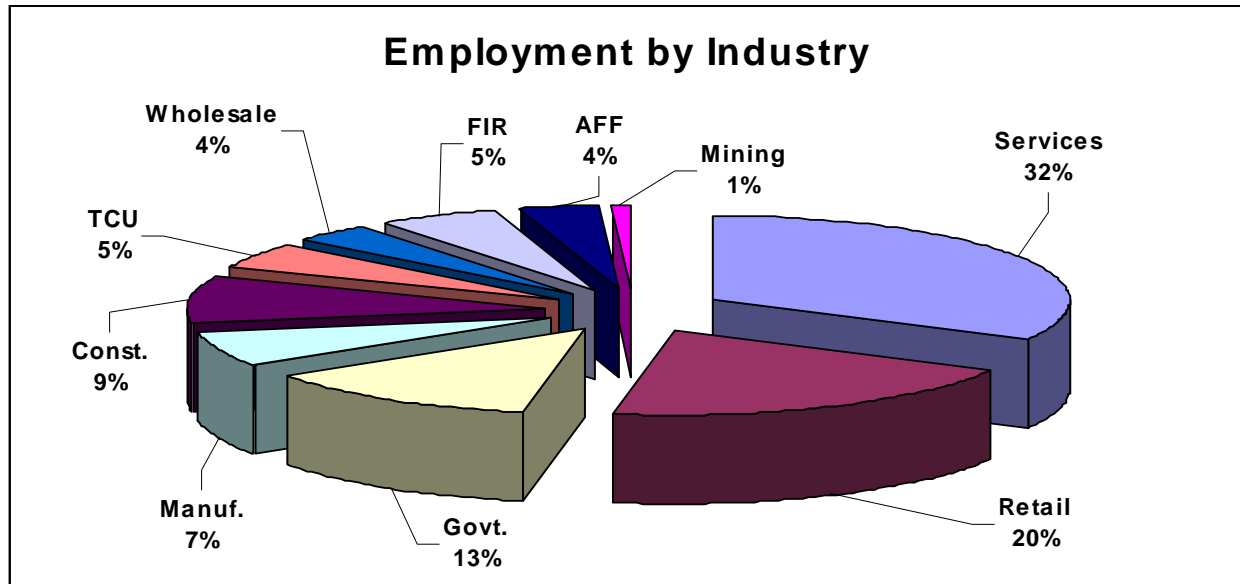
Source note : Some demographic information is gathered only during Census years. Other information is estimated by the Colorado Division of Local Governments. The DLG projects population by county for future years, but individual city data runs two years behind. This year's most current data for cities and households is 2000. 2003 data are projections.

* Source: 2000 Census. 2000 estimated based on 89.5% of residents residing in urban area

** Source: MORI Research Report for the Daily Sentinel

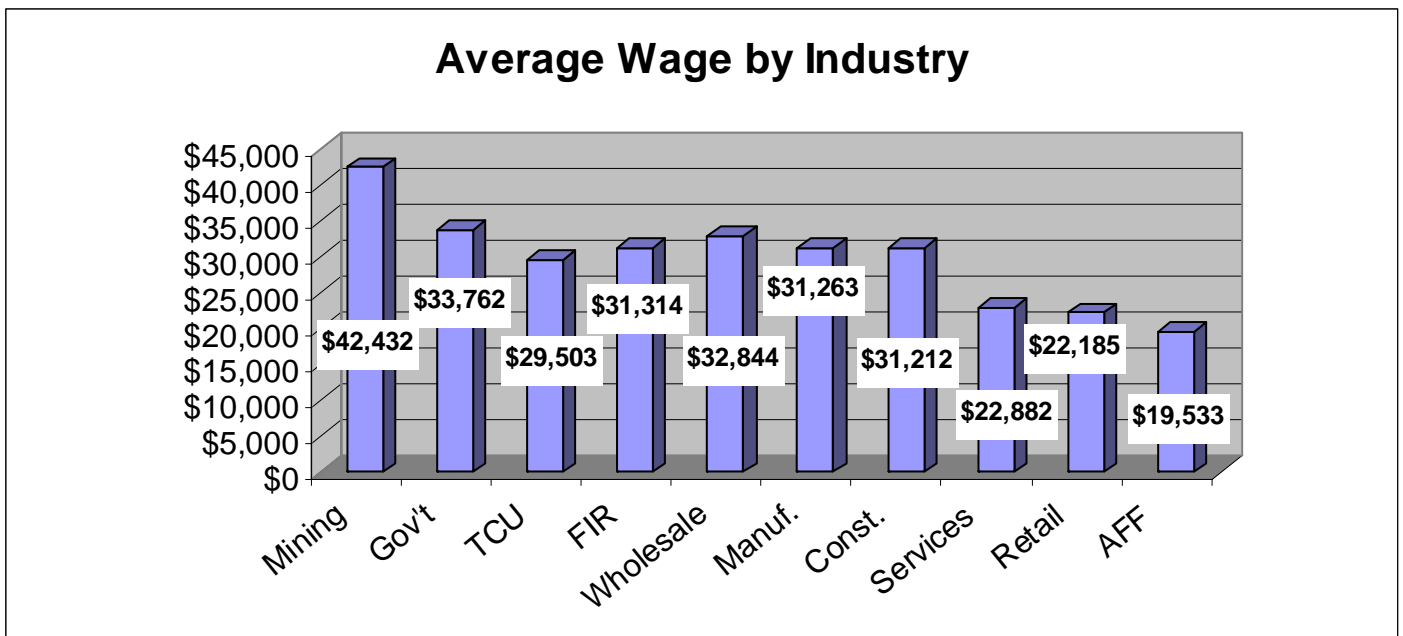
^ Source: Colorado Division of Local Affairs

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK



Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs—for 2000

Key	
AFF	Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries
FIR	Finance, Insurance, Real Estate
TCU	Transportation, Communication, Public Utilities



Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs—for 2000

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Cost of Living

	2001	2002	2003
Index Avg.	101.8	99.4	98.8
Groceries	103.4	105.3	110.6
Health Care	104.7	104.7	106.4
Housing	107.3	96.6	95.5
Misc Goods & Services	95.8	98.8	97.5
Transportation	103.3	103.5	106.2
Utilities	100.6	91.3	85.7

Construction

	2002
Total Building Permits	2,488
Residential	1,308
Industrial/Commercial	1,110
Other	70

Other includes residential & commercial remodels, fences and signs, storage and garages.

Major Employers

Company	# of Employees
Mesa County School District #51	2,646
St. Mary's Hospital	2,087
Mesa State College	1,116
Mesa County ¹	870
City Market, Inc.	627
State of Colorado ²	600
Wal-Mart	550
City of Grand Junction	550
StarTrek	500
Rocky Mountain Health Plans, Inc	435
Community Hospital	425
Hilltop Community Resources, Inc	400
Choice Hotels	400
Family Health West	350
Albertson's/Max Foods	330
Grand Junction VAMC	306
Mesa Developmental Services	275
West Star Aviation	265
U.S. Postal Service	260
Hamilton Sundstrand	240
Qwest	238
The Daily Sentinel	225

¹ Includes all Depts; ² Includes G.J. Regional Center (414), Division of Youth Corrections (72) Vocational Rehab (20) and Support Staff (69)

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Housing Costs			
	2000	2001	2002
<u>Average Value</u>			
Three Bedroom	\$130,182	\$141,821	\$151,059
Condo/Townhouse	\$83,356	\$98,678	\$108,000
Business Property	\$161,488	\$319,312	\$295,000
Vacant Land	\$83,037	\$79,461	\$84,785

Labor & Employment

	December-02
Total Labor Force	61,109
Employed Persons	58,192
Unemployed Persons	2,917
Unemployment Rate	4.8%

Climate

Month	High	Low	Precip.
January	35.5°	14.5°	0.56"
April	65.8°	38.5°	0.75"
July	93.6°	63.9°	0.65"
October	67.7°	41.6°	0.98"

Avg. precipitation: 8.64 inches per year

Avg. snow fall: 25.4 inches per year

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Commissioner, District 1	Craig J. Meis.....	244-1604
Commissioner, District 2	Tilman M. Bishop.....	244-1604
Commissioner, District 3	Janet Rowland.....	244-1606
Assessor	Curtis Belcher .	2441616
Clerk & Recorder	Janice Ward.....	244-1679
Coroner	Dr. Robert Kurtzman..	242-0920
District Attorney	Pete Hautzinger.....	244-1730
Sheriff	Stan Hilkey.....	244-3500
Surveyor	Leroy Stiles.....	244-1821
Treasurer	Monika Todd.....	244-1824

MANAGEMENT

ACTING COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR	JON PEACOCK.....	244-1800
Administration Support	Kathy Crane.....	244-1800
Animal Services	Penny McCarty.....	255-5003
Emergency Management	Kimberly Bullen.....	244-1763
Financial Services	Marcia Arnhold.....	244-1843
Information Management	Tim Ryan.....	244-1766
Personnel	Nancie Flenard.....	244-1695
Purchasing/Risk Management	Mark Reitz ..	244-3247
Planning & Development	Kurt Larsen ..	244-1867
Criminal Justice	Dennis Berry ..	244-3300
Facilities	Sue Gormley.....	244-3230
Public Works	Pete Baier ...	244-1765
 ASSISTANT CO. ADMINISTRATOR	 JON PEACOCK.....	 244-1810
 COUNTY ATTORNEY	 LYLE DECHANT	 244-1612
 HEALTH DEPARTMENT	 DR. M.D. ADUDDLELL	 248-6900
 ACTING HUMAN SERVICES	 SUE TUFFIN.....	 248-2858

