

WELCOME TO MESA COUNTY, COLORADO

## MESA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



**Craig J. Meis, Chair**

District 1

In office since January, 2005

Current Term expires January, 2009

(970) 244-1605



**Steve Acquafresca**

District 2

In office since January, 2007

Current Term expires January, 2011

(970) 244-1604



**Janet Rowland**

District 3

In office since January, 2005

Current term expires January, 2009

(970) 244-1606

## MESA COUNTY COURT HOUSE



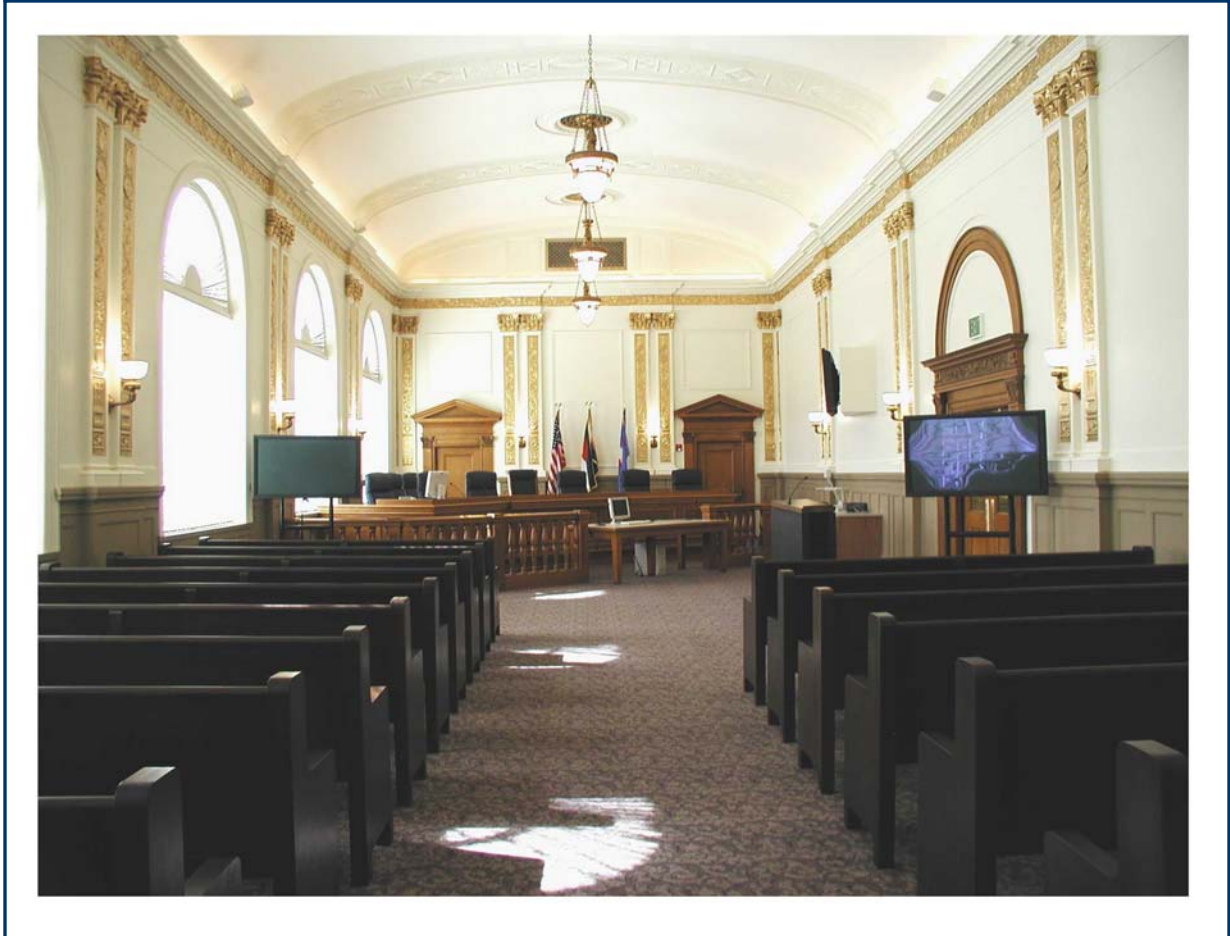
In ancient times, Western Colorado was a flood plain with a humid climate. It was home to dinosaurs, whose bones are still an attraction for tourists and scientists from around the world. The first known humans in this valley were Fremont Indians living here from 250 to 1300 AD. The Fremonts were hunters, 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. On February 11, 1883, Mesa County was created from neighboring counties, and Grand Junction was named the County Seat.

As of 2007, Mesa County is home to approximately 139,000 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.

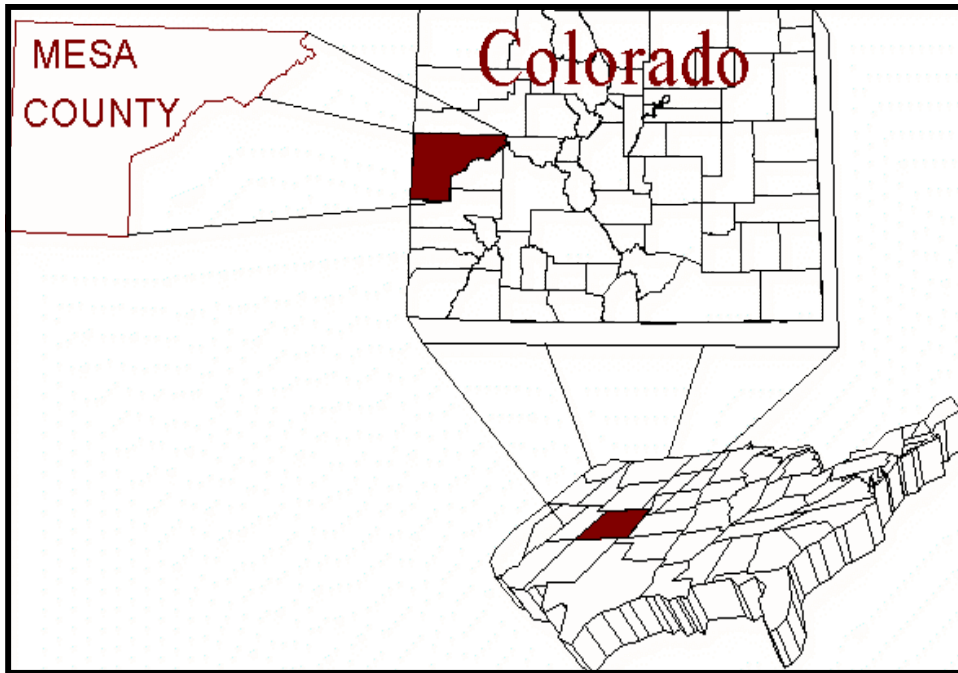
Grand Junction was staked in the early 1800s through a land rush settlement. It was first called Ute, then West Denver and finally, Grand Junction because of its location at the confluence of the Gunnison and the Grand (now called the Colorado) Rivers. Grand Junction began to thrive when the main line 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*

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HEARING ROOM**

The original Courthouse shown on the preceding page was completed in 1924. Today it houses the County Commissioners, Administration Support, Emergency Management, Financial Services, Information Technology, Personnel, Purchasing/Risk Management, County Attorneys, Assessor, Clerk & Recorder and Treasurer. The room shown above was primarily used as a District Court courtroom until February of 2001. Mesa County embarked on major renovations to the courthouse, which concluded in March 2002. The room is now used as the Public Hearing Room and has been restored to its original splendor, capturing the beauty and character of the arched ceiling, decorative pillars and softened lighting. The original jury, public and judge seating and cabinetry furnishings have been preserved while maintaining function. These historical items are blended with new furnishings and technology to provide enhanced sound and visual systems.

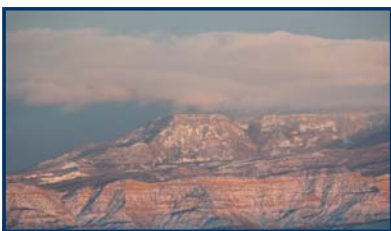
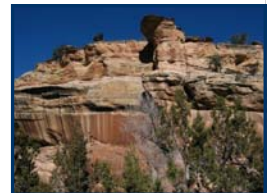
# GEOGRAPHY



Mesa County is located on the western border of Colorado, 250 miles west of Denver. One of the 64 counties in Colorado, Mesa County encompasses 3,309 square miles, of which approximately 72% is publicly owned and is controlled primarily by the U.S. Forest Service and 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 to the east. 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 20,000 acres of the park. Here in this 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 said to be the largest flat-topped mountain in the world. It has more than 200 lakes available to challenge the best angler, and is also home to Powderhorn ski area. Outdoor activities can be found year-round on the Mesa, from hiking, mountain biking, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, camping, and boating, to cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and snowshoeing.

The central part of Mesa County is frequently referred to as the Grand Valley. The valley is noted for its wide variety of agricultural produce, often boasting the best peaches money can buy. Mesa County's mild climate provides a sharp contrast to the eastern slope of Colorado. Our residents enjoy mild winter temperatures with lows averaging only 26F (-3°C) in January, and the year-round low humidity is savored by all. Both the moderate temperatures and low humidity create perfect growing conditions for grapes. Mesa County is home to a number of wineries and vineyards, many of which 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 2000 to 2005 Mesa County's population grew by 11.1%. Over the past five years, Mesa County has grown at a faster rate than Colorado as a whole, according to the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). DOLA projects that Mesa County's population will grow to 144,711 by 2010 (23.0% growth from 2000) and 224,418 by 2030 (90.7% 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 famous western writer Zane Grey, Mesa County developed its own "Code of the West." This code, although not all inclusive, is meant to be a guide that educates and informs 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, and 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 central municipal location.

*The Colorado Department of Local Affairs projects that Mesa County's population will grow to 144,711 by 2010 (23.0% growth from 2000) and 224,418 by 2030 (90.7% growth from 2000).*

## CULTURE AND ACTIVITIES

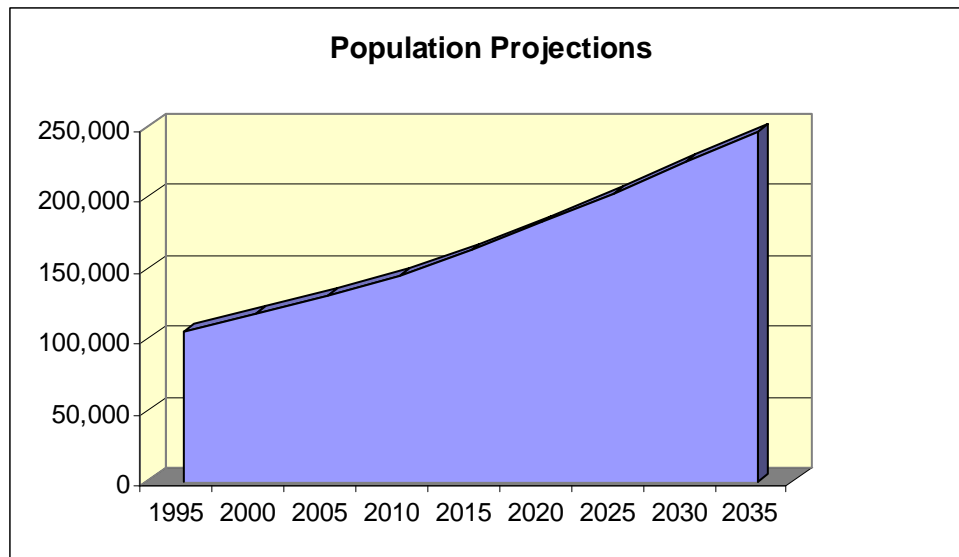
The Grand Valley is home to an array of cultural events, performing arts groups, museums and Mesa State College. Mesa County's residents and visitors alike savor an abundance of diverse activities for all ages to enjoy. The County boasts a number of recreational programs for citizens as well as numerous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

Among Mesa County's most popular events:

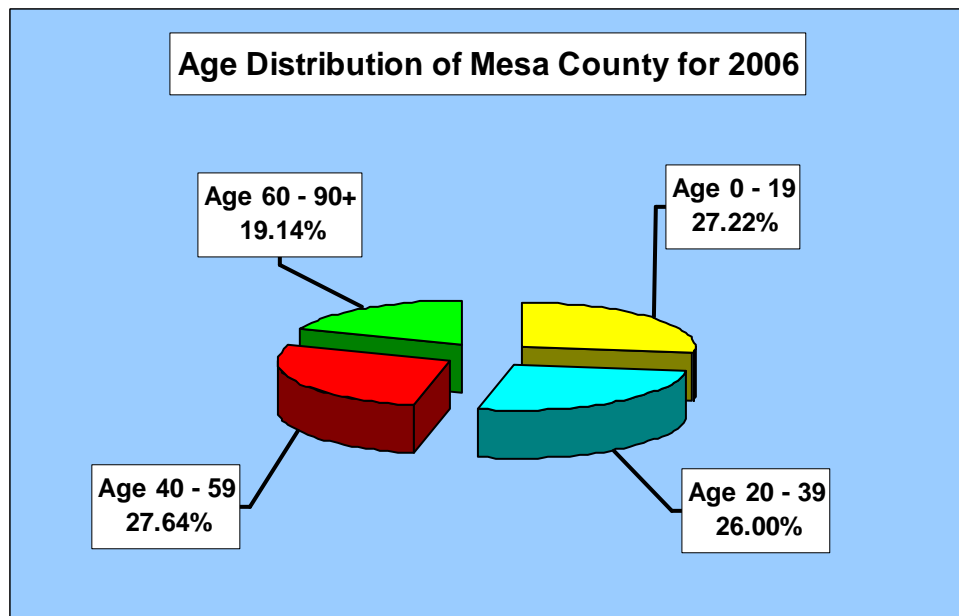
- Fruita Fat Tire Festival
- Country Jam
- Rock Jam
- Colorado Stampede Rodeo
- Cinco de Mayo Festival
- Western Colorado Botanical Gardens
- Color Sunday on the Grand Mesa
- Celtic Festival and Highland Games
- Grand Junction Symphony
- Renaissance Fair
- Oktoberfest
- Art Expo & Downtown Farmer's Market
- Rim Rock Run
- Winter Festival & Parade of Lights
- Mesa County Fair
- Dinosaur Days
- Palisade Peach Festival
- Fruita Fall Festival
- Tour of the Valley Century Ride
- JUCO (Junior College Baseball World Series)

# DEMOGRAPHICS

Mesa County has experienced a steady increase in population during the past decade. Estimates from the Division of Local Affairs, State of Colorado, project Mesa County's population at approximately 130,399 for 2005.



Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs



Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs

## DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

### Education—Individuals over the age of 25\*

H.S. Diploma or More	84.9%
Bachelor’s Deg. Or More	21.9%

### Households\*

Family Households	68.9%
Non-family Households	31.1%

### Home Ownership\*

Own Home	68.8%
Rent/Other	31.2%

### Population (2005)\*\*\*

Collbran	642
De Beque	504
Grand Junction	49,422
Fruita	9,393
Palisade	2,842
Unincorporated	<u>67,859</u>
Mesa County	<u>130,662</u>
Females	66,376
Males	64,286
Growth (%) since 2004	2.1%
Total Households	51,554
Household Size (avg)*	2.47

### Population Estimates by Age\*

0-4 Years Old	6.2%
5 –17	17.2%
18-24	10.4%
25-44	26.8%
45-64	24.1%
65+	15.4%

### Income (2005)\*\*

Per Capita Personal Income	\$28,821
Median Household Income	\$50,600

### Type of Dwellings\*\*\*\*

Single Family	74.0%
Apartments/Townhouses	16.0%
Mobile Home/Trailer	10.0%

### Ethnic Diversity \*

Caucasian (Non-Hispanic)	85.4%
Hispanic	11.0%
American Indian	0.9%
Asian	0.6%
African American	0.7%
Other	1.4%

*Source note : Some demographic information is gathered only during Census years.*

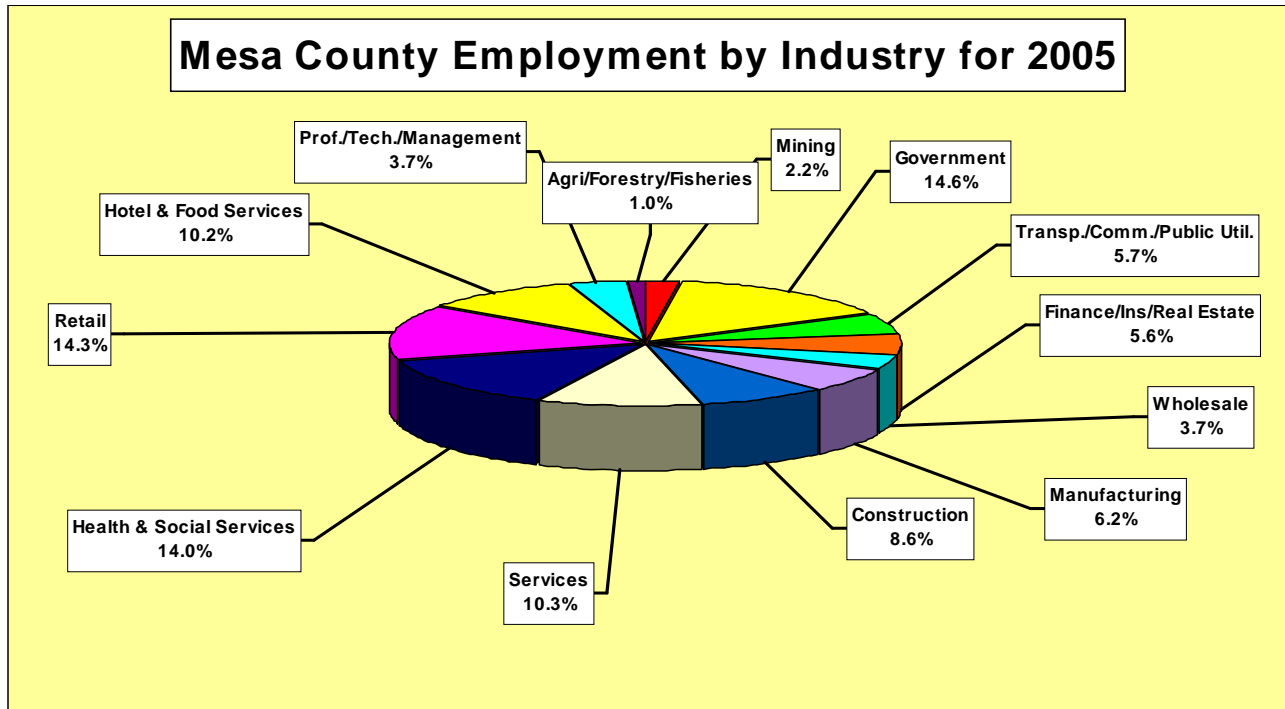
*\*Source: USA Counties IN Profile*

*\*\*Source: Grand Junction Economic Partnership*

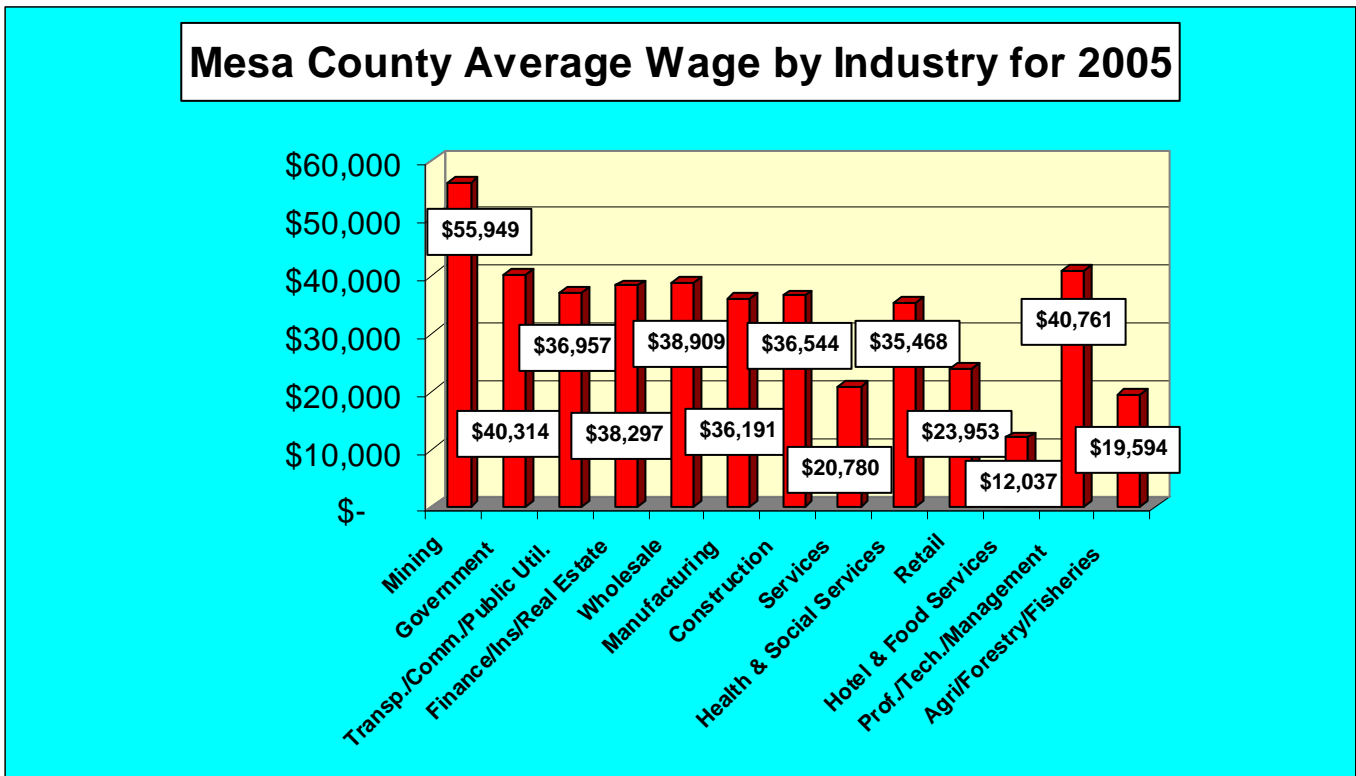
*\*\*\*Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs*

*\*\*\*\*Source: American Community Survey 2005*

# ECONOMIC OUTLOOK



Source Colorado Employment and Wages (OCEW)



Source Colorado Employment and Wages (OCEW)



## ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

### Mesa County Cost of Living

	2003	2004	2005
Index Average	98.8	101.0	98.1
Groceries	110.6	108.9	108.9
Health Care	106.4	101.9	101.6
Housing	95.5	100.3	94.0
Misc. Goods & Services	97.5	98.9	98.7
Transportation	106.2	110.5	105.3
Utilities	85.7	89.7	86.0

Source: Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce

### Mesa County Construction

	2006
Total Building Permits	3,728
Residential	1,427
Industrial/Commercial	93
Other	2,208

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

Source: Mesa County Building Department

### Major Employers in Mesa County - 2006

<u>Employer</u>	<u># of Employees</u>
Mesa County School District # 51	2,600
St. Mary's Hospital	2,000
Mesa State College	1,250
State of Colorado	982
Mesa County	925
Wal-Mart	910
City of Grand Junction	808
City Market, Inc.	808
Haliburton Energy Services	700
Star Tek	580
Hilltop Community Resources, Inc.	490
Veterans Health Administration	425
Choice Hotels	400
Community Hospital	392
Rocky Mountain Health Plans, Inc.	350
U. S. Postal Service	323
West Star Aviation	300
Family Health West	280
United Companies of Mesa County	265
Colorado West Mental Health	260
Albertson's Foods	247
McDonald's	244
Primary Care Partners, PC	235
Safeway Stores, Inc.	227

Source: Grand Junction Economic Partnership - June 2006

# ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Mesa County Real Estate Costs	
Average Value	2005
Three Bedroom	\$218,457
Condo/Townhome	\$192,746
Business Property	\$450,860
Vacant Lot	\$157,784

Source: Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce

Mesa County Labor and Employment	
Unemployment Rate	3.2 %
Civilian Labor Force	75,746
Number Employed	73,346
Number Unemployed	2,400
Average Hourly Wage	\$15.75
Average Yearly Wage	\$32,760

Source: Mesa County Workforce Center

Mesa County Climate			
Month	Average Maximum Temperature	Average Minimum Temperature	Average Precipitation
January	37 F	16 F	0.60 inches
April	65 F	39 F	0.79 inches
July	93 F	64 F	0.61 inches
October	67 F	41 F	0.90 inches
Average Precipitation: 8.7 inches per year			
Average Snowfall: 21.6 inches per year			

Source: Western Regional Climate Center

## Mesa County Elected Officials



Assessor  
Barbara Brewer



Coroner  
Dr. Dean Havlik



District Attorney  
Pete Hautzinger



Clerk and Recorder  
Janice Rich



Sheriff  
Stan Hilkey



Surveyor  
Lee Stiles



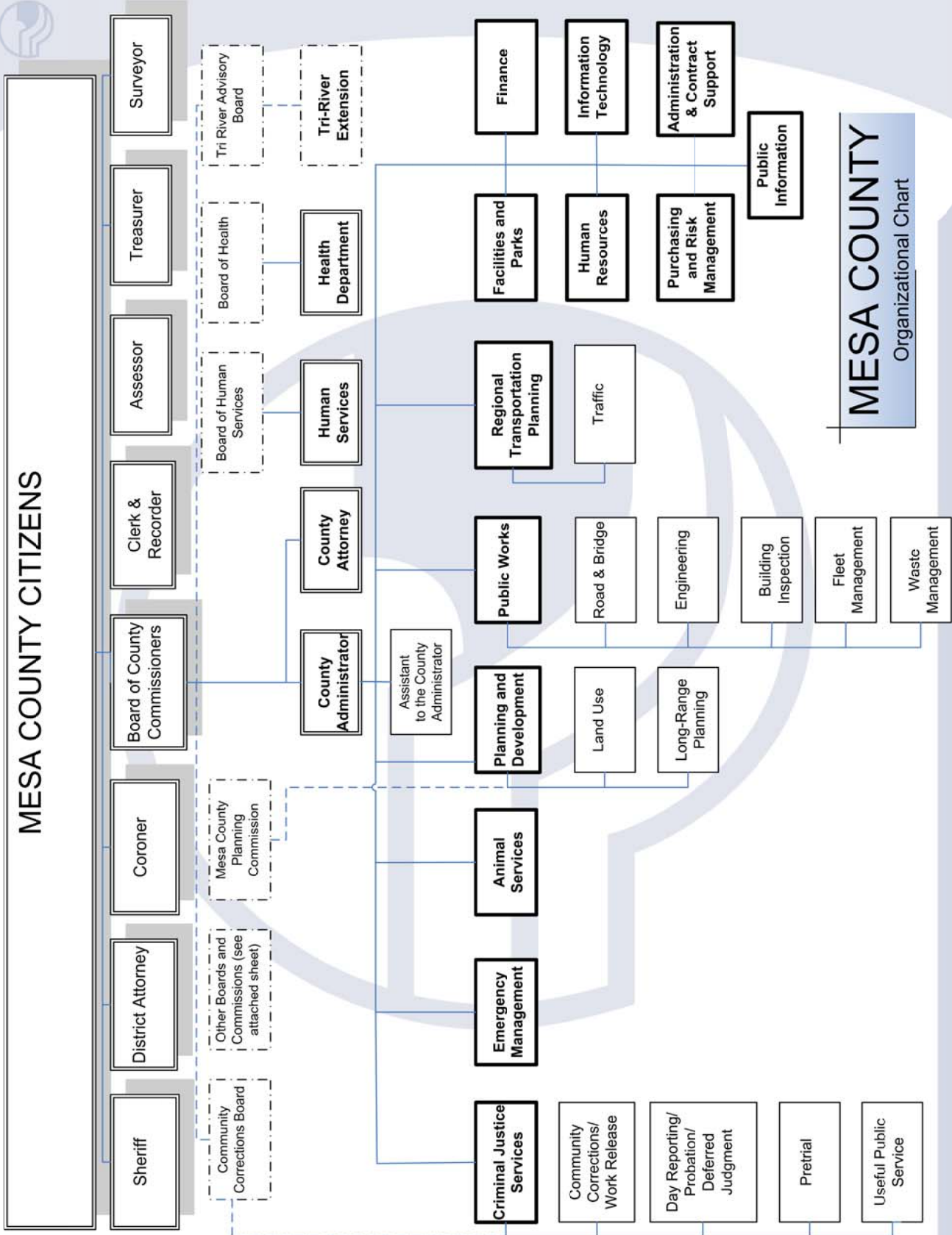
Treasurer  
Monika Todd

### Mesa County Appointed Officials

Administrator, Jon Peacock  
County Attorney, Lyle Dechant  
Acting Human Services Director, Valerie Robison

### Mesa County Department Directors

Animal Services, Penny McCarty  
Criminal Justice Services, Dennis Berry  
Emergency Management, Kimberly Bullen  
Facilities and Parks, Sue Gormley  
Financial Services, Marcia Arnhold  
Health Department, Dr. Michael Aduddell  
Acting Human Resources/Personnel, Stefani Conley  
Information Technology, Tim Ryan, Ph.D.  
Planning and Development, Kurt Larsen  
Public Works, Pete Baier  
Purchasing and Risk Management, Mark Reitz  
Regional Transportation Planning Office, Tom Fisher  
Tri-River Area Extension Agent, Rhonda Follman





## MESA COUNTY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

**ACCESS APPEALS BOARD:** To hear appeals regarding roadway access issues. Members need to become familiar with the Mesa County Land Development Code, Road and Bridge specifications, and Road Access Policy.

**BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT** - Authority to make special exceptions to the terms of the zoning regulations.

**ADULT PROTECTION REVIEW TEAM** - Established in 1999 to act in an advisory capacity to the Department of Human Services Adult Protective Services Unit. The team shares information and problem solves regarding adult protection.

**AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY PANEL** - Will assist the Board of Commissioners in resolving agricultural related issues by determining whether an agricultural practice is historical, traditional, legitimate and reasonable.

**AIRPORT AUTHORITY** - To borrow money and issue bonds; to purchase, trade, exchange, acquire, buy, sell, and otherwise dispose of and encumber real and personal property of the authority; to regulate airport activities.

**ADVISORY BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES** – To act in an advisory capacity to the Mesa County Board of Commissioners on matters of animal control and welfare.

**BUILDING CODE BOARD OF APPEALS** - May make special exceptions to the terms of the building code; formulate suggested amendments to the building code for consideration by the County Commissioners.

**CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL** - This panel assists the Board of Mesa County Commissioners by providing a conflict resolution process for grievances concerning the conduct of the County Department of Human Services personnel.

**COLLBRAN CEMETERY BOARD** - To acquire, hold, and convey real and personal property for cemetery purposes.

**COLORADO RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD** – To acquire, operate, and hold in the name of the district real and personal property as necessary; to make surveys and conduct investigations to determine best manner of utilizing stream flows; to contract with respect to relative rights of the district. The County has one rep who serves on this board.

**COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS BOARD** - To establish priorities, standards, long-range plans, and financial support for correctional services.

**ELMWOOD CEMETERY BOARD** - To acquire, hold, and convey real and personal property for cemetery purposes.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD FOR THE MESA COUNTY FAIR** - Plans, manages, and conducts various programs during the Mesa County Fair during the last week of July.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR THE MESA COUNTY FAIR BOARD** - Helps with the operation and management of specialized divisions of the Mesa County Fair.

**FLOODPLAIN BOARD OF APPEALS** - To hear and decide appeals and requests for variances and appeals to decisions by the floodplain administrator regarding interpretation of floodplain boundaries, issuance or non-issuance of a floodplain development permit.

**BOARD OF HEALTH** - To determine general policies to be followed by the public health administrator in administering and enforcing the public health laws.

**INVESTMENT COMMITTEE** – To implement and administer the policies & procedures contained within the investment policy statement; to ensure the safety of all County funds, investments, and to minimize the potential for capital losses; to ensure that adequate funds are available at all times to promptly pay all the County's financial obligations.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT** - To determine general policies for the Public Library District, including adopting a budget and making appropriations for the ensuing fiscal year.

**MESA COMMUNITY CENTER PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL** – To assist the County Commissioners in managing, controlling, and supervising the business and affairs of the district.

**MESA - MOLINA CEMETERY BOARD** - To acquire, hold, and convey real and personal property for cemetery purposes.

**PERSONNEL APPEALS ADVISORY BOARD** – To hear County personnel matters referred to them.

**PLANNING COMMISSION** - To make, adopt, amend, or extend a master plan and zoning plan; to review general land use matters and make recommendations to the County Commissioners.

**RIVERFRONT COMMISSION** - To serve as the principal coordinating body for the redevelopment and reclamation of the Colorado River waterfront and its tributaries.

**STORMWATER STEERING COMMITTEE** – To assist in streamlining stormwater management in the Grand Valley in order to provide more effective and efficient stormwater maintenance and capital construction.

**TECHNICAL RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE** -Committee established 10/99 to seek ways to market and implement voluntary land conservation efforts in Mesa County.

**TRI RIVER ADVISORY BOARD** - To assist local Tri River Area Extension personnel in planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating programs and performance.

**UPPER GRAND VALLEY PEST DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD** – To make recommendations to protect the district from being invaded by noxious weeds, insect pests, or plant diseases injurious to agricultural crops, trees, fruits, or pasture.

**WEED ADVISORY BOARD** - To develop a recommended management plan for designated noxious weeds and to declare noxious weeds and any state designated noxious weeds to be subject to management.