



# 2021 - 2023

## ANNUAL REPORT

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**community  
builders**

PEOPLE | PLACE | PROSPERITY

## MISSION

We help local leaders build healthy, equitable, and prosperous communities to improve peoples lives today and ensure a sustainable tomorrow.

## VISION

Livable communities for all.

## PRIORITIES

We focus our work on five key issues that are shaping the future of our communities in order to support and create a more sustainable tomorrow.

- Transportation
- Housing
- Land use
- Economy
- Civic health

## APPROACH

- Strengthen Local Leadership
- Inspire Community Action
- Enable On-The-Ground Progress

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# A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This is a dynamic time for the communities we serve here in Colorado and throughout the American West.

On the positive side, a generational level of funding is available for communities to invest in outdated infrastructure, offering the potential to reshape and modernize outdated systems and shape more livable and resilient communities and regions. At the same time, many communities are grappling with transformative market, economic, and demographic changes that unfolded during and after the pandemic.

The impacts and implications of new types of development pressure, greater economic inequities, even greater strains on housing affordability, and subsequent loss of local workforce are still reverberating in many of the communities with which we work. Heightened political tensions about how to address these challenges present a formidable barrier to action, but working through these divides—as the community of Silverton has done (keep reading to find out how)—offers promise that our communities can come together and respond to new realities and emerge stronger from the challenge.

As we look ahead, we're excited to raise the bar on our own efforts to help communities work through the challenges and opportunities of this moment to address the needs of today, while building a more livable and sustainable future.

**Clark Anderson**  
Executive Director

## MEET OUR TEAM



Clark Anderson



Erica Heller



Joe Babeu



J.J. Folsom



Mackinzi Taylor



Angie Martell



Cathy Click



Brooke Murphy



## WHAT WE DO

Our **Training** and **Assistance** brings communities together to tackle challenges. **Tools** and **Insights** give communities information and inspiration.

Our approach addresses these realities, helping communities break through political, technical, and financial barriers to realize positive, community-driven change.

We're a small but mighty team committed to building more livable communities. Our expertise is creative, collaborative, and strategic.

**\$60** million in implementation funding

**600+** leaders trained

**40** assistance projects

## IMPACT

We've produced dozens of innovative plans, policies, and programs for local, regional, and state governments that are driving on-the-ground results. We've guided hundreds of community leaders and dozens of teams through our training programs.

Our projects have built more sustainable transportation systems, created vibrant public spaces and recreational amenities, revitalized main streets and downtowns, spurred investment in local businesses, expanded housing quality and affordability, and created new community organizations and capacity, enabling ongoing progress and impact. Many projects have emerged as inspiring models that advance better approaches to community and economic development.

# OUR WORK



# SILVERTON COMPASS PROJECT



"COMMUNITY BUILDERS' MODEL OF FACILITATING DIALOGUE, CONNECTING VISION AND STRATEGY, AND CREATING SPACE FOR THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO BECOME LEADERS AND TAKE OWNERSHIP OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A SILVERTONIAN WAS EXACTLY WHAT OUR COMMUNITY NEEDED."

GLORIA KAASCH-BUERGER  
TOWN MANAGER OF  
SILVERTON, COLORADO

Silverton, Colorado is the type of place that's tough to find anymore.

The town's grit, charm, and sense of place—all nestled high in the San Juan Mountains—draw a unique mix of locals who adore their community, but fear it is slipping away in the face of increasing housing costs, development pressure, and economic instability.

Tensions around these issues boiled over during the pandemic, dividing the town and fraying the sense of community residents cherish. The Town of Silverton and San Juan County asked Community Builders to help, and so began the Silverton Compass Project.

For over a year, we guided local partners through a dynamic engagement project that brought the Silverton community together to create a unifying vision for the future craft strategies and actions to make it happen.

The [Compass Master Plan](#), adopted unanimously in October of 2022, provides a blueprint for realizing the community's priorities and is already driving implementation, including updates to the town's zoning code, nearly \$1M in grant funding, strategic capital investments, and more.

The project, which recently won an American Planning Association award for Community Engagement, was made possible with support from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and our philanthropic partners who invest in our work.

**[TOWNOFSILVERTON.COLORADO.GOV](https://www.townofsilverton.colorado.gov)**

# THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TOOLKIT



In a growing number of markets across the West, residents are increasingly forced out of their communities in the face of housing shortages and rapid price escalation.

To equip communities to address these challenges, Community Builders teamed up with Enterprise Community Partners and the Colorado Division of Housing on The Colorado Affordable Housing Toolkit for Local Officials.

This initiative, funded by the Colorado Division of Housing, arms local officials with tools, training, and assistance they need to take meaningful action in their communities and help address the affordability crisis throughout the state.

Through this initiative, our team is providing intensive training sessions in communities across Colorado—from bigger places like Boulder, Broomfield, Grand Junction, and Greeley, to smaller places like Hugo, Kit Carson, and Granby, and lots of places in between, like Craig, Durango, Rifle, Delta, Montrose, and Glenwood Springs—to help local leaders craft solutions to their housing needs.

These work sessions bring together public, private, and nonprofit leaders to innovative solutions within housing policy and finance, building strategic partnerships across regions.

We are also leading technical assistance projects with Granby and Durango / La Plata County to support their communities in implementing the solutions identified through the training.



# COLORADO BROWNFIELDS PARTNERSHIP



Recycling existing buildings or properties —AKA redevelopment—serves as a catalyst for community revitalization efforts as well as a more sustainable alternative conventional sprawling development. Unfortunately, environmental contaminants from past uses often create a costly barrier to reinvestment and reuse of these sites. The challenge is immense: these sites, called brownfields, are found in communities throughout Colorado.

The Colorado Brownfields Partnership, a partnership between Community Builders and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, provides communities with the resources, guidance, and support needed to clean up and redevelop brownfield sites.

This year, we helped over 50 communities across Colorado respond to generationally significant funding opportunities for brownfields clean-up and redevelopment through workshops, training, one-to-one coaching, and application assistance. Our 2023 Colorado Brownfields Conference brought together over 200 local leaders and brownfields professionals from across the state to network and share ideas on innovative strategies to spur reinvestment and revitalization.

**[COBROWNFIELDSPARTNERSHIP.ORG](http://COBROWNFIELDSPARTNERSHIP.ORG)**







## BUILDING RESILIENT ECONOMIES IN COAL COMMUNITIES

Throughout the country, coal mines and power plants are shutting down as our nation transitions towards cleaner forms of energy. Such tangible changes offer real progress towards curbing the climate crisis, but with little time to plan for the loss of major employers and tax base, many communities struggle to survive under such significant economic upheaval.

Any successful energy transition must include these communities, which is why we've joined the National Association of Counties' (NACO) Building Resilient Economies in Coal Communities initiative (BRECC). BRECC provides technical assistance to local leaders to identify and advance projects for economic revitalization and diversification.

For the first year, Community Builders is working with three designated communities to provide one-on-one coaching, technical planning assistance, and a virtual learning series: in northwest Colorado, northeast Arizona, and the Four Corners region. Community partners are currently being selected for the second year of the program. We are also partners in a national virtual learning series with over 400 unique participants; a peer-learning network sharing hands-on experience among 20 leaders, and a national storytelling campaign.

[NACO.ORG/BRECC](https://www.naco.org/brecc)

## DEDICATED FUNDING FOR WORKFORCE HOUSING

Glenwood Springs, CO is grappling with a lack of affordable housing. Realizing the threat this poses to the sustainability and wellbeing of the community, Community Builders worked with the City and local partners, including Mountain Voices and Valley Settlement Project, to form a coalition focused on creating a dedicated source of local funding for workforce housing.

Guided by Community Builders, this diverse group developed the framework for a local housing program, and then worked with City Council to place a question on the local ballot, proposing a workforce housing fund created by a 2.5% lodging tax increase.

Approved by voters in November 2022, the fund will provide gap funding, down payment assistance, homeowner incentives, affordability flips, hotel conversions and rehabs, and work to protect existing affordable housing in the valley.



Believing that solutions should be guided by those most impacted, we worked to ensure the Glenwood Housing Coalition reflected the diverse mix of people and voices who make up our community. Our approach built the capacity of the group—recognizing that different participants would come with different types and levels of expertise—resulting in a strong and unified coalition capable of building the public and political support needed to pass the measure.

# THE ONE VALLEY RESILIENCE ROADMAP



Political divisions, lack of trust in government, and imbalances in civic participation were exacerbated across the country during the pandemic, especially in small mountain communities. This diminished civic capacity needed to realize progress on complex community problems and made it more challenging to collaborate effectively across regions.

To this end, the communities of the Gunnison Valley came together to partner with Community Builders and create the One Valley Resilience Roadmap (OVR). We facilitated work sessions, planning, and dialogue that brought together the people of the Gunnison Valley and created a strategic roadmap to guide regional efforts.

The resulting roadmap captured a unified approach to strengthen the region, resulting in a regional housing strategy to address the valley's housing needs, a land use and transportation framework to facilitate responsible development and transportation systems, and a civic capacity action plan to catalyze healthy civic participation, dialogue, and local governance.





## RECOVERY IN THE WESTERN SAN LUIS VALLEY

The San Luis Valley is a rural region of south-central Colorado with thriving industries in agriculture, government, and healthcare. Despite this, housing costs and poor living conditions impact residents' daily lives, posing risks to community health and wellbeing.

The COVID-19 pandemic compounded these already persistent problems, and with a small and declining population base, it became difficult to attract residents and new businesses into the region.

To address these issues, the Western San Luis Valley region—comprising Center, Del Norte, La Jara, and Saguache—partnered with Community Builders to create a Regional Resilience and Recovery Roadmap.

We helped the regional team prioritize their regional challenges, identify solutions, and create a roadmap of next steps through a robust planning and engagement process. The resulting roadmap has led to updated zoning around housing, planned new housing construction, an infrastructure needs assessment, and increased local leadership capacity.

[CORESILIENCY.COM/ROADMAP-PROGRAM](https://coresiliency.com/roadmap-program)



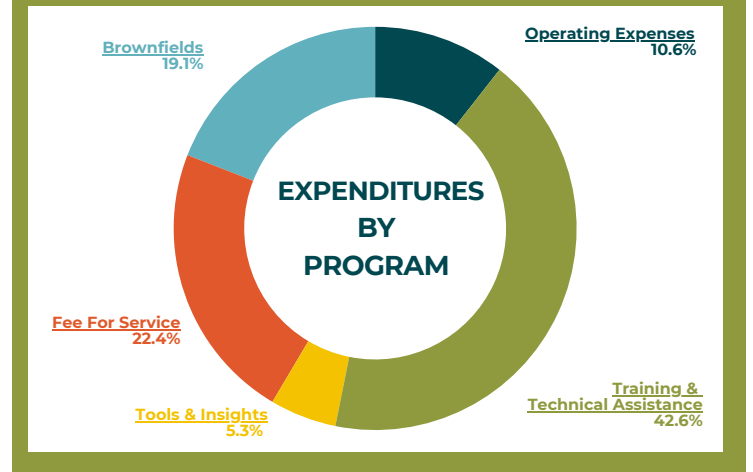
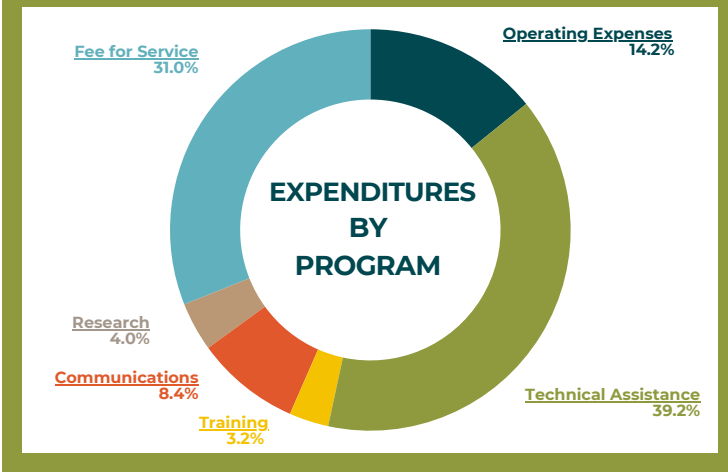
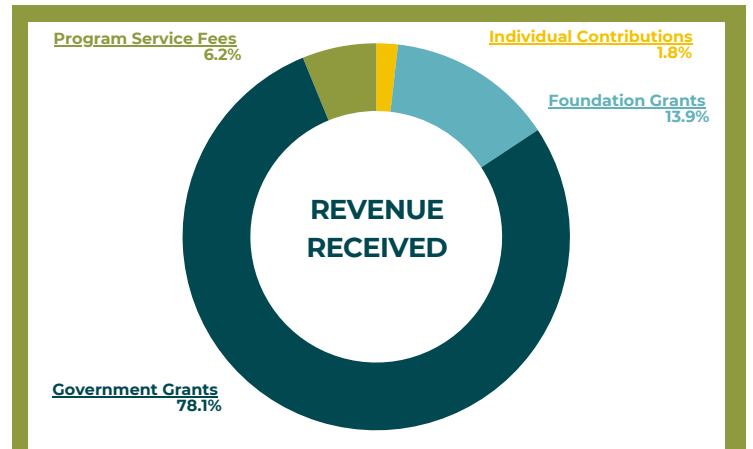
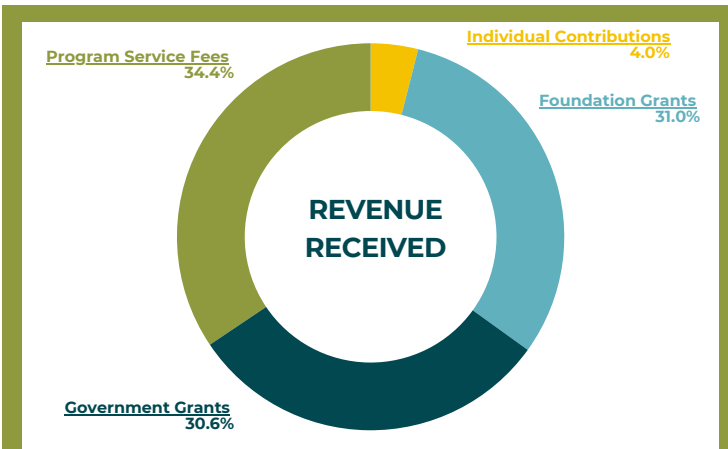
# FINANCIALS

In the 2021 -2022 fiscal year, Community Builders spent \$559,350. We raised \$367,661 in new funding and covered the remaining balance with net assets from the prior year's funding.

In the 2022-2023 fiscal year, Community Builders spent \$825,223. We raised \$612,846 in new funding and covered the remaining balance with net assets from the prior year's funding.

## FY22

## FY23



\*From FY22 to FY23, we strategically updated our programs to better reflect our work. This included combining Communications and Research into Tools & Insights, combining Training and Technical Assistance into one program, and moving Brownfields from Fee for Service into its own program.

# WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER!

This is tough work. Fortunately, we're not alone. We work shoulder to shoulder with local leaders and community partners that are creating a more sustainable future. We are inspired by their leadership, and grateful to be a part of their work. You know who you are. Keep after it.

Of course, our work is only possible through the generous support of the people and organizations that invest in this work. Their partnership and commitment underpins our unique funding model, which pairs philanthropic funds with local investment, to complete innovative and impactful projects.

Community Builders is grateful to all of our partners for your support. We're proud of what we've done together so far and excited to continue working together to shape more livable communities for all.





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