

*If you know someone who would enjoy our newsletter,
please forward them to this link.*

Join Our Mailing List!

From the Director's Desk:

Homelessness, Live-Working in a Van, and the end of Single Family Zoning in 3 parts

"The other night I came home late and tried to unlock my house with my car keys. I started the house up. So I drove it around for a while. I was speeding, and a cop pulled me over. He asked where I lived. I said, "right here, officer:"

Stephen Wright, 1980s comedian.

Living out of your vehicle isn't a punchline anymore. Nor is using a platform of mental illness for comedy: ask Jerry Lewis or Chris Farley. As a matter of public policy, alternate living accommodations are increasingly relevant.

On July 18th, the [Summit Daily wrote](#), Summit County group launches overnight parking pilot program for working homeless. It's a story about Raychel Kelly, who started "Good Bridge Community" which organized terms for working homeless like herself to pilot an overnight parking site with strict terms in partnership with the Interfaith Chapel. Good Bridge is not about finding a place for tourists to visit on the cheap. Its about our service workers not being able to afford rent or find a place to live (now that short term rentals have further disrupted the already tight rental market). Welcome to your mobile workforce.



Raychel Kelly

I was in the Town of Grand Lake recently helping them get an interim manager. One candidate suggested saving the town housing costs by living in his camper. "That's not legal in town" was the reply. In that case, there were a plethora of established camping areas with amenities nearby. Many RV parks conceived for temporary visits are transitioning into long-term housing.

June 12, I listened to Aaron Mayville, District Ranger for the Eagle/Holy Cross Ranger District of the White River National Forest, share with Eagle County Mayors and Managers the success of how many tons of human waste, trash, and how many live-in encampments they were able to document now that they finally have "front country ranger" staff to keep track of the escalating problem. Those positions were funded by partnerships with local governments who foot the bill to have federal

boots on the ground. Besides being a sanitation issue, this kind of intensive use of a

National Forest is a significant risk to have people living in our highly flammable forests. Forests are just a harbinger of what is coming into our towns. We developed cities to deal with these issues centuries ago. Have the cities adapted to bring campers back into the fold?

We really have not adjusted to urban camping yet. I listened in to police getting coached on the subject by CIRSA in Carbondale this past month. It was evident that the legal definitions applying to the 4th Amendment forbidding unlawful search and seizures is getting complicated with regard to homelessness, camping and living in a vehicle. Remember "the right of people to be secure in their persons, houses... shall not be violated?" Turns out you can pass curfews, parking restrictions, but ordinances aimed just to "keep the riff raff out" are getting thrown out. People have rights of place even if they don't have ownership. This is a constitutional principle. And by being there, they are residents of your community like it or not. Recent case law means that the anti-camping ordinance your town has on the books is probably unconstitutional.

Frankly, it may be time to re-think "camping" anyhow for a variety of reasons. Those campers are both your high-end visitors and your close to the edge workers. Welcome to our new reality. I was thinking about Raychel's Good Bridge Community, and the evolving case law that police are adjusting to while thinking about the same government leaders who have spent years talking about our housing crisis. I'm one of them. It is easy for affordable housing to be framed as a developer and market problem but it is one we have created through a variety of public policy tools. This is a community issue.



Car "camping"

In the NWCCOG region, we have the top visitor destinations in the world with Breckenridge, Steamboat Springs, Aspen, Vail, Winter Park and Glenwood Springs, and another 10 or so of the best state destinations, so how are responding to this disruption?

Should we not be setting up seasonal work camps instead of leaving it for individuals to "figure it out." Most employers in the high country ask if an incoming worker has housing already. HR will tell you that it isn't supposed to be a criteria and definitely not an interview question, but we all ask it, knowing that "I'll figure it out when I get here" is not a responsible answer for anyone. To turn a blind eye could be promoting homelessness.

Look below for Parts 2 and 3

Jon Stavney

Executive Director

jstavney@nwccog.org

New Fiscal Assistant Forges Ahead -
Welcome Becky Walter



Originally from the northern suburbs of Chicago, Becky Walter moved to Colorado in 2007. After spending 4 years in Fort Collins working on her degree, she moved to Summit County in 2011. In order to live the life of the quintessential ski bum, Becky spent much of her time working in restaurants before becoming the North American Accounts Manager for Faction Skis. After Faction moved to Denver, she decided to stay in Summit County - their loss, our gain.

When asked what she's most looking forward to in working at NWCCOG, she said, "I'm excited to be a part of such a wide-reaching organization and to learn more about how NWCCOG's programs are positively affecting regional communities."

Her list of free time hobbies include activities that are perfectly suited for Summit County. She says, "I pursue several hobbies that involve going up and down mountains. I am an avid backcountry skier, mountain biker, climber, rafter and trail runner. I have also been playing the violin since I was 8 and am currently a member of the Summit County Community Orchestra." In addition to those activities, she is also a volunteer guide and social media manager for High Country Veterans Adventures.

We're excited to have Becky on the team and look forward to working with her.

Gardner Announces BLM Will Relocate Headquarters to Grand Junction

July 15, 2019 Senator Cory Gardner (R-CO) announced that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will relocate its headquarters to Grand Junction, Colorado. In his effort to reshape the way Washington bureaucracy interacts with Americans its rules and regulations impact - he was the chief architect of the plan to move the Bureau of Land Management's headquarters West. Gardner's steadfast commitment to his proposal, along with public legislative action and behind-the-scenes work with key Administration officials, is the reason the BLM's new home will be in Colorado.



"Today is a historic day for our nation's public lands, western states, and the people of Colorado," said Senator Gardner. "Relocating the Bureau of Land Management to the Western Slope of Colorado will bring the bureau's decision makers closer to the people they serve and the public lands they manage. The problem with Washington is too many policy makers are far removed from the people they are there to serve. Ninety-nine percent of the land the BLM manages is West of the Mississippi River, and so should be

the BLM headquarters. This is a victory for local communities, advocates for public lands, and proponents for a more responsible and accountable federal government."

Gov. Jared Polis also voice his support for the move and said in a statement he was "thrilled to welcome" the federal agency. "Hard to think of a better place to house the department responsible for overseeing our beloved public lands," the governor's statement continued.

Courtney Gidner, a spokeswoman for Democratic Sen. Michael Bennet, said Bennet has long supported Grand Junction's bid for the BLM headquarters.

[Read the full announcement here.](#)

Casting Call for Northern Exposure remake: Grand Lake Town Manager Opening



We usually don't post member job openings in our newsletter - they have become so frequent. But we are making an exception since NWCCOG assisted the Grand Lake as a free member service in their selection process for an Interim Manager. We have also helped draft the job announcement. It was a joy coordinating with the town board and Greg Clifton the current Interim (until Mid-August when he starts his

new job at Flagstaff, AZ).

In our humble view, Grand Lake Town Manager is an ideal opportunity for an experienced county or municipal department head, planner or mid-level manager from the high country who is not a stranger to the politics of working with a board, who aspires to municipal management and loves working with a close team (ten employees). It could be a tough go for someone just out of school. As a hands-on manager it is much too intense to think you can retire on this job. The town planner there for the past two years likens his job to working in the TV program Northern Exposure.

Yes, it's a resort town with true summer/winter seasons and true mud seasons; the resident population of 499 is very involved. This is not a job for someone who thinks everything can be delegated. Grand Lake wants to continue many successful ongoing projects and programs while bringing the process and several new employees to a new level. [See the job posting here.](#)

And the Community Project Award goes to.....

At the Mountain Connect Conference on Tuesday, June 25th, we received the Community Project



The "Remmy" Award

Award for our work on Project THOR. The award is a Frederick Remington sculpture replica - thus the "Remmy" award. Project THOR was also the Luncheon Keynote presentation to a packed auditorium at the Keystone Resort. As Project THOR continues its successful soft launch, it is clearly a high-profile project that has generated immense interest across the entire state.

All the checks for both non-recurring costs and monthly recurring costs have been received. These represent the local matches required in the DOLA grant. This has enabled us to submit our first DOLA reimbursement request for Project THOR.

The first two waves of

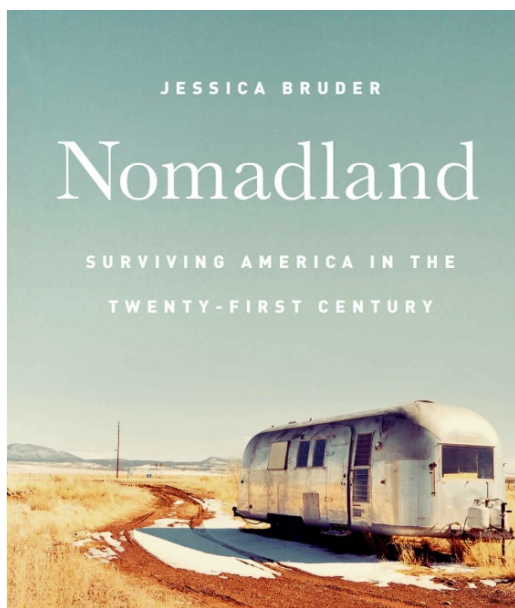
network equipment orders been received, and they will continue to arrive throughout the summer and early fall. We are working with local communities, who are managing their own local fiber builds, for their projects. Mammoth Networks and our contracted fiber contractor is fully engaged in early stages of implementation for those local builds and Project THOR infrastructure installation. There will be a rolling implementation through September when various communities will start to get "lit up". We are excited with the progress and Nate Walowitz continues to be the "go to" person if you have additional questions. You can contact him here - Nwalowitz@nwccog.org



Nate Walowitz

Part 2: This is not how we planned our retirement. Nomadland.

It sure looked cool in 1981, the post-apocalyptic The Road Warrior, a cross between Grease, West Side Story and later dystopian Cormac McCarthy's The Road, but most of us don't want to be in a perpetual state of resource collection and self-preservation. The essential RV thing is about taking all you need with you, living in your bought experience and then returning home to remember how much you appreciate it. The RV/Van/fifth-wheel, teardrop to popup trailer industry is in an unprecedented boom.



Not everyone is investing to go play on public lands. It isn't only about being out there. It is increasingly about making a living as a gig worker.

"The last free place in America is a parking spot," I heard while commuting this past year listening to Nomadland: Surviving America in the Twenty-First Century by Jessica Bruder. The book gave me pause about rushing into my retirement plan to live in a customized van down by a hundred rivers across the west, and reminded me throughout about how a friend of ours refused to car camp with us when the kids were young because it reminded him of growing up poor in Oregon. We were poor too, but we had family places that anchored us so it wasn't all camping. Camping to me was novel, fun, an

experience.

Nomadland is primarily about retirees roving from job to job; camp host, Amazon wish-fulfilment center, visiting friends with a deal, trying to make enough money to stay adrift, not get caught...not start living under a bridge, because for many, "there is no promise of ever being able to retire," not as wages and housing costs continue to diverge. That wasn't so disturbing when we were talking about 20 somethings gaining life experience. Nomadland is not a pretty picture of snowbird living, leaving the farm in Minnesota to winter in Arizona as we imagined listening to Lake Wobegon not so long ago, but it haunts me just like the memory of Garrison Keillor.

Disturbingly, many are preparing for life to be more like the Road Warrior-transient, provisional and lonely. While camping across the West remains one of the most safe and serene experiences attracting people from around the world, and fuels a growing appetite for gear, and internet image-building, as a last resort way of life it just gets complicated and more than a little depressing. [Living on the road is hard work](#). Can you imagine perpetual camping? Welcome back to the stone age.



And, please, homelessness is not just about the mentally ill. Has the opioid and alcohol crises not touched you? Not all of those living at the RV park in those "expensive" trailers or those driveway surfing in a van are living the dream. Yeah, a Portlander, I still have my West Coast dream of camping from Alaska to Baja. Plenty do, and do extreme sports along the way and You Tube and Instagram about it. Many others don't have much choice. Bruder in Nomadland explains how to identify the four door cars with shades tucked into the windows, front seats and dashes filled with stuff, and the many ways to make a one-time work van look like it is still in service while you live there. Both young and old are riding on rubber, but it is the sheet-metal-thin-wall between us, them, and poverty.

Our poverty. Our inability to see them as us.

(WAP) Saves the Day - Literally

There is an umbrella classification in the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) called Health and Safety. It covers a broad range of deficiencies that are found and remediated in a home. These can be as innocuous as fixing a dryer vent or water leak under the sink - either of which could eventually cause mold and moisture issues - to serious and even life-threatening hazards like a gas leak. There have been combustion appliances that have not been vented correctly which could produce lethal levels of carbon monoxide permeating the living space. Clients have said that they have been sick all winter with what they think is the flu but in reality, they have been exposed to elevated levels of CO ever since they closed up the house for winter.

Our results showed that of the 37 manufactured homes that have been weatherized across our territory, 32 of them had at least one health and safety deficiency. Of the 39 stick-built homes that were weatherized, 34 of them had a health and safety problem detected and fixed.



Leaking, corroded gas line.

A recent Weatherization project in Dinosaur, CO, included new floor insulation, new high efficiency furnace, new refrigerator, air sealing, and lighting upgrades. When our NWCCOG Quality Control Inspector arrived to make sure all work passed inspection, he noticed a strong smell of gas in the crawl space. He checked all connections in the area, but no leak was found. He immediately turned off the gas to the home and called the fire department. They confirmed a gas leak and our NWCCOG team scheduled **Praiter's Plumbing and Heating**

to take a second look at the gas line. After having pressure-tested the line, they discovered a leak in the buried portion of the line running from the propane tank to the house. Based on the discoloration of the soil, they determined the line had been leaking for some time. The plumbers were shocked that the home had not blown up! They ran a new trench and gas line to the home, and disaster was averted. Luckily, we take our Health and Safety issues seriously.

Alpine Area Agency on Aging -- what's up?

AARP Livable Communities Conference

Nearly one out of every five Coloradans will be 65 years or older by 2030, a demographic shift that holds both challenges and opportunities for Colorado communities.

AARP Colorado is organizing a one day conference that will bring together national, state and local policy experts with government and community leaders to explore the potential creation and development of age- friendly communities for people of all ages. The conference will feature presentations on best practices by local communities and opportunities for future networking-see attached draft conference [agenda](#).

Wednesday, August 21, 2019
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Beaver Run Conference Center
620 Village Road

Attendance is free, a light breakfast and lunch will be provided.

To RSVP or for additional information please respond to the AARP Colorado State Office at: rey@aarp.org

2019 Caregiver Conference



This year's caregiver conference was held June 11th at the Glenwood Springs High School. We had 103 attendees and 66 providers - our largest yet! Kim Mooney and Megan Carnarius were the keynote speakers and Angelo Fernandez spoke about effective communication. Attendees commented that there was "a lot of great information" and that the conference was "resourceful, enlightening, and helpful!"

Grand County Events

On June 18th, a committee tasked with researching gaps in senior services presented a [Grand County Aging Well plan](#) to the BOCC. The committee, comprised of many local community organizations including Grand County Public Health, Human Services, Housing Authority, and the Rural Health Network, along with Mountain Family Center, the Alpine AAA, and many

others, worked diligently with Mary Kenyon of Impact Marketing to create the comprehensive document.

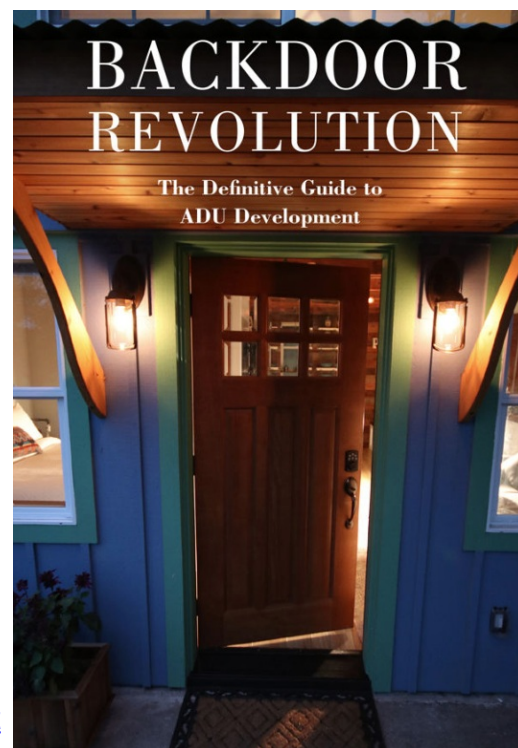
Within ten years, Grand County's population age 65+ will increase anywhere from 75%-120%, making Grand one of the counties with greatest older adult population growth in the entire state. Commissioners were presented with five core aging well areas, with specific recommendations for improvement and definitions of success. The plan, which envisions Grand County as a community in which people of all ages and ability are empowered to enjoy full, safe and health, independent lives, details the core areas as Resource Connection, Transportation, Volunteerism & Employment, Social Connection, and Building & Open Spaces.

Senior Law Day

The first annual Grand County Senior Law Day was held on June 28th at the Granby Community Center. Speakers presented on Planning for Long Term Care and Aging 101, and a local resource panel representing over 15 entities detailed local supports and services available to older adults and their caregivers. The first year was a smashing success with 73 attendees and we anticipate an even bigger turnout next year.

Part 3: Is this the beginning of the end for our 80-year experiment with Single Family Zoning?

Could our very zoning be contributing to our national affordable housing problem? Duh. Regarding cost, square footage matters. Tiny homes seem cool. I have a book I have not read yet about Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) called Backdoor Revolution, by Kol Peterson. I often debated our own engineer and planner about why we don't just allow every SF home to have an ADU (approved and with reduced tap fees). I've spoken before about the role trailer parks play in affordable housing, although they are inefficient with regard to density. We have limited our solutions. Now attention is turning to the top culprit: single family homes.



There is a revolt simmering in West Coast states regarding the tool that seems to have put us in this mess. It is called single family zoning. Curb reported July 1, "[Oregon just effectively banned single-family zoning](#) as the state adds a YIMBY policy, "meaning legalizing" up-zoning to allow more density in housing developments in towns and cities where single family zoning is contributing to a housing shortage." [Seattle took a more measured approach reported Governing Magazine](#), limiting their up-zoning to certain neighborhoods after the NIMBYs came out in numbers stating "the density Bolsheviks are coming to town, and their gonna burn your single-family house to the ground." California has been considering SB-50 which seeks to address the "crisis" of homelessness and housing affordability, citing that [two thirds of California residences are SF](#) while most of the zoned developable land is zoned strictly for single family dwellings. It is a concept big enough to have had significant coverage from both the [L.A. Times](#) and the [NY Times](#).

That California bill may die this year, but the proposal will return. Experienced city council members will know better, but lest one think this is a clear-cut partisan issue, Curb in the Oregon article reports that up-zoning is supported by HUD director Ben Carson as well as Elizabeth Warren, as well as the CATO institute. Looks like we may need to get more comfortable with density.

Could a State end to SF zoning happen in Colorado?



Not the way it seems to be happening in Oregon or California. Lest Coloradoans worry, two factors stand in the way of the West Coast trend: an extreme, well protected prejudice for local control in Colorado means that such decisions will likely be made town by town. The other factor being that most housing developments in Colorado are developed under a Planned Unit

Development (PUD) zoning meaning each PUD would have to be amended to

change the zoning, and the municipality could not unilaterally impose such an amendment. Few Metro Districts, or HOAs would come forward requesting this change. In Eagle when I was Mayor, we up-zoned much of the Central Business District to commercial and nothing happened.

Lesson: there must be a market for redevelopment to make sense. That said, I am waiting for the first Colorado town to eliminate single family zoning in the name of affordable housing, and amend their PUD regs to do the same. It would be a powerful statement to the next developer who walked through the door.

When state legislatures are acting to beat down NIMBYism, we know that we are about to experience land use in a different way.

NEXT 2019 NWCCOG COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, August 22, 2019

Full Council & EDD Board Annual Planning Meeting

Location: Summit County Community & Senior Center Hoosier Room, Frisco, CO

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Agenda Items: Strategic Planning for 2020

Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

www.nwccog.org

970.468.0295

THANK YOU FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN NWCCOG!

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)