

A scenic landscape photograph of a dirt road winding through a valley. In the background, there are snow-capped mountains under a dark, cloudy sky. The foreground shows a dirt road curving through a field of dry grass and some trees.

ARCHULETA COUNTY · DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

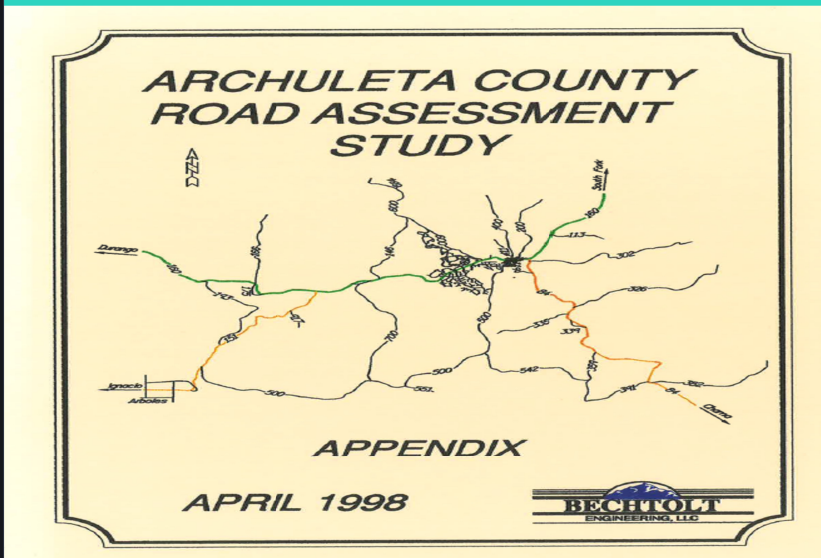
Primary & Secondary Roads: How We Got Here — and Where We Stand

Work Session Briefing for the Board of County Commissioners

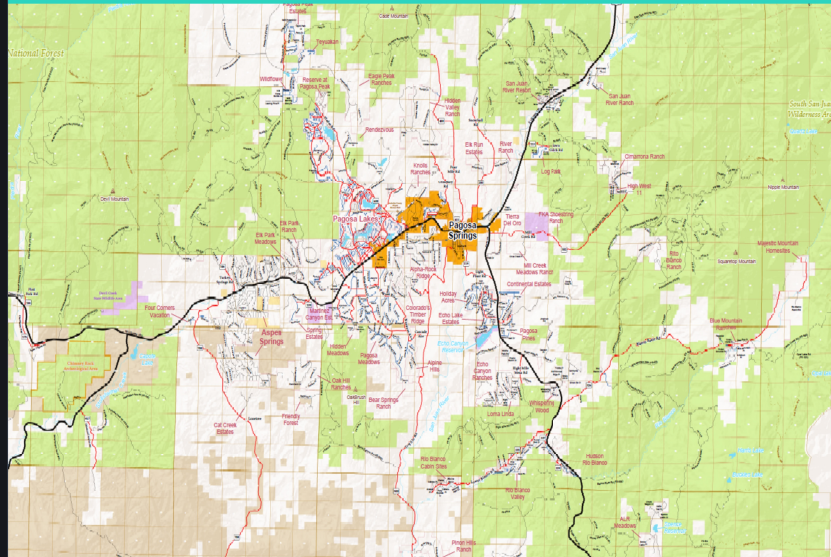
Prepared by Road and Bridge Department · July 2026

How the County map changed

1998 ROAD MAP



2017 ROAD MAP



Source: Archuleta County road maps, 1998 and 2017.

The roads accepted for maintenance

ARTERIALS

CR 500 (Trujillo Rd)
CR 600 (Piedra Rd) — Hwy 160 to FS boundary

COLLECTORS

Buttress Ave — S Pagosa Blvd to Cascade Ave
Cascade Ave
CR 119 (Light Plant Rd)
CR 335 (Lower Blanco Rd)
CR 359 (Coyote Park Rd)
CR 700 (Cat Creek Rd) — Hwy 160 to Orange Ct
Meadows Dr
Mission Dr
N Pagosa Blvd
Park Ave — N Pagosa Blvd to Carlee Pl
Pinon Causeway
S Pagosa Blvd
Trails Blvd — Hwy 160 to Ranger Park Dr
Vista Blvd

AGRICULTURAL ACCESS

CR 391 (Edith Rd)
CR 542 (Montezuma Rd)
CR 551 (Juanita Rd)
CR 700 (Cat Creek Rd) — Orange Ct to CR 500

RECREATIONAL ACCESS

CR 113 (Fawn Gulch Rd)
CR 146 (Turkey Springs Rd)
CR 166 (First Fork Rd)
CR 200 (Snowball Rd)
CR 302 (Mill Creek Rd)
CR 326 (Blanco Basin Rd)
CR 382 (Upper Navajo Rd) — to FS 731 Price Lakes Rd
CR 400 (Four Mile Rd)
CR 982 (entrance to Navajo State Park)
CR 988 (entrance to Navajo State Park) — South of Hwy 151
Eight Mile Mesa Rd

Source: Archuleta County Primary System Roads document (2004) · Arterials, Collectors, Agricultural Access and Recreational Access.

The situation in brief

Dedicated ≠ accepted

For decades, subdivisions dedicated roads to the public — but the County never accepted most of them for maintenance.

A formal 2006 policy

Since 2006, Secondary roads receive no routine maintenance beyond one blading and snow plowing as needed.

The money doesn't reach

Highway Users Tax Funds cover only about a tenth of what full maintenance of all roads would cost.

A map, misread

The 2017 County map labels roads “Secondary” — which means public, not County-maintained.

Sources: 2004 Ballot Measure Report · Resolution 9882 (1998) · 2006 Road System Policy & attorney minutes · Archuleta County road map.

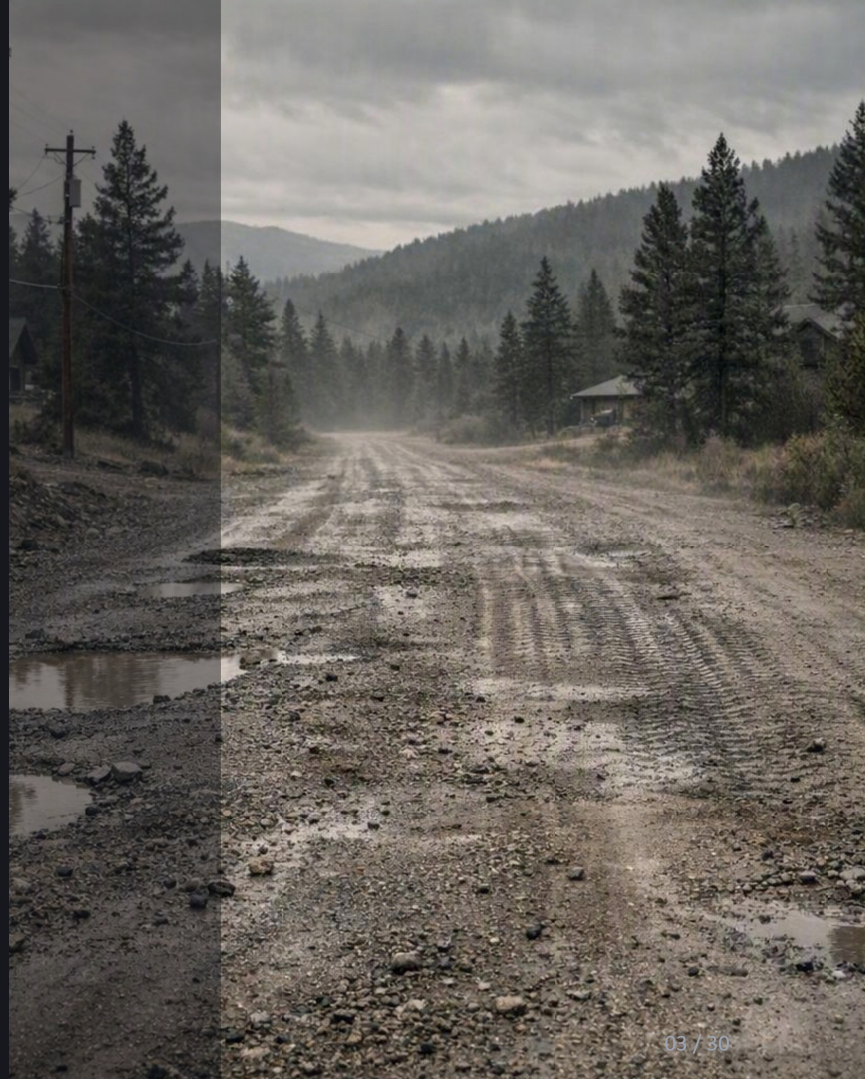
THE PROBLEM

Why we are here

- Residents are telling the Board we aren't maintaining their roads.
- Many of those roads were dedicated to the public decades ago but were never accepted by the County for maintenance.
- We sometimes graded a road as a courtesy — that does not create an obligation to keep doing it.
- The County does not have the resources to keep every public road in good condition.

Source: 2006 Road System Policy · Design Standards §27.5.

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“Secondary” does not mean “we maintain it”

“Maintenance has nothing to do with designating a County road system.”

— 2004 Ballot Measure Report

Secondary = a PUBLIC road

Open to the public. Anyone may use it.

Secondary ≠ a COUNTY-MAINTAINED road

The designation on the map says nothing about who maintains it.

Sources: 2004 Ballot Measure Report · 2006 Road System Policy (“no maintenance to roads in the Secondary Road System”).

What each road system actually gets

PRIMARY SYSTEM

Roads of greatest importance to intra-County transportation

- Routine maintenance, year-round
- Road Capital Improvement (RCI) program
- Snow removal
- Signage, safety & bridges
- Reconstruction to County standards
- Eligible for Highway Users Tax Funds (HUTF)

SECONDARY SYSTEM

All other public roads not on the Primary system

- One blading per year (minimum)
- Snow plowing only as necessary
- No capital improvement program
- No reconstruction to standards
- No year-round service
- No HUTF — unless in a special district

Sources: Archuleta County Primary System Roads document · 2004 Ballot Measure Report · 2006 Road System Policy & attorney minutes (Nov. 21, 2006).

Acceptance is a formal, discretionary process

The County considers petitions to accept a road into its maintenance system only once a year — and the burden is on the requesting party.

01

Petition annually

Submit a written request to the County Engineer on or before May 31 each year.

02

Prove the road

Document its public nature, existing condition, and whether it meets County design standards.

03

Fund the gap

Provide a cost estimate and a funding plan to bring the road up to County standards.

04

County evaluates

The Engineer & Director weigh the economic and practical burden and fairness before any acceptance.

Source: Road & Bridge Design Standards §27.5.1–27.5.2 (Resolution 2005-40, amended by Resolution 2017-19).

A timeline: 1953 to 2017

1953

State law requires a County road map — never located.

2004

“What we’re doing isn’t working.” Ballot & funding crisis.

2006

BOCC ends routine maintenance on Secondary roads.

1998

Res. 9882: a 5-year fix for 12 subdivisions.

2005

Staff build the Primary / Secondary map (AASHTO).

2017

Updated map re-labels roads — confusion begins.

Sources: Resolution 9882 · 2004 Ballot Measure Report · County Road Map timeline · 2006 attorney minutes · C.R.S. §43-2-109.

The temporary fix that failed

The County agreed to accept certain roads in twelve existing subdivisions — but only temporarily, and only if it could afford to.

5 years

Subdivision roads maintained Jan 1, 1999 – Dec 31, 2003, then transferred back to the subdivisions.

Arterials only

Only the arterial roads in those subdivisions were to be maintained permanently.

If affordable

All maintenance was “specifically subject to the County’s financial ability to do such maintenance.”

Takeaway: the County never intended to maintain all subdivision roads permanently.

Source: Resolution 9882 (1998), Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners.

“Obviously what we’re doing isn’t working”

On a Road & Bridge budget comparable to Summit County’s, Archuleta County was trying to maintain more than three times the road mileage.

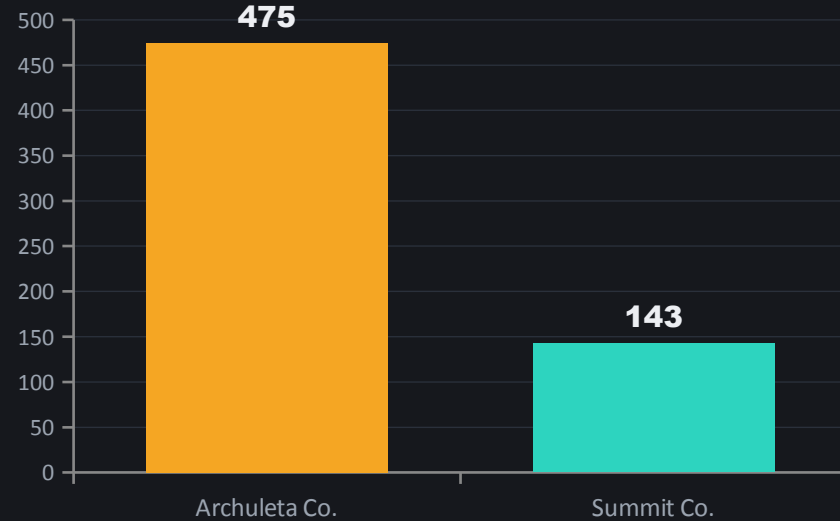
474.5

MILES
Archuleta County

142.5

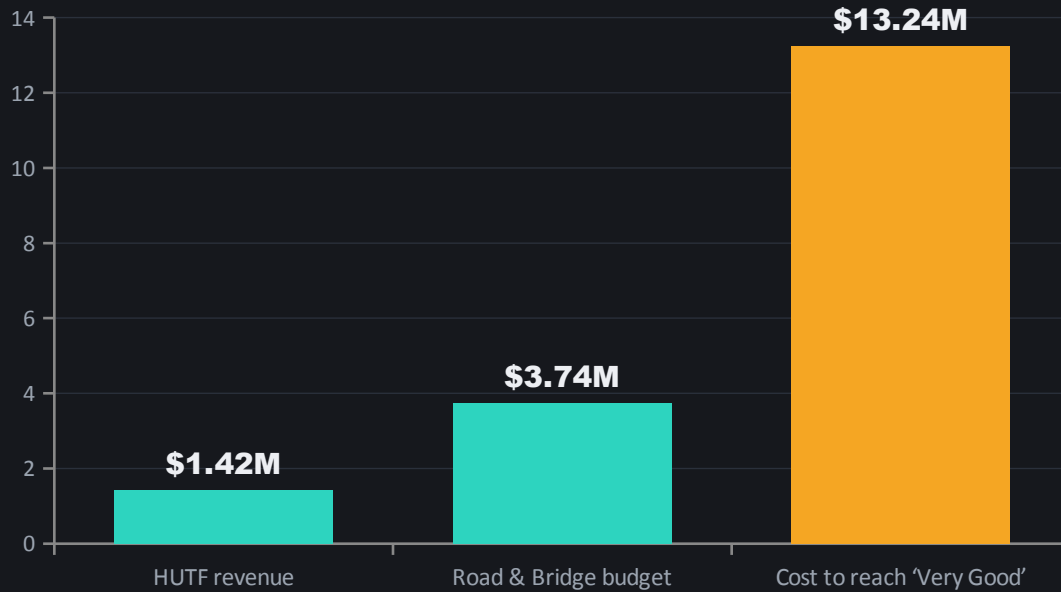
MILES
Summit County

Road miles maintained — similar budgets



Source: 2004 Road Maintenance Ballot Measure Report — road mileage and Road & Bridge budget comparison.

The money cannot reach every road



~10%

of the full maintenance need is covered by HUTF revenue.

Trying to maintain more than the County can afford would degrade the entire road system.

Sources: 2004 Ballot Measure Report (HUTF revenue, budget) · 2006 Road Condition Summary Report (cost to reach 'Very Good').

Counties that actually look like ours in 2026

Summit County has become a premier ski market, with property values and tax yield we cannot match. Chaffee and Teller are the fairer comparison.

Archuleta

About 14,500 residents. Road & Bridge budget of \$7,255,538. Responsible for 482.397 miles, with a 595.199-mile total system. About 15 Road & Bridge employees.

Chaffee

20,356 residents. Road & Bridge budget of \$8.5 million (2024). A 533.58-mile total system, with roughly 300 miles actively maintained. About 22–25 Road & Bridge employees.

Teller

About 26,000 residents. Road & Bridge budget of roughly \$8.5 million. About 554 miles maintained. About 26 Road & Bridge employees.

Takeaway: Archuleta has the smallest population, the smallest budget, and the smallest crew — for the largest road system.

Note: Published figures vary by source and year; the numbers above are as reported. Sources: Chaffee County 2024 Adopted Budget, pp. 16 & 176 and staffing narratives · Teller County Public Works Director Fred Clifford · Archuleta County Resolution 2025-70 · County Manager's July 2026 road report.

The smallest budget, the largest road burden

1

The smallest budget

\$7.3 million for Archuleta, against \$8.5 million for Chaffee and \$8.5 million for Teller.

2

The smallest population

About 14,500 residents, against 20,356 in Chaffee and roughly 26,000 in Teller.

3

The largest system per capita

482.397 miles of responsibility and 595.199 miles of total system, carried by the fewest taxpayers.

4

The widest funding gap

No comparison county is responsible for nearly 500 miles on a budget under \$7.5 million.

Sources: County Manager's July 2026 road report · Resolution 2025-70 · Chaffee County 2024 Adopted Budget · Teller County Public Works.

Almost everything we maintain is gravel

Mileage alone understates the burden. What separates Archuleta from Chaffee and Teller is surface type — our system is overwhelmingly unpaved, and gravel is the expensive kind to keep up.

Archuleta

70.0 paved miles and 524.6 unpaved, of 594.6 jurisdictional. Of the 482.397 miles we are responsible for, roughly 412 are unpaved.

Chaffee

154.1 paved miles and 203.4 unpaved, of 357.4 jurisdictional miles. Chaffee maintains roughly 300 miles, about 200 of them unpaved.

Teller

162.1 paved miles and 391.9 unpaved, of 554.0 jurisdictional miles. Teller maintains its full system, roughly 390 miles of it unpaved.

Takeaway: Archuleta maintains the largest unpaved road system of the three — with the smallest crew and the smallest budget.

Note: Maintained-mile figures are operational estimates; jurisdictional miles are as published. Sources: CDOT paved/unpaved jurisdictional mileage · Archuleta County Manager's 2026 road report · Chaffee County department summaries · Teller County Public Works.

Why unpaved miles consume more resources

Gravel is inexpensive to build and expensive to keep. A paved mile is resurfaced once in a generation; a gravel mile has to be worked again every few weeks.

Gravel degrades immediately

Weather, traffic, and drainage failures produce washboarding, ruts, and potholes within days — not years.

Maintenance never stops

Gravel roads need grading every two to six weeks. Paved roads need resurfacing every ten to twenty years.

Material, labor & equipment

Gravel and fines wash away every storm and must be replaced yearly; hauling and grading are slow, skilled work that wears equipment fastest.

What the numbers show

Blading one mile of dirt road costs \$2,910. Reconstructing a paved mile runs \$1,100,000; converting gravel to pavement, \$1,300,000.

Source: Archuleta County Road & Bridge unit cost data, County Manager's 2026 report · CDOT paved/unpaved jurisdictional mileage.

What voters actually authorized

*“... funding general Archuleta County government operations to include **routine maintenance of all County roads** ...”*

— 2006 TABOR ballot question (no increase to the current mill levy)

What it means

“County roads” are the roads on the official County road map, adopted under C.R.S. § 43-2-110 and § 43-2-111.

What it does NOT mean

It did not promise maintenance for every platted or dedicated street shown on a subdivision plat.

Sources: Resolution 2006-19 — TABOR ballot question · C.R.S. §43-2-110 and §43-2-111.

Defining which roads are “County roads”

County attorneys advised that the road map required by C.R.S. § 43-2-109 back in 1953 had never been created. Staff built it from scratch.

1

Research

Staff researched right-of-way ownership for every public road in the County.

2

Classify

Each road was tested against AASHTO functional classifications.

3

Sort

Roads meeting the definition became Primary; all others became Secondary.

4

Present & adopt

The map and document were adopted on the 17th, on a two-to-one vote.

Source: Timeline of Events for the Preparation of the County Road Map · C.R.S. §43-2-109 (1953).

The County cannot maintain all roads

“The Road & Bridge budget did not allow for reasonable maintenance of all County roads.” Staff recommended a system the County could actually sustain.

01

A Primary system the County can afford

Concentrate limited resources on the roads that matter most to County-wide travel.

02

A Secondary system with no routine maintenance

Public roads that the County is not committing to maintain on a routine basis.

03

A two-year transition

Time for affected residents to organize and form districts to maintain their own roads.

Sources: 2005–2006 staff recommendations & County Road Map timeline · 2004 Ballot Measure Report.

The Board formally ends routine maintenance

JUNE 15
2006

Effective date: staff directed to no longer maintain Secondary roads except in emergency situations.

“Roads in the Secondary System will receive no County maintenance, including snow removal.”

— 2006 attorney minutes documenting the Board’s decision

This is the policy still in effect today — and the strongest legal foundation for the County’s position.

Source: 2006 attorney minutes documenting the Board’s decision, January 17, 2006.

What Secondary roads receive today

Amended policy adopted November 21, 2006

- **One blading**

At least one blading per year — the minimum level of service.

- **Snow plowing as necessary**

Plowing only as conditions require, not on a routine schedule.

- **No capital improvements**

No RCI program, no reconstruction, no year-round service.

- **No HUTF**

Not claimed for Secondary roads unless they lie in a special district.

Source: Amended Road System Policy, Nov. 21, 2006.



HUTF is not a blank check

HUTF applies only to Primary roads the County has formally accepted and is obligated to maintain year-round. It cannot fund full maintenance of every road.

HUTF APPLIES TO

- Primary roads formally accepted into the system
- Roads the County maintains full, year-round
- Public roads that are passable except in adverse weather

HUTF DOES NOT APPLY TO

- Secondary roads (unless in a special district)
- Subdivision roads never accepted
- Roads without adequate right-of-way
- Roads maintained by metro districts

Sources: 2004 Ballot Measure Report · 2006 attorney minutes — HUTF eligibility.

What we must do — and what we do not

THE COUNTY IS OBLIGATED TO

- Maintain Primary roads year-round
- Maintain signage, safety & capital work on Primary roads
- Provide emergency access on all public roads
- Regulate rights-of-way (police power)

THE COUNTY IS NOT OBLIGATED TO

- Maintain Secondary roads
- Plow Secondary roads except for emergencies
- Maintain subdivision roads never accepted
- Maintain roads below standard or without adequate right-of-way

Sources: Primary System Roads document · 2006 Road System Policy · Design Standards §27.5 · C.R.S. §43-2-111.

Where the confusion comes from

Why residents are confused today

The 2017 County map labeled roads “Primary” and “Secondary” — without explaining what “Secondary” means.

The misconception: *“my road is Secondary, so the County maintains it.”*

The reality: *“The County will provide no maintenance to roads in the Secondary Road System.”*

Secondary = a public road, not a County-maintained road.

Sources: 2004 Ballot Measure Report · 2006 Road System Policy.

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Shared responsibility for unaccepted roads

Under C.R.S. § 43-2-111 and § 43-2-147 the Board sets highway policy and regulates access. Responsibility for roads never accepted is shared — not the County's alone.

Owners, HOAs & districts

Roads never accepted for County maintenance are the responsibility of residents, HOAs, or special districts.

Right-of-way damage

Anyone who damages property in the County right-of-way must restore it to original condition or better.

Off-road parking

Parking on County roads is illegal; every owner must provide adequate off-right-of-way parking.

Variances for hardship

Design standards are mandatory, but variances can be granted for exceptional and undue hardship.

Source: Road & Bridge Design Standards §27.5.5 (amended by Res. 2017-19) · C.R.S. §43-2-111 & §43-2-147.

This is not new policy

We are not changing the County's philosophy. We are **realigning practice with the standards, maps, and resolutions the County already adopted** — decades ago.

2004

Ballot Report

2006

Road System Policy

2017

Design Standards

Sources: 2004 Ballot Measure Report · 2006 Road System Policy · 2017 Road & Bridge Design Standards.

What we are asking the BOCC to affirm

1

Affirm the 2006 policy

Reaffirm that Secondary roads receive minimal service and no routine maintenance, as adopted.

2

Communicate clearly

Explain to residents that “Secondary” means public — not County-maintained.

3

Support district formation

Help residents on unaccepted roads organize and fund maintenance through districts.

4

Hold the line on acceptance

Apply the § 27.5 petition, standards, and funding process before accepting any road.

Basis: adopted County road standards, policies & resolutions — 2005-40, 9882, 2006-19, 2017-19; 2006 Road System Policy.

THE MESSAGE FOR THE BOARD & THE COMMUNITY

“HUTF is a limited funding source that applies only to Primary roads the County has formally accepted. Secondary roads receive minimal maintenance, and unaccepted subdivision roads are the responsibility of residents, HOAs, or districts. This is not new policy — it is the system the County adopted decades ago.”

Sources: 2004 Ballot Measure Report · 2006 Road System Policy · 2017 Road & Bridge Design Standards.

Archuleta County · Department of Public Works

Plats of record: not accepted for maintenance

RECEPTION NUMBERS · 19 RECORDED PLATS (Only a few examples)

119503	105427	80067	83664
106557	84862	100011	117828
95548	100231	74963	74989
80316	73682	73683	76045
76690	100594	110165	

Road and subdivision names on file with the County Clerk & Recorder.

THE RECORDED PLAT LANGUAGE

“This approval does not extend to the design of utilities, sewage disposal, roads, or any other service facility, and does not constitute acceptance of roads, utilities or services by Archuleta County for maintenance or operation.”

“This approval shall not [be] deemed an acceptance by the County of the dedication of the roads therein.”

Bottom line: dedication to the public did not create a County maintenance obligation.

Source: Recorded subdivision plats, Archuleta County Clerk & Recorder — “Subdivision Roads Not Accepted for Maintenance by Archuleta County.”

References

Every source cited in this briefing, with the slides on which it appears.

1. Road & Bridge Design Standards, §27.5.1–27.5.5

Resolution 2005-40, amended by Resolution 2017-19 [Slides 3, 8, 23, 25, 26, 28](#)
· [Doc pp. 1–2](#)

2. Archuleta County Primary System Roads document

Designation of the Primary Road System [Slides 6, 7, 23](#) · [Doc pp. 2–3](#)

3. Resolution 9882 (1998)

Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners [Slides 2, 9, 10, 27](#) · [Doc pp. 1–3](#)

4. 2004 Road Maintenance Ballot Measure Report

Road mileage, budget and HUTF revenue analysis [Slides 2, 4, 7, 9, 11, 12, 19, 22, 24, 26, 28](#) · [Doc pp. 4, 6, 15, 20–22, 40–41](#)

5. Resolution 2006-19

TABOR ballot question on road maintenance funding [Slides 17, 27](#) · [Doc pp. 1–3](#)

6. Timeline of Events for the Preparation of the County Road Map

Staff chronology, 1953–2017 [Slides 2, 5, 9, 18, 19](#) · [Doc pp. 1–4](#)

7. Attorney minutes, January 17, 2006

Board decision on secondary road maintenance [Slides 7, 9, 20, 22](#) · [Doc pp. 1–3](#)

8. Road System Policy, as amended November 21, 2006

Primary / Secondary system maintenance levels [Slides 2, 3, 4, 7, 21, 23, 24, 26, 28](#) · [Doc pp. 1–2](#)

9. 2006 Road Condition Summary Report

Cost to bring the system to “Very Good” condition [Slide 12](#)

10. C.R.S. §43-2-109

County road system designation [Slides 9, 18](#)

11. C.R.S. §43-2-110 and §43-2-111

Adoption and acceptance of county roads [Slides 17, 23, 25](#)

12. C.R.S. §43-2-147

Access to public highways [Slides 25](#)

13. Recorded subdivision plats — Archuleta County Clerk & Recorder

“Subdivision Roads Not Accepted for Maintenance” [Slide 29](#)

Peer county road, surface & budget data

CDOT surface mileage · Chaffee 2024 Budget · Teller Public Works [Slides 13–16](#)