

**Commission on Property Tax**  
**Public Engagement Meeting - Pueblo, CO at Colorado State University- Pueblo**  
**Meeting Minutes**

*Thursday, February 8 2024*

*5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.*

*Zoom Recording:*

[https://keystone-org.zoom.us/rec/share/W-yY6loQHicqDoq62nbS6cWwpL2k8w2jJeFA9B\\_ZRjNwP2LbSvtX-4mJSYTvY1v.vjiQLJt-ZGa1H2PQ?startTime=1708043431000](https://keystone-org.zoom.us/rec/share/W-yY6loQHicqDoq62nbS6cWwpL2k8w2jJeFA9B_ZRjNwP2LbSvtX-4mJSYTvY1v.vjiQLJt-ZGa1H2PQ?startTime=1708043431000)

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5:30 PM: Commissioner Bob Olme provided opening remarks; Senator Bob Gardner also provided opening remarks. Renny Fagan introduced the Keystone Policy Center. He also electronically polled the attendees to gather demographics and affiliations. Polling results are captured in Addendum A. Afterwards, he displayed a powerpoint to provide background of the Commission, including its guiding principles.

5:42 PM: Trace Faust facilitated a conversation about the challenges around property tax. Attendees voiced challenges reduced funding for fire departments, firefighter retention, rising costs, cutting services, tax payer understanding, difficulty of an assessor's job, lack of predictability, schools that can't pass mill levy overrides, lack of senior exemption portability, difficulty with rising home values, not feeling like a vote matters, difficulty understanding ballot measures and, assessed values not reflecting market values. There was a conversation about the authority of school boards, the difficulty of an assessor's job, deBrucing, Prop HH and assessed values.

6:28 PM: R. Fagan facilitated a conversation about solutions around property tax. Attendees voiced proposed legislation for a senior exemption portability, cap property tax increases by inflation or cost of living, taxing short term rentals, primary house plus one relief, bonds, sales tax, eliminating property tax, and income related property tax credit. There was a conversation about senior exemption portability, short term rentals, primary versus secondary houses, income tax, regressive versus progressive taxes.

7:20 PM: T. Faust thanked the group for sharing their input. They also asked for further comments via the electronic survey.

[Addendum A](#)- Mentimeter Results

[Addendum B](#)- Participant Input

**Property Tax Commission Attendance:**

Lori Laske (online)

Bob Olme

JoAnn Groff (online)

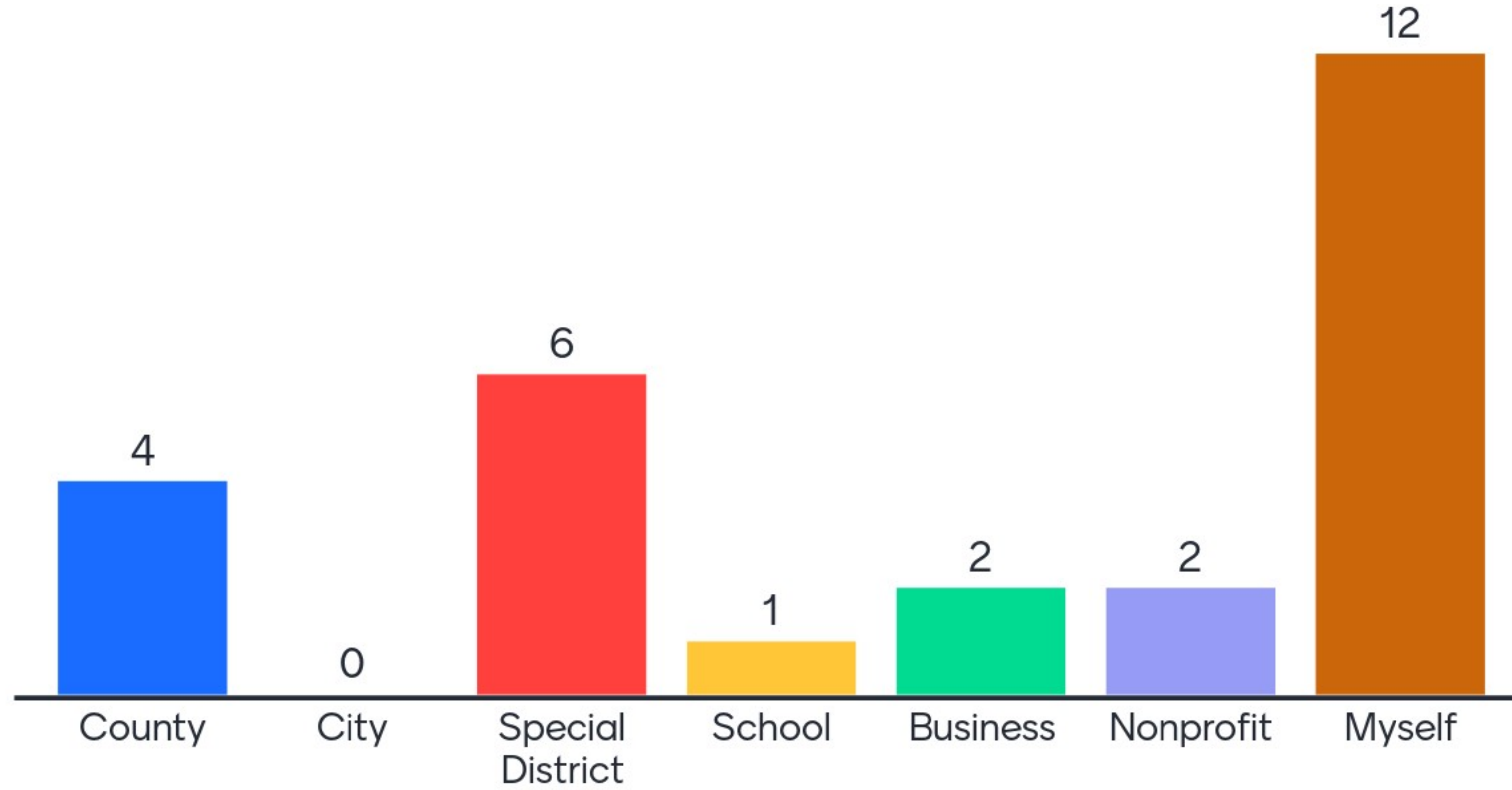
Andy Kerr (online)

# What county do you live in?

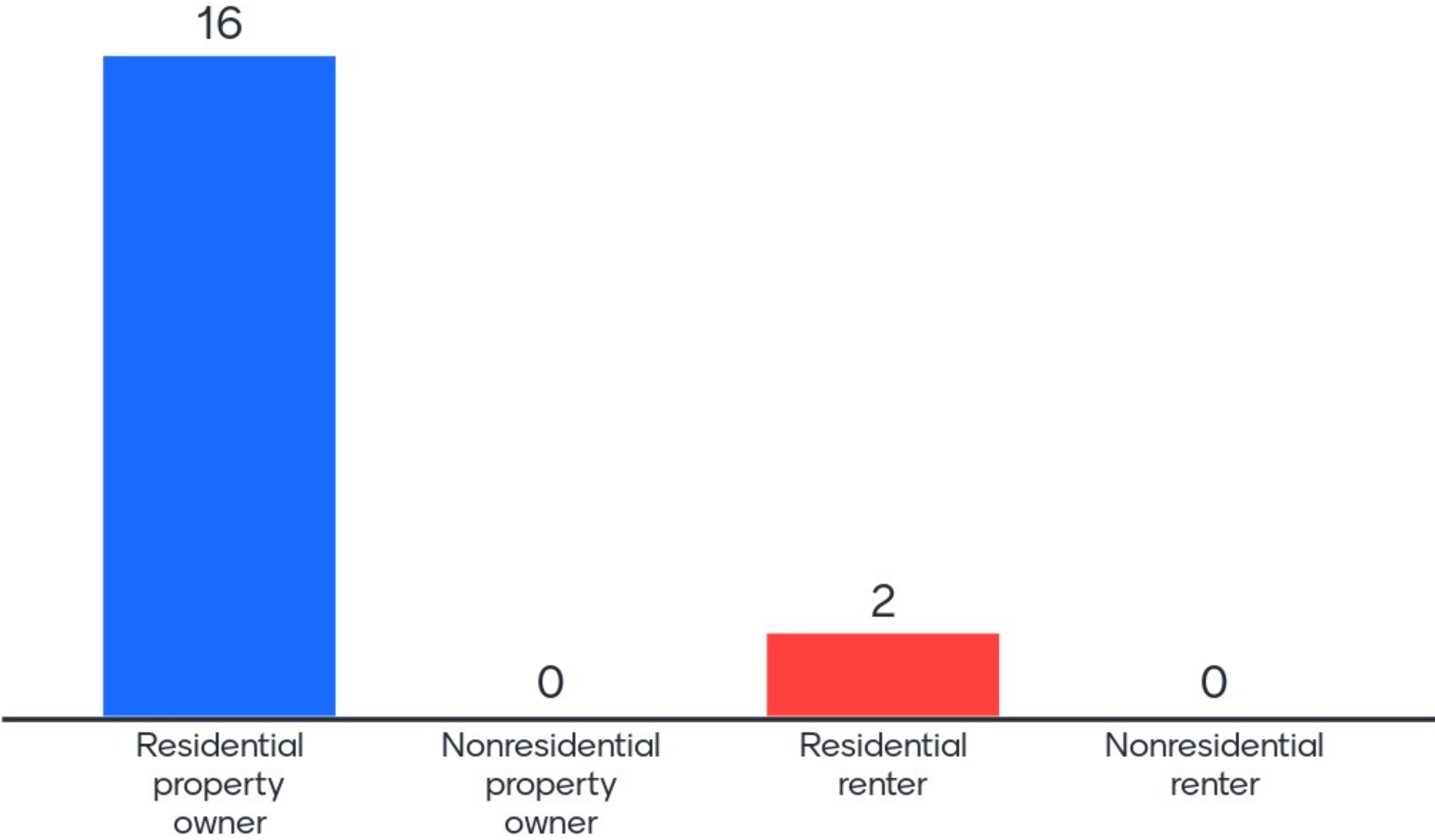
21 responses



# I am here for:



# Select all that apply



# COUNTIES

What are your suggested solutions?

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

**Maintaining funding for emergency services and schools.**

**Unincorp EPC residents feel shorted on services like sheriffs and road work.**

EPC prides itself on low taxes, and complains @ low services & don't see the connection

Exempt emergency services and schools. Maintain current structure.

Funding the small low income communities that have low property values,

**Challenging for assessor's to implement & tax payers to understand**

Our El Paso County officials only spend money on roads that are OUTSIDE city limits. Bust most residential taxes are collected in the county from CITY residents.

**Allow up and down adjustments to mill levies without voter approval.**

**It is taxation without benefit**

# CITIES

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

What are your suggested solutions?

Our local taxing authorities listen more to voters (age 60+) than military families because military families don't vote.

Many people in Northern El Paso County are military officers and don't vote in Colorado & they have little concern about the residential taxes in Colorado relative to other states

**where they paid property taxes.**

UNIC EPC residents are affected by nearby city taxes w/o being able to vote.



What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

# SCHOOLS

What are your suggested solutions?

**Funding for schools needs to be left alone.**

Some districts don't pass MLOs due to low/no tax ideology our schools are in jeopardy

Trying to have a different tax basis or funding sources is too complicated and not necessary

Homestead Act portability will allow people to move to homes to age in place and allow families who need higher quality K-12 to move into D20.

1/3 of homes in our D20 school district have very high mills because they have a metro district (like wolf ranch, flying horse) so they complain about property taxes but

**it's not the school district mills.**

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

# SPECIAL DISTRICTS

What are your suggested solutions?

**Maintain funding for emergency services and schools.**

Continue to be told to do more w/ less. No longer feasible. We have to be honest w/ people.

Too many categories for special interests to lobby and seemingly get a break.

Gallagher Ratios was a wild guess w/o science behind it. Glad its gone; not gone we got a science based replacement

Reducing property taxes impacts the quality of personnel we can retain in the fire district. IF we can't keep pace with salaries/benefits/training, they will go somewhere else.

**KISS Keep it simple if it can't be explained easily tax payer will be dissatisfied.**

Allow special districts to pursue other avenues of funding, such as sales tax. Does not fix every special district but helps some. Statewide sales tax to fund special districts.

Limit the special assessment categories to three; ag residential/commercial

Fix ratio of residential to commercial. Without giving a wind fall to commercial properties.

Trying to offset RAR reductions by going through an election process is expensive and may not result in the solution needed. Double whammy.

Reducing prop taxes ultimately results in decreasing services for fire districts. Less personnel, longer response times, outdated equipment, less training.

**Maintain stability from property tax revenue.**

Keep it workable for debt instruments. Especially for special districts.

**Rely on local elected officials to manage local government mill levies.**

Solutions. Leave it alone and let the districts lower their mill levies (if appropriate). Residents can voice their concerns/opinions at the district level.

growth is continuing exponentially yet we are being asked to do more with less.

**Legislatures/ State government imposing 'one size fits all' solution.**

Challenges- spec. districts. Decreasing RAR prop taxes impacts fire dept. (special dist) revenues making it extremely difficult to keep up with the increasing cost of doing business

Special districts are the ones that really build the property taxes. We need to review the districts ability to set their budget aside from property value.

**KEEP IT LOCAL.**

Decrease in funding whole seeing increase in expenses (cost of living & cost of doing business). Fire trucks are not getting cheaper.

Recruitment & retention is harder w/ less money. Small districts lose employees to big cities, as cities do not rely on property tax.

**(personnel, equipment, training, etc)**

Exempt emergency services and schools from further changes or separate them.



# Residential

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

What are your suggested solutions?

State not listening to the voters. We spoke multiple years w/ ballot issue defeat. We are already in bottom tier of all 50 states w/ property tax and taxes overall.

**We should be taxing short term rentals as commercial.**

This will help the influx of folks from out of area buying property for just investment

**Maintain stability in annual property tax bill**

Residential values going up by 40% not correlate w overall inflation rate or income. This value increase is only realized when house is sold/ loan taken.

**Lack of portable senior tax exception ties up housing stock.**

Making things understandable for the general public with regard to property valuations.

Our 70-80 year old residents stuck in their 3000 sq ft homes are voters, they won't approve school mill levy overrides because they are on fixed incomes

**and don't have kids in the award winning school district.**

**Understanding the algorithm used to do valuations on properties.**

**HB 24-1166 homestead exemption.**

**Make senior homestead exemption portable.**

Close assessment rates over 10 year period between Res and Commercial.

**Make homestead exemption portable**

**Educational sessions for the public.**

Ease tax burden through other means such as lower income tax. Property tax is not the only way.

**Wait on implementing solutions until we know what the problem is!**

Limit prop tax increases to inflation overall not inflation of property value.

Hold local elected officials responsible for setting local mill levies.

Build more townhome & condos to level market. Do this by passing construction defect litigation reform.

**HB 23B-1006 Tax codes legislative task force (killed in committee)**

Make senior exemption based on 10 year ownership period not ownership of single home. On age on medical exemption. COCA

We need homestead act portability so the 70 & 80 year olds on my block can leave their home (which has appreciated 7x) for a right-sized age in place residence.

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

# Non-Residential

What are your suggested solutions?

So District 20 is paid for by residential taxes mainly (many other large buildings are church-related)

In Academy District 20 the commercial properties along InterQuest & Northgate are in 'blighted' zones will not be contributing commercial taxes for 15+ years to our

**school district.**

Understanding the algorithm used to do valuations on properties.

Consistency in increases or valuations.

Solutions. Fixed income elderly-increase exemptions as we see increases in valuation- or limit their assessed value based on how long they have lived in their home.

What's your unique challenge? What are your top priorities you'd like the Commission to be considering as they look at recommendations?

# Misc.

What are your suggested solutions?

**Metro districts need more oversight too easy to be captured must have rule**

People who buy in Norther El Paso County are buying \$600,000-900,000 homes. They are professionals many who moved in as military or defense contracting

**or tech jobs. They owned homes in higher property tax states.**

Cost of rising property taxes on rentals being transferred to the renter, who may be struggling to afford current rent.

How to counter misinformation about proposed changes to tax policy.

How to help citizens make the connection between taxes and the services they fund.

**Supplement a progressive income tax**

**Listen to the voters!**