



Help Re-open Our Community Center

Friends of the Gilpin County Community Center
P.O. Box 201
Rollinsville, CO 80474

Dear Gilpin Neighbor,

We are the Friends of Gilpin County Community Center (FGCCC), a group that formed this past summer to explore ways with the county of reopening the Community Center campus. Our long-term goals focus on improving our Community Center and its offerings. This includes creative programming, grants, and other fund-raising efforts. We also offer citizen feedback to the county regarding the Center.

We welcome any County resident who wishes to work on these goals with us. You can get more information about us, our working committees, and the Community Center, at: <http://gilpincommunitycenter.org/> -- where we also gratefully accept donations to help fund our activities.

The Community Center in a Time of COVID-19

We are leading an educational effort about the Center's future. The Community Center facilities were first closed this year by the state Health Department due to restrictions required to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Colorado. The Community Center campus is closed due to severely restricted financial resources from the County, mainly due to unprecedented low revenues from gaming. Some parts of the Community Center campus do remain available as an emergency facility for both people and animals, in the event of a catastrophic need. In addition, there are small grants in place to fund very specific outdoor programs, as well as 4H and CSU extension activities. The ballparks are open to the public, as is the public trail.

However, all other activities, exercise and wellness classes, facilities, events such as the Winter Arts Festival (which draws dozens of small businesses and brings visitors for holiday-related shopping), the County Fair (including the High Country Auxiliary pancake breakfast fundraiser), the senior lunches, dances, pottery rooms, meetings, and other functions are shut down until the Center reopens. The popular High Country Auxiliary Chili Dinner and Silent Auction fundraiser has been moved to the Teller House for 2021.



Near-future Plans for the Community Center Campus

As part of its planning for the next few years, the County is working on two sets of plans regarding the Community Center campus. One set is focused on reopening the center in early 2021, if voters approve Ballot Measure 1B to impose a property tax mill levy for three years. The other is to keep most of the Center's facilities closed in the event that Issue 1B does not get voter approval.

A Ballot Issue to Support Parks and Recreation

With an eye toward trying to reopen the Community Center, the Gilpin County Commissioners placed ballot issue 1B on the ballot for this year's election. It asks county residents to vote for a mill levy of 2.57 mills to raise property taxes for the next three years. They estimate that the measure will bring in \$1,180,300.00 per year. If passed by the voters, all funds generated by the mill levy are required to be spent on the Community Center campus, to reopen it for Gilpin neighbors to use. The measure will sunset at the end of 2023. The three-year period allows the Center to reopen, and gives the County, as well as our group, time to find other sources of revenue as the economy recovers.

Pros and Cons of Issue 1B



PRO: The Community Center is a multi-purpose campus that hosts a variety of activities and events. The 2.57 mill levy is a small additional tax each year that will be used to reopen and run the Community Center while the economy stabilizes. In addition, the three-year period gives more time to gauge how expected future revenues from such sources as casino gambling will improve.

A "YES" vote on this issue would institute the mill levy to fund the Parks and Recreation Department. It will allow the County to reopen the entire community center campus and begin restoring its uses, activities and events.

Our Web site <http://gilpincommunitycenter.org/faq/> has an FAQ with a link to the County's calculator to help you get an estimate of what this and other issues will add to your tax bill.

It may sound terrible to be raising taxes in a pandemic year. Its not an easy "ask". However, this mill levy (and the others on the ballot) will help the county recover something that Gilpinites treasure. It can help us improve our own quality of life while we ride out the pandemic and its economic aftermath.



Gilpinites have repeatedly shown that they care for each other during natural disasters such as blizzards, fire, and floods. It's no different as we work our way through this latest challenge.

A "Yes" vote will help all of us — the friends and family who use this facility, those who work there, and the organizations and small businesses that have come to rely on its availability for events, classes, and activities they participate in or sponsor throughout the year.

CON: A "NO" vote means no raise in property taxes to support reopening of the Community Center. Opponents feel the county should wait until gambling revenues come back before reopening the center campus. The estimated wait time could be as long as eight years (based on projections made by the County in consultation with the gaming businesses). Other opponents do not wish to see any raise in taxes for any purpose. Some feel that since they personally do not use the center, they shouldn't be asked to help pay for it.



Please Vote YES

We respectfully recommend a "YES" vote on this measure to restore a much-needed county facility. Our neighbors count on the Community Center for many different uses. Friends of Gilpin County Community Center pledges to work with the county to enable the re-opening.

We also promise to follow through on future plans for keeping it open and available to all in the county as the economy stabilizes.

With your help and your vote, the heart of Gilpin County will once more be available to all of us for our recreational, health, wellness, and social activity needs.

Need More Information?

We will have a representative at a special Rotary Town Hall meeting to be held on October 9th, 2020, at 12 noon. We are joining speakers who will discuss upcoming mill levy questions for Sheriff's Office funding, library funding, and Gilpin School funding. The link to that meeting is: <https://zoom.us/j/97413039597?pwd=dkR3MjhBOHp4SHB0cFVNcXRwaUxnUT09> The attendance is limited to 100 viewers, and we will put the recorded version on our Web site.

The text for ballot Issue 1B can be seen at: <http://gilpincommunitycenter.org/faq/>, where we have links to the county's page with a calculator to help figure out an estimate of what this measure will cost on your tax bill.

You can also see samples of the actual ballots for each area of the county on the Gilpin County Elections page: http://www.gilpincounty.org/departments_offices/clerk_and_recorder_voting_and_elections/elections

There is also a resolution clarifying the ballot language that every voter should read. It can be found at: <http://www.gilpincounty.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=9285259&pageId=11073072> -- scroll down to the bottom of the page and select Resolution 20-19. It will provide a downloadable PDF for you to read.

Finally, please share this information with your friends and neighbors. If you're interested in helping with our work, donating funds, or have some ideas about future programs, please contact us at: info@gilpincommunitycenter.org and we'll be happy to chat with you.