#1 of 6: Ratio of Highest to Lowest County Permit Rate per 1,000 Residents (2025

Grand County leads High Country in new home approvals

6.56x higher permit rate than Pitkin County, 2025

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THE DATA

6.56x

Ratio of Highest to Lowest County Permit Rate per 1,000 Residents (2025)

The disparity in new home construction approval rates across the Colorado High Country is stark, with Grand County far ahead of Pitkin County.

This 6.56x gap reveals a deep divide in development momentum between mountain communities. Grand County's high rate reflects strong local demand, public land planning alignment, and infrastructure readiness. Meanwhile, Pitkin County's lower rate suggests constrained zoning, environmental review delays, and a deliberate pace of growth focused on sustainability.

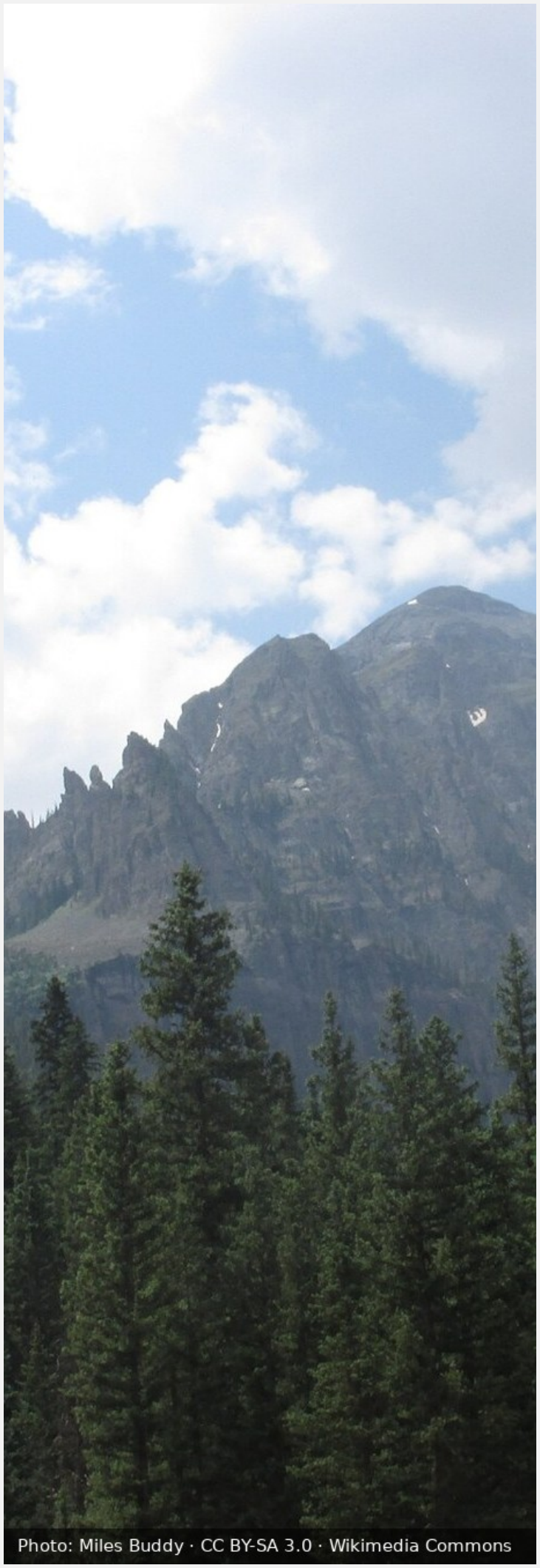


Photo: Miles Buddy · CC BY-SA 3.0 · Wikimedia Commons

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Building Permits Survey, county annual totals, 2025; population from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2024 · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-11-10-high-country-permits-county-spread



01

Growth is not uniform — it’s strategic

The High Country is not experiencing a monolithic boom. Grand County’s aggressive construction pace reflects a deliberate strategy to expand housing supply in response to seasonal tourism demand and workforce housing needs. This is not unplanned sprawl — it’s policy-driven development, backed by county-level planning and public investment. Pitkin County, in contrast, is choosing to slow growth, prioritizing environmental stewardship and long-term livability over rapid expansion.

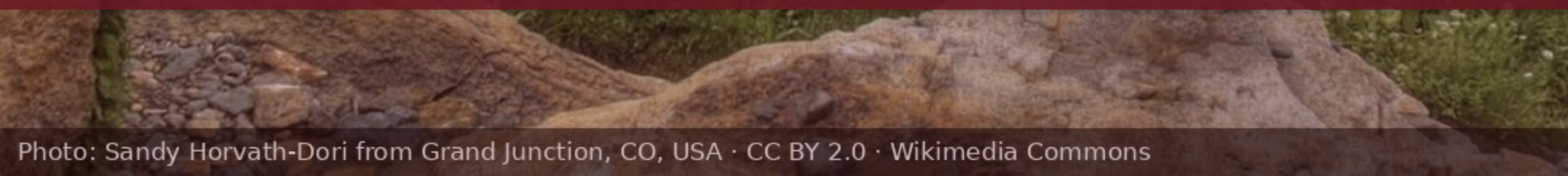


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02

Affordability is a byproduct of policy

The permit gap reveals a fundamental tension: development speed and affordability are not automatically linked. Grand County's high permit rate may increase supply, but it also risks inflating land values and exacerbating cost-of-living pressures. Pitkin County's slower pace, while limiting new housing, may preserve affordability for locals. This suggests that future affordability in the High Country will depend less on market forces and more on the political will to prioritize inclusive growth.

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