



January 2026

First Liberty Capital Corporation, the holding company of The First National Bank of Hugo, and High Plains Banking Group, Inc., the holding company of High Plains Bank, jointly announced the signing of a definitive agreement whereby High Plains Banking Group, Inc. will acquire 100% of the shares of The First National Bank of Hugo. High Plains Bank and The First National Bank of Hugo will merge into one bank operating as High Plains Bank.

"We are excited to be joining forces with High Plains Bank," said Randy Younger, President and CEO of The First National Bank of Hugo. "We know the team at High Plains well. We know they are committed to serving rural communities and have a track record of creating jobs and investing in Eastern Colorado. We are confident our customers will be well served by High Plains."

"High Plains Bank has made a generational commitment to remain independent," said John Creighton, CEO of High Plains Bank. "We are grateful for the opportunity to merge The First National Bank of Hugo-Limon into our operations. We will be a stronger organization better prepared to provide Lincoln, Kit Carson and neighboring counties with the highest level of banking services."

The merger of High Plains Bank and The First National Bank of Hugo bucks the trend of bank consolidation. Many community banks have been swallowed up by corporate banks. What follows is all too familiar: jobs in the rural branches are cut; lending to farmers and ranchers, as well as small businesses, is severely curtailed and decisions are no longer made locally. High Plains Bank's approach is the opposite.

Creighton, who is a third-generation family leader of High Plains Bank said, "My father would be most proud that we have increased the payrolls in our original branches in Eastern Colorado as we've grown in other parts of the state." To help ensure accountability to rural communities, the

bank has built an ownership group that includes many people from Lincoln and Kit Carson Counties. "They help make sure we remain focused on agriculture and small business," Creighton said.

The First National Bank of Hugo directors and staff will stay involved too. Randy Younger and Ryan Smithburg will join the High Plains Bank board of directors, after the merger is complete. In addition, several FNB Hugo shareholders plan to invest in High Plains Banking Group, Inc. Shareholders from both organizations are committed to the bank's long-term success. High Plains Bank has made a commitment to retain all FNB Hugo staff who want to continue their banking careers. Randy Younger will retire from his role as bank President and CEO.

"We are committed to making the transition from FNB Hugo to High Plains Bank a smooth process for FNB Hugo customers," Creighton said. "We will provide regular updates on the process to transition accounts from FNB Hugo to High Plains Bank."

In preparation for the merger, High Plains Bank wants to learn people's questions. "Ask High Plains Bank" cards are available at all FNB Hugo branches. You also may join the "Merger Updates" e-mail list by contacting Kim Taylor at kim.taylor@highplainsbank.com. John Creighton may be reached at johncreighton@highplainsbank.com or on his direct line at 720.680.3020.

The merger will not be immediate. The Federal Reserve and Colorado Division of Banking must formally approve the acquisition and merger and both banks must go through other regulatory procedures that could take 90 to 120 days. The two banks hope to have all necessary approvals in place to close in the first quarter or early second quarter of 2026.

The First National Bank of Hugo will host open houses, dates to be announced soon, so customers may meet High Plains Bank staff. "We want our customers to have the opportunity to ask questions and learn more about High Plains Bank," Younger said. "We want our customers to have the same level of confidence that we have in High Plains Bank."

For more information, please contact Kim Taylor via email: kim.taylor@highplainsbank.com or via phone: 303.776.2265.