



**ANNUAL
COMPREHENSIVE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
(CEDS)
AND
PROGRESS REPORT**

GRANTEE: Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) – Economic Development District

PROJECT NUMBER: 05-83-05316-02

PERIOD COVERED: January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015

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Adjustments to Strategy

NWCCOG was awarded an EDA planning grant on April 1, 2010 to develop the region's first-ever CEDS. Work commenced this date, and over the next 18 months the CEDS was developed. The CEDS was officially approved by the EDA on November 28, 2011, with implementation beginning January 1, 2012. The NWCCOG EDD was officially awarded planning partnership funds beginning January 1, 2013, thus 2013 was the first year of operation of the district. The NWCCOG EDD has officially completed its third year of operations as of December 31, 2015, and the CEDS is in its fourth year of implementation, with a complete update to the CEDS due to the EDA on December 31, 2016.

Adjustments to strategy in 2015:

The NWCCOG EDD CEDS identified 9 goals (see Attachment A - Updated Implementation Plan). The following is a summary of the adjustments to strategy, based on changes in priorities for the region, for each goal:

Goal #1: Support & Strengthen Existing Businesses

Adjustments: This continues to be a main focus of the NWCCOG EDD and top priority. NWCCOG EDD continued to serve as the host organization for the Northwest Colorado Small Business Development Center (NWCOSBDC) in 2015. This partnership with the NWCOSBDC was not initially identified in the CEDS regional action plan, because the NWCOSBDC was not operational when the CEDS was developed. Collaboration and partnership with the NWCOSBDC has been a key element added to the regional action plan since the initial CEDS was developed.

With respect to "*Help Create More Business-Friendly Communities*" - Language was added to state that it is the role of the NWCCOG EDD to "*support efforts*" to streamline regulations, as this is the only authority the EDD would effectively have in this arena. Each local government has the power to create their own regulations.

Goal #2: Attract new businesses/industries to create vibrant, resilient economies

Adjustments: One focus that emerged in 2014, and continued throughout 2015, was on encouraging businesses in our region to adopt worksite wellness programs as a way to improve workforce productivity, reduce healthcare costs, and encourage more demand for services and products offered by businesses in the health and wellness industry in the region. A regional grant was awarded by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment in early 2015 for a regional comprehensive worksite wellness effort (called the WorkWell Collaborative) to be regionally coordinated by NWCCOG EDD. This initiative was not identified in the original CEDS regional action plan, but is now a significant project of the EDD for the next 2.5 years.

Under "*Development of renewable energy industry / green energy economy*" – this section was modified to streamline the tasks/projects originally identified. Specifically, the NWCCOG EDD will focus efforts on supporting the development of programs to encourage energy efficiency in local buildings, as well as supporting the creation of programs that assist businesses with re-tooling to meet renewable energy requirements/benchmarks. The regional action plan was modified to reflect this.

Under "*Attract New Businesses/Industries to Create Vibrant, Resilient Economies*" – this section was greatly streamlined to remove mention of specific industries, recognizing that trends, environmental

factors, etc. change, and as such the region should be open to all industries that may present as a good fit to our region.

Goal #3: Focus on Projects that Bolster Tourism

Adjustments: The tasks/projects identified under the section: “*Assistance for Tourism-Related Businesses*” was greatly streamlined to reflect general statement, rather than identifying specific types of tourism businesses. This was deemed appropriate by the working group in that it better reflected the EDD’s sphere of influence over this area. Also, there was some redundancy in this section that was eliminated, specifically in the language that spoke to regulatory requirements (this was already addressed in Goal #1: Support and Strengthen Existing Businesses).

Goal #4: Wisely Develop Natural Resources while protecting the environment

Adjustments: Removed specific language related to development of specific programs, as this is not the role of the NWCCOG EDD, but the role of individual local governments. The role of the NWCCOG EDD is to support the development of these projects and programs, where appropriate.

The objective *Create Training and Education Programs for Green Energy Economy Jobs* was removed from the action plan, not because it was not deemed to be a potentially valuable economic development program, but that it was determined that it was outside of the scope of influence of the NWCCOG EDD. The NWCCOG EDD does stand ready to support efforts for the development of this program in any way that is appropriate.

Goal 5: Focus on supporting investment in core infrastructure and community resources improvements that will help expand local economies

Adjustments: This section was greatly streamlined to reflect the main areas that NWCCOG EDD can affect. Another adjustment that was made was to move *Goal #6: Create Sustainable Main Street/Downtown Projects* as an objective of Goal #5, as it was recognized that vibrant Main Streets/Downtown areas in fact are elements of core infrastructure/community resources that help to expand local economies. Removed from this section was *Enhance and Fund Education Systems*, as it was determined that this objective is outside the sphere of influence of the NWCCOG EDD., as was: *Support towns and counties in their effort to enhancement, upgrade, Maintain Water and Sewer Systems (this could be included in the section that states we would help communities obtain funding for infrastructure).*

Goal 6: Create Sustainable Main Street / Downtown Projects

Adjustments: This goal was eliminated as a stand-alone goal, and was added to Goal #5 as an objective.

Goal #6 (new number): Workforce Development: Create and/or expand workforce development / training / educational opportunities to focus on training and education programs across all economic sectors

Adjustments: Some language referencing development of specific training programs was removed as it was deemed to be outside the scope of the EDD (for example, language related to the development of a campus for a small private college, training facility/program for emergency disciplines and educational services for non-English speaking populations).

Goal #7: NWCCOG Economic Development District (EDD) to be point of contact for economic development activities: technical assistance, information, data, capacity building, etc.

Adjustments: Language was changed to reflect the plan in 2016 to develop a website, complementary to the CEDS, that will serve as a marketing tool for new businesses looking to locate in the region (i.e. it will not be a “relocation kit” as was previously stated).

Analysis of Economic Development Problems/Opportunities

The following is a discussion on the current state of economic development problems and opportunities identified in NWCCOG EDD's CEDS:

Problems:

1 - Dependence on One Industry: Tourism – Non-Diversified Economy. Over the last 3 years, the national economy has improved, which has increased the amount of discretionary income for leisure travel. This has brought a resurgence to the tourism industry, evidenced by increased visitor numbers, lodging occupancy, and sales tax revenue. The communities in the region have also realized more year-round activity in that more summer activities are now allowed on national forest land, thereby increasing visitor numbers in the summer as well. There still is a need to focus on industries other than tourism, however, to further diversify the economy.

2- Pine Beetle Epidemic – the spread of pine beetle has ended, however the region is still left with several hundreds of acres of dead trees, which continues to present a threat of wildfire. It also affects tourism as the dead trees affect the scenic landscape which contributes to the appeal of the area. A new epidemic may be on the horizon with the spread of spruce beetle being seen in some parts of the region.

3 - Lack of Affordable Housing – this issue has reached crisis level in this region, as the region comes out of the recession and housing prices, which are already much higher than the national average, continue to rise, and the rise in the region's wages do not keep pace. The largest percentage of jobs in this region is in the service industry, and therefore low-paying. A significant amount of workers in this region pay well over 30% of their income for housing. This problem is compounded by the fact that a great deal of the rental housing stock, which was previously available for seasonal workers, are not being rented on on-line sites short-term to vacationers, as the profits to the owners are much higher in this scenario.

4 - I-70 Congestion and Lack of Funding for Transportation – Congestion on I-70 as well as other highways in the region (e.g. Highway 82 from Glenwood Springs to Aspen) is increasing, and the impacts on the economy can be felt by all the region's communities. The Colorado Department of Transportation estimates that by 2025, up to 27 percent of winter-season motorists who would normally travel I-70 in the Mountain Corridor will choose not to, depending on the day, location and direction of travel, according to the report. The issue is becoming larger than a statewide traffic problem. It's now a Colorado ski industry problem. Lost personal time from sitting in traffic and the image problem it creates is hurting the ski industry by making Northwest Colorado ski resorts less appealing to other states. The region's quality of life is a major enhancement for business recruitment and retention, however I-70 congestion may make economic development efforts more difficult. Short-term fixes have been put into place (i.e. the Twin Tunnels Project in Clear Creek County and the new toll lane eastbound through Idaho Springs area), however a comprehensive long-term solution is needed, for which there is no funding. Funding for transportation projects statewide continues to be inadequate to meet the needs.

5- Decline in Property Values – Property values have been increasing over the last 3 years, thereby increasing property tax revenues received by the region's towns and counties for services and capital projects. This is a result of the improving national economy, and increased demand for homes in this region, therefore increased value of homes.

6 - Lack of Access to Capital for Businesses – This is still an issues, however it has been getting increasingly better with the improved national economy, and new and different avenues for access to capital have opened up in the region. NWCCOG’s Northwest Loan Fund became fully operational in 2014. In 2014, the NLF closed 7 loans for total amount of capital infusion of \$659,500 to the region’s businesses. In 2015, the NLF closed 9 loans for a total of \$487,400. There have been new initiatives in the region in 2015 to match entrepreneurs with funding including 2 Summit Startup Weekends (August and November) and the Summit Angle Summit (December 2015).

7 - Lack of Funding for Education – This is still an issue, however it has been identified by the working group that it is more of a state-level issue, while the NWCCOG EDD can advocate for measures that will increase funding for education, it cannot affect much of this.

8 - Prevalence of Second Homes: Potential threat to the region’s vitality, health, and sustainability – There are still a large number of second homes in this region, however this may be more of an opportunity than a problem in that “retirees” is a potential industry focus for this region.

9 - Climate Change – this most likely will be an issue, however it is more global in nature, and the NWCCOG EDD is less able to affect; we will continue to monitor, and support the slowing of climate change through support of recycling / sustainability programs, etc. The NWCCOG EDD will monitor literature/studies/reports, etc. that relate to how climate change affects the length of the snow season, thus affects the ability of our region to be a winter tourism attraction.

Opportunities:

1- Retirees / Baby Boomers – This has been identified as a significant opportunity, as the NWCCOG EDD region continues to be attractive to retirees and baby boomers due to the region’s active, livable communities offering an abundance of natural and man-made amenities that are attractive to this demographic, which is growing at a rapid rate in our region.

2- Entrepreneurism – This is still a significant opportunity for the NWCCOG EDD, and the focus on projects and programs that support entrepreneurship is an increasing focus. Specifically, the EDD will focus on projects that support the creation of “entrepreneurial infrastructure” including broadband, transportation, educational systems, co-working spaces, incubators, and a regulatory and tax environment that encourages the kind of creativity and risk taking that entrepreneurship requires.

3- Renewable Energy – This is still an opportunity in this region. The NWCCOG EDD will continue to identify opportunities to encourage the development of this industry in the region.

4- Tourism- Tourism will continue to be a strong base in NWCCOG EDD’s region, and the driving industry. The abundant amenities and beautiful natural setting will continue to make the region a desirable place to visit and vacation, as long as they are protected. The region has an opportunity to continue to protect and enhance those amenities and to bolster tourism by adding more. Also, there is an opportunity to create more year-round tourism that is not so dependent on winter/ski season. This may include heritage tourism agri-tourism, and arts tourism through the region’s growing creative industries sector.

5- Main Street / Downtown projects – many of our region’s communities have taken advantage of the resources available to complete main street/downtown redevelopment/revitalization/beautification

projects through partner organizations such as Downtown Colorado, Inc., the Department of Local Affairs' Downtown Program, Smart Growth America, and the Sonoran Institute's Community Builders Project. Many of these projects focus on projects and programs that help the region's communities create walkable downtowns with transportation options that are vibrant, and will attract millennials who bring ideas and entrepreneurial opportunities to the region. NWCCOG will continue to support these partners in providing assistance in downtowns, commercial districts and town centers of our region's communities.

6- Education – Supporting improvements to education continues to be an opportunity for the NWCCOG EDD. The EDD will continue to partner with Colorado Mountain College and K-12 school districts throughout the region to support STEM programs and other programs that focus on educating our workforce of the future. The NWCCOG EDD will continue to support these efforts to expand educational offerings in this region.

7- Healthcare - the NWCCOG EDD has placed increased emphasis on healthcare as an opportunity through the creation of the Health and Wellness Industry Sector Partnership. This partnership was created late in 2013, but took on increased momentum in 2015. The focus has shifted from not just looking at the delivery of healthcare, but the Health and Wellness industry as a whole, which encompasses not just hospitals and primary care providers, but alternative providers, wellness services, preventative services, mental health services, etc. Trends in the NWCCOG EDD that continue to make health and wellness an economic opportunity include substantial growth in the number of older adults in the region, longer life expectancy, the emphasis on the economic benefits of worksite wellness programs; more of our population has access to health insurance and thus healthcare thru ACA; emphasis on prevention/preventative services to reduce healthcare costs. The reduction of healthcare costs is particularly important as our regions' counties have some of the highest insurance premiums in the country.

Changes in the Region's Economic Condition

The region's economic condition has improved since the CEDS was approved 4 years ago. Specifically, the region has seen an increase in employment. Average employment in the region for the most recent quarter reported (Q2 2015) was 70,417, which is an 11.3% increase over Q2 2012. This is an increase of 7,162 jobs over the last 3 years. Unemployment in all 5 counties in NWCCOG EDD's region for the most recent month reported (October 2015) was lower than the reported rate a year ago. The regional average unemployment rate (3.2%) is lower than that of the State of Colorado (3.8%) and the U.S. (5.0%). The current regional unemployment (3.2%) is considerably lower than the unemployment rate reported 3 years ago (6.5% in October 2012). The labor force for the region has increased by 0.8% over the last 3 years, increasing from 67,459 in October 2012 to 68,024 in October 2015. Average annual wages for the region have increased overall in the last 3 years, increasing by 9.3% when averaging all industries. Wages have increased for most of the key industries in the region with the exception of Accommodations and Food Services (-2.3%) and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (-15.5%), the two industries which account for most of the jobs in the region. Wage growth in key industries is as follows: construction industry +3.9%; financial services +9.0%; healthcare industry +18.8%. The number of establishments in the region increased by 374, from Q2 2012 to Q2 2015, which is a 4.7% increase. (Source of data: Colorado Department of Labor and Employment).

**NWCCOG – Economic Development District
Governing Body
EDD Board of Directors 2015**

1. Government Representatives (*Dues Paying Region 12 Jurisdictions*) **(11)**

Name	Jurisdiction	Position
Kathy Chandler-Henry	Eagle County	County Commissioner
DiAnn Butler	Grand County	Economic Development Director <i>appointed by County Commissioner</i>
Betsey Blecha	Jackson County	County Commissioner
Patti Clapper	Pitkin County	County Commissioner
Karn Stiegelmeier	Summit County	County Commissioner
Lana Gallegos	Town of Gypsum	Planning Director <i>appointed by Mayor</i>
Tom Clark	Town of Kremmling	Mayor
Suze Kanack	Town of Walden	Town Clerk
Kelli McDonald	Town of Vail	Economic Development Director <i>appointed by Mayor</i>
Susan Philp	Town of Basalt	Planning Director <i>appointed by Eagle County Commissioner</i>
Ben Raitano	Town of Dillon	Councilmember

2. Non-Government Representatives (9)

A. Private Sector Representatives (2)

Name	Company	Position
Doris Kirchner	Vail Valley Medical Center	President & CEO
Vacant	Vacant	Vacant

B. Stakeholder Organization Representatives (7)

Name	Organization	Position
Chris Romer	Vail Valley Partnership <i>This is the chamber of commerce for Town of Vail</i>	Executive Director
Catherine Ross	Winter Park/Fraser Valley Chamber of Commerce	Executive Director
Vacant	Jackson County Stakeholder Org.	Vacant
Robin Waters	Basalt Chamber of Commerce	President & CEO
Corry Mihm	Summit Independent Business Alliance	Executive Director
Matt Gianneschi	Colorado Mountain College	Chief Operating Officer
Jack Taylor	Colorado Workforce Center	Business Services Director

Calculations:

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. Government Representatives (51 - 65%)	<u>11</u>	<u>55%</u>
2. Non-Government Representatives (35 - 49%)	<u>9</u>	<u>45%</u>
A. Private Sector Representatives (at least 1)	<u>2</u>	
B. Stakeholder Organization Representatives (at least 1)	<u>7</u>	
 Total Board Membership	 <u>20</u>	 <u>100%</u>

NWCCOG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) CEDS Advisory Committee Roster

The NWCCOG EDD Working group will serve as the CEDS Advisory Committee, as this group represents the main economic interests in the region.

Aaron	Landau	Evo 3 CoWorkspace	Founder/Owner
Amy	Kemp	Elevate CoSpace	Co-owner
Anita	Cameron	Northwest Loan Fund	Director
Betsey	Blecha	Jackson County	Commissioner
Ben	Raitano	Town of Dillon	Councilmember
Corry	Mihm	Summit Independent Business Alliance	Executive Director
DiAnn	Butler	Grand County	Economic Development Coordinator
Greg	Winkler	Department of Local Affairs	Regional Manager
Jack	Taylor	Colorado Workforce Center - Frisco	Business Services Manager
Jeremy	Rietmann	Vail Valley Partnership	Business Development Director
Chris	Romer	Vail Valley Partnership	President & CEO
Kersten	Anderson	Town of Dillon	Economic Development Manager
Kelli	McDonald	Town of Vail	Economic Development Manager
Lana	Gallegos	Town of Gypsum	Planning Director
Lindsey	Stapay	Northwest Colorado SBDC	Director
Mark	Nunn	Summit County Chamber of Commerce	President of the Board
Mark	Campbell	Town of Kremmling	Town Manager
Meridith	Marshall	OEDIT	Director of Regional Development
Nate	Walowitz	NWCCOG	Broadband Coordinator
Patti	Clapper	Pitkin County	Commissioner
Rachel	Lunney	NWCCOG	EDD Director
Shelly	McMannus	Kremmling Chamber of Commerce	Executive Director
Steve	Skadron	City of Aspen	Mayor
Tom	Clark	Town of Kremmling	Mayor
Jeremy	Kennell	Winter Park Fraser Valley Chamber	Program Manager
Shannon	Foley	High Country Healthcare	Marketing Manager
Maureen	Stepp	Colorado Mountain College	Dean, Roaring Fork Campus
Amanda	Wagner	The Aspen Clinic	Executive Director
Dave	Askland	Colorado Mountain College	Dean - Summit Campus
James	Lee	Fathom VR	Owner

NWCCOG – Economic Development District Staff

Rachel Lunney, EDD Director – Rachel Lunney joined NWCCOG in 1999 and served as member services coordinator for three years. She re-joined NWCCOG in 2008 as economic development and communications manager. Her responsibilities included managing the economic development district and all communications functions for the organization including web site management, electronic communications and social media, creating various publications, writing press releases, and assisting member jurisdictions with their data needs. Rachel served as project manager for the development of NWCCOG’s first ever Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). She was named EDD director in January 2014 and is responsible for the overall management of all EDD programs and activities. Rachel has a bachelor's degree in economics and an M.B.A. from the State University of New York at Buffalo (SUNY Buffalo).

Liz Mullen, NWCCOG Executive Director - Liz Mullen was hired as Executive Director of NWCCOG on March 22, 2012. Liz originally joined NWCCOG in 2002 as the Director of Member Services. Over the past 12 years, she has also served as the Coordinator and Grant Administrator for several programs: the Rural Resort Region (RRR), I-70 Coalition, NWCCOG Foundation, Colorado Bark Beetle Cooperative (CBBC), and the Northwest All Hazards Emergency Management Region (NWAHEMR), as well as Assistant Executive Director. In all of her roles at NWCCOG, Liz has successfully managed multiple projects and programs, from convening the initial stakeholders groups to identifying funding sources to either project completion or launching a newly self-sufficient program. Liz has also worked with several of NWCCOG’s member jurisdictions over the years facilitating planning retreats and other meetings that promote multi-jurisdictional cooperation. Liz earned both her B.A. degree in Communications and her M.A.S. degree in Technology Management/Project Management at the University of Denver.

Northwest Colorado Council of Governments ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

SCOPE OF WORK 2015 Progress Report

Please note: Throughout this report, the following acronyms are used:

NWCCOG EDD – Northwest Colorado Council of Governments Economic Development District

NWCOSBDC – Northwest Colorado Small Business Development Center

OEDIT – Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade

1. Build a Business Friendly Environment

- A. Provide technical assistance and other resources to assist communities in the region to create and foster a business climate that is friendly to existing businesses, as well as entrepreneurs looking to start and grow new businesses. This includes:

1. Maintenance of NWCCOG EDD website which includes a clearinghouse of information on resources available throughout the region to assist communities with helping their small businesses including economic indicator data, access to capital, funding opportunities, links for “how to do business” in the region, and links to a wide variety of business resources available in the region. The website is also used as a marketing tool to highlight regional assets.

Accomplishments Achieved: NWCCOG EDD has taken many avenues to provide technical assistance and other resources to assist communities create a business friendly environment, and to assist entrepreneurs. These include maintenance of the website - nwcoloradobusiness.org – that provides a clearinghouse of resources for businesses including training opportunities, grant funding opportunities, access to capital throughout the region, economic data, links to government sites on “how to do business”, studies and reports, and links to free business consulting services. We also participate in business resource outreach events, and collaborate with the NWCOSBDC on providing business conferences. Further, we send out monthly resources bulletins with a wide variety of business resources. These bulletins, with active links, are archived on our website.

On February 25th, 2015 we hosted the Colorado Fiscal Forum Mountain Region Session. This program is offered by the Colorado Fiscal Institute, and offers businesses, local governments, and other stakeholders valuable information on the state budget, federal and state tax structure and how it affects our business community, and economic outlook for the coming year.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Number of hits to website: 5,994

Number of Resources Bulletins sent out: 13

Number of business conferences: 2

Number of outreach events: 5

Difficulties Encountered: None.

2. Maintain regional portal of Colorado InSite, the GIS-based database of available commercial properties (buildings and building sites). Coordinate trainings and workshops with the regional users of this system to keep abreast of system upgrades, changes, enhancements, etc. Coordinate with OEDIT to hold training events in 2015 for both (1) businesses so they know how to use the tool for demographic/economic data and (2) the real estate community so they know how to work with local economic developers to promote key commercial sites in the region. Continue to serve as liaison between OEDIT and regional users of the system.

Accomplishments Achieved: The NWCCOG EDD did not continue to provide a local portal on EDD website, but instead is promoting the local portals provided by Eagle and Grand Counties, as well as the statewide portal provided by OEDIT. (see difficulties encountered)

Quantifiable Deliverables: Provide links to local portals (Eagle County and Grand County) on our website: nwcoloradobusiness.org.

Difficulties Encountered: There are very few properties on the system from the region due to lack of staff capacity from member jurisdictions to maintain the system, as well a reluctance from the commercial real estate community to share their listings. The working group decided not to continue to pay to have the regional portal on the NWCCOG EDD website (nwcoloradobusiness.org), but to provide links to the county-specific portals (Eagle and Grand County have chosen to pay for county-specific portals) as well as the statewide system on the OEDIT website.

3. Distribution of monthly resources e-bulletins. These bulletins provide information on a broad range of economic development resources available throughout the region. The bulletins are sent directly to businesses as well as to a broad range of stakeholders, including the SBDC, chambers of commerce, business associations, town and county governments, and other economic development groups, and those groups are encouraged to forward it to their membership such that the reach is very large.

Accomplishments Achieved: NWCCOG EDD resources bulletins were sent electronically monthly. A total of 13 bulletins were sent in 2015, all of which are archived on the NWCCOG EDD website: <http://nwcoloradobusiness.org/resource-center/resources-bulletins-archives/>.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Not only does this bulletin reach the database of NWCCOG EDD businesses, but it is shared with businesses by our partner organizations as well:

Reach of EDD Resources bulletins:

NWCCOG EDD email list – 270 businesses; 250 economic development stakeholders

NWCOSBDC email list – 1,500

Vail Valley Partnership email list – 2,500

Grand County Economic Development email list – 850

Summit County Chamber of Commerce email list – 650

The chart below shows how many business contacts viewed the resources bulletin (note this is only from the NWCCOG EDD database; the reach is most likely much wider as we do not track open rates for our partner organizations listed above):

Date Sent	opens	Open Rate
12/10/2015	358	22%
10/26/2015	268	27%
9/8/2015	271	28%
7/30/2015	239	29%
7/7/2015	264	31%
6/8/2015	257	27%
5/14/2015	303	27%
4/27/2015	225	27%
3/31/2015	208	24%
3/2/2015	254	26%
2/12/2015	226	27%
1/27/2015	308	32%
1/8/2015	278	31%

Email marketing experts state that a 20% open rate is average, thus every resource bulletin sent out in 2015 had an above-average open rate.

Difficulties Encountered: None. NWCCOG EDD staff receives very positive feedback from our economic development stakeholders on the resources bulletins.

4. Work in collaboration with NW Small Business Development Center (NWCOSBDC) to promote, market, deliver free business consulting services to small businesses and entrepreneurs looking to start a business.

Accomplishments Achieved: Expanded free business consulting services throughout the region. Increased the number of business consultants available.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Total Clients: 166

Number of long-term clients: 40

Number of client sessions: 423

Average # hours spent per client session: 3.93

Number of business consultants: 7

Difficulties Encountered: One of the biggest challenges is how large the NWCCOG EDD region is, and the fact that business consultants are not compensated for their travel (it is considered in-kind). This makes it difficult to reach all the clients for whom there is a need.

B. Build the capacity of the region's communities to maintain existing assets, and develop new assets, which serve to make our communities attractive places for entrepreneurs to start new businesses, that serve to keep a productive, educated workforce. These assets include vibrant downtowns, transportation systems, recreational amenities, and preserve the natural environment, which is our greatest economic development asset. This includes:

1. Provide information on funding opportunities available to towns, counties, nonprofits through

monthly resources bulletins as well as other newsletters, website postings, and social media.

RESOURCES: Accomplishments Achieved: Information on resources to help improve downtowns, increase recreational amenities, and protect the natural environment were provided through funding opportunities and technical assistance available through the NWCCOG EDD resources bulletins, NWCCOG EDD website (nwcoloradobusiness.org), as well as via presentations from partner organizations at working group meetings.

Quantified Deliverables:

Number of resources bulletins sent out: 13

Number of hits to website (nwcoloradobusiness.org) – 5,994

Presentations made at working group meetings: 2

Difficulties Encountered: None.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES: Accomplishments Achieved: Maintained funding opportunities page on EDD website; included funding opportunities in monthly resources bulletins; hosted 2 workshops on grant/loan program through the USDA’s Rural Energy for America program (4/16/15 and 9/21/15) which provided member jurisdictions and stakeholders with information on funding opportunities for energy efficiency improvements in their businesses.

Quantified Deliverables:

Webpage hits: 5,994

Number of resources bulletins: 13

Number of grant workshop: 2 (each was attended by approximately 8 people)

Difficulties Encountered: None.

2. Feature different communities throughout the region in newsletters, on the website, and through social media which highlight the community’s assets and benefits to doing business in that community. Also feature local businesses in the region on an on-going basis.

Accomplishments Achieved: NWCCOG EDD features assets and success stories from both communities and businesses in the region through monthly resources bulletins as well as on the website (www.nwcoloradobusiness.org).

Quantifiable Deliverables: Through the resources bulletins and website, featured 9 success stories and 38 businesses.

Difficulties Encountered: None.

2. Retain, Grow and Recruit Businesses

A. Retain:

1. Increase/build the capacity of the NWCOSBDC by assisting with increasing access to and connecting businesses with consulting services offered by the NWCOSBDC. Continue to serve as host organization of NWSBDC in 2015.

Accomplishments Achieved: NWCCOG EDD, via the NWCCOG Foundation which is a 501c3 organization, continued to serve as the host of the NWCOSBDC in 2015. In this role, the EDD director served as liaison for all fiscal activities, assisted with recruiting new business consultants, promoted the services offered by the NWCOSBDC, attended outreach events, assisted with the coordination and promotion of business conferences, and collaborated on a number of projects.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Total Clients: 166
Number of long-term clients: 40
Number of client sessions: 423
Average # hours spent per client session: 3.93
Number of business consultants: 7
Number of training sessions: 25
Training Session Attendance: 267
Number of Business Conferences: 2
Number of attendees at each conference: over 100

Difficulties Encountered: The vast region of the NWCOSBDC (covers 13 counties; NWCCOG EDD's region only covered 5 of those counties) is always a challenge, as is funding the NWCOSBDC receives, which is inadequate to have the capacity to serve this large region.

2. Support and assist with two regional business conferences in 2015: (1) Health & Wellness Business Symposium (Spring 2015) and (2) Women's Business Conference (Fall 2015).

Accomplishments Achieved: Assisted the NWCOSBDC with the execution of 2 business conferences in 2015.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Health and Wellness Business Conference – held on May 7, 2015 at Colorado Mountain College Breckenridge Campus. Attendees: 80

Women's Small Business Conference – held on October 9, 2015 at Marriott Vail.
Attendees: 300

Difficulties Encountered: None.

3. Provide data and information to businesses to maximize economic growth opportunities and enhance local business and industry retention and expansion.

Accomplishments Achieved: Developed and distributed quarterly regional economic update which contains data on employment, labor force, job growth in key industries, wage growth, as well as trends in key industries in the region. EDD director provided direct assistance to specific member jurisdictions, businesses, and other stakeholder organizations seeking specific economic data.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Send out 4 quarterly regional economic updates:
March 2015 Update – sent on 3/6/15 - open rate: 28%

June 2015 Update – sent on 6/8/15. – Open rate: 27%
 September 2015 Update – sent on 9/11/15 – open rate: 26%
 December 2015 Update – sent on 12/28/15 – open rate: 23%

Direct assistance provided by NWCCOG EDD Director – while not all-inclusive, some highlights include:

Date	Business	Area
1/21/15	Larry Sullivan who wants to develop a business accelerator (Outdoor Tech Accelerator) in Avon. Provided him with funding opportunities.	Eagle County
2/2/15	Amy Kemp, Elevate CoSpace – provided economic data related to job growth in key industries in the region	Summit County
2/12/15	Shipping container business – looking for info on enterprise zones; gave 3 websites: NLF, EDD, SBDC	Eagle and Pitkin County
2/17/15	Landon – assisted with hotel occupancy data for Summit County	Summit County
Feb 2015	Firebird Designworks	Inquiry about valuing business because looking to buy the business
3/6/15	Denver Metro Chamber Leadership Foundation – Colorado Experience	Info on economic issues in summit county for this group coming to keystone in April; and on key business leaders
3/26/15	CMC Leadership Summit	Sit on panel on economic issues and opportunities in Summit County
May 2015	Peter Grannery from Pitkin County – business owner	Economic data; he is interested in diversifying industry in Pitkin County; gave ED contacts in region
5/20/15	Bob Semro – Bell Policy Center	Assist w/ HB 15-1033 CONCERNING LONG-TERM STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS COLORADO'S 102 AGING POPULATION, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH,

		103 CREATING A STRATEGIC ACTION PLANNING GROUP TO DEVELOP 104 A COMPREHENSIVE, LONG-TERM ACTION PLAN FOR COLORADO'S 105 AGING POPULATION. Provided data, studies, contact info
6/11/15	Amy Lively – The Lively merchant	Moving biz from Ohio to Summit County; will meet w/ Amy late June to discuss office space rental; housing, etc. Connected with local real estate agent and Evo3 Coworking space – Aaron Landau
6/17/15	Jackson County	Assistance w/ data for application to re-designate the county as an enterprise zone (request by AGNC)
6/30/15	Doug Doherty - klaa.com – structural engineers and consultants – ddoherty@klaa.com	Cost of living data for the region – directed him to the 2013 Cost of Living Study done for the legislative council
Meetings with potential new business startups	1 – Mike Messeroff – I’m not at work (Aug 2015) 2 – Holly Erlichman – Aug 30 2015	
12/29/15	Melanie Wong – Vail Daily	Respond to inquiry regarding economic data in December 2015 quarterly economic update

Difficulties Encountered: None.

4. Serve as clearinghouse for business resources through direct contact with businesses as well as via website, monthly resources bulletins, and social media.

Accomplishments Achieved: created new website – nwcoloradobusiness.org - and monthly resources bulletins.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

EDD Website Stats – compare 2014 to 2015:

	2014	2015
Sessions	1,363	5,994

Users	990	5,414
Page Views	3,264	8,064
% New Sessions	72.6%	89.9%
% Returning Visitors	27.4%	9.8%
Average Session Duration	3:57 minutes	1:01 minutes
International Reach:		
% sessions US	80%	41%
% sessions Brazil	7%	1.15%
% sessions India	1%	
% sessions Russia		22.6%
% sessions Italy	1%	

Number of Businesses in direct contact with for assistance: 12

Stats on Monthly Resources Bulletins sent out:

Date Sent	opens	Open Rate
12/10/2015	358	22%
10/26/2015	268	27%
9/8/2015	271	28%
7/30/2015	239	29%
7/7/2015	264	31%
6/8/2015	257	27%
5/14/2015	303	27%
4/27/2015	225	27%
3/31/2015	208	24%
3/2/2015	254	26%
2/12/2015	226	27%
1/27/2015	308	32%
1/8/2015	278	31%

Difficulties Encountered – social media presence has yet to be established; this is a project for 2016.

- Promote and market the Northwest Loan Fund as a way for existing businesses to retain and create new jobs. (count clicks on NLF from resources bulletins)

Accomplishments Achieved: promoted and marketing the loan fund via resources bulletins, website (nwcoloradobusiness.org), and at business events around the region.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

- Promoted the Northwest Loan Fund in 7 bulletins.
- Assisted Loan Fund Director to provide 1 workshop on "Tips for Preparing Loan Packages" on 4/14/15.
- Attended 2 events to promote the Northwest Loan Fund: 5/8/15 at Health & Wellness Business Symposium and 10/21/15 at Winter Park Business Expo.
- Received 53 inquiries to the Northwest Loan Fund in 2015.

- Closed 9 loans totaling \$487,400.

Difficulties Encountered: None.

6. Highlight businesses that are current or past clients of the Northwest Loan Fund as a way to help market their businesses.

Accomplishments Achieved: highlighted current and past clients of the Northwest Loan fund in EDD resources bulletins as a way to help market their business.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Highlighted 11 clients of the Northwest Loan Fund in monthly resources bulletins.

Difficulties Encountered: None.

B. Grow:

1. Explore and possibly implement programs which help existing businesses grow including an Economic Gardening program and/or accelerator programs. Partner with the NWCOSBDC as well as other economic development partners in the region.

Accomplishments Achieved: NWCOSBDC received funding from OEDIT for an economic gardening program. The SBDC Advanced program is open to Colorado businesses at three levels to ensure all Colorado companies have access to the program. The SBDC Advanced program taps into corporate-level tools, experienced consultants, and an extensive resource base to provide data and information to Colorado businesses as they formulate their strategic growth plans.

Quantifiable Deliverables: NWCCOG EDD did provide information on how to apply for this program/market and promoted it via its resources bulletins.

Difficulties Encountered: There are very few businesses in the region known to qualify for this program based on its parameters. The NWCCOG EDD intends to partner with the NWCOSBDC in the future to further promote the program thereby increasing the probability that the information on this opportunity is reaching those businesses that do qualify, that remain unknown.

C. Recruit:

1. Work with regional broadband effort in creating a marketing plan for the region which highlight the many assets the region has which make it an attractive place to do business, and an attractive place for broadband providers to make investments in broadband infrastructure.

Accomplishments Achieved – NWCCOG EDD highlighted several assets of the region through resources bulletins and on the website. This will be a project to be pursued in 2016 (i.e. the development of a regional website to market the region), with the help of a Department of Local Affairs Grant, as a complement to the CEDS update.

Quantifiable Deliverables: preparation for an RFP for this project for 2016 is underway.

Difficulties encountered – it was not within the staff capacity and budget to complete this project in 2015. Also, it was identified that it was more appropriate to delay this project until 2016, because of the complementary nature of it to the CEDS update.

2. Explore and create programs to encourage new businesses that complement the region’s key economic drivers, and that also serve to diversify our economy. This may include partnering with the many existing resources in the region that are already working on serving entrepreneurs, including co-working spaces, accelerators, angel investment networks, Startup Weekend.

Accomplishments Achieved: NWCCOG EDD has partnered with the 2 co-working spaces in Frisco to help promote several of their programs which encourage entrepreneurialism including the Hour of Code, Start-up Weekends, Start-up Ski Summit; Start-up Bike Summit, and a stop on the Colorado Tech Tour. Partnered with the NWCOSBDC to offer 2 business conferences with an entrepreneurial focus in 2015: the Health and Wellness Business Conference (May 2015) and Women’s Small Business Conference (October 2015).

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Kitchen Business Feasibility Study completed – Nov. 2015

Showcase of Entrepreneurial Programs in the region – at working group meeting on Oct. 28, 2015

Hosted Colorado Tech Tour – stop in Frisco at Elevate CoSpace – July 22, 2015

Health and Wellness Business Symposium – May 8, 2015

Women’s Small Business Conference (with the NWCOSBDC) – October 9, 2015

Difficulties Encountered: Given the unique nature of the NWCCOG Region- mountainous terrain, scarcity of land, high cost of land, environmental concerns – it is somewhat challenging to break out of the tourism mindset to consider other industries that may be suited to this region, particularly in the manufacturing arena.

3. NWCCOG EDD will continue to serve as a clearinghouse for technical and financial resources available from the many partners in the region. Disseminate this information through the monthly resource bulletin, as well as the website.

Accomplishments Achieved: Send out monthly resources bulletins and maintain NWCCOG EDD website – www.nwcoloradobusiness.org.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

See Resources Bulletin and website stats on page 18.

Difficulties Encountered: None.

4. Serve as liaison between Federal (EDA) and State (OEDIT) government agencies and local communities.

Accomplishments Achieved: NWCCOG EDD maintains a close working relationship with state and federal agencies. We invite their participation in working group meetings as a forum for information sharing. The NWCCOG EDD working group meetings have served as a regional forum on several occasions for planning sessions with OEDIT on the State of Colorado Economic

Development Strategic Plan – *the Colorado Blueprint*. We include information on funding opportunities and other initiatives of federal and state agencies through the resources bulletins and website (nwcolorado.org). We serve as the regional convener for sector partnership work of the Colorado Workforce Development Council.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

The following is an account of times in 2015 in which we have had presentations, planning sessions, and/or collaborative conversations with the following federal, state, and local governmental agencies:

2/25/15 – Chris Stiffler, Economist, Colorado Fiscal Institute - discussion on Colorado’s Economic and State Revenue Outlook (at the Colorado Fiscal Forum – Mountain Region Session)

2/25/15 – Thomas Davidson, County Commissioner, Summit County Government - discussion on the State’s Economic and Revenue Outlook and what this means for our local economy (at the Colorado Fiscal Forum – Mountain Region Session)

4/22/15: Meridith Marshall, Senior Regional Manager for Regional Development – Colorado Blueprint Discussion and Planning Session

6/24/15: Regional Planning Session on Colorado Blueprint. Lead by Fiona Arnold, Executive Director for OEDIT. Presentations given by Kelly Manning, State Director, SBDC; Elizabeth Garner, State Demographer

Difficulties Encountered: None.

3. Increase Access to Capital

- A. Promote and market the Northwest Loan Fund. Highlight success stories of NLF clients to promote both the NLF and the businesses that benefitted.

Accomplishments Achieved: The EDD promotes and markets the loan fund through monthly resources bulletins, the website, and at outreach events.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

- Number of times Northwest Loan Fund was promoted in resources bulletins – 7
- Number of clicks to the Northwest Loan Fund page (referred from bulletins) - 30
- Number of Northwest Loan Fund Clients (businesses) featured in resources bulletins - 11
- Assisted Loan Fund Director to provide 1 workshop on "Tips for Preparing Loan Packages" on 4/14/15.
- Attended 2 events to promote the Northwest Loan Fund: 5/8/15 at Health & Wellness Business Symposium and 10/21/15 at Winter Park Business Expo.
- Received 53 inquiries to the Northwest Loan Fund in 2015.
- Closed 9 loans totaling \$487,400.

Difficulties Encountered: None.

- B. Continue to research sources of grant funding available from both government and non-government sources; maintain a page on the website with funding opportunities. Disseminate this information

via monthly resources bulletins.

Accomplishments Achieved: this is an on-going effort; a page is maintained on the website: <http://nwcoloradobusiness.org/resource-center/funding-opportunities/> and funding opportunities are highlighted in all resources bulletins.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Number of Resources Bulletins sent out with funding opportunities – 13

Number of clicks to the Funding Opportunities page (referred from bulletins) - 82

Difficulties Encountered: None.

- C. Serve as a clearinghouse to businesses for information on financing/capital sources; provide updates in monthly resources bulletins. Provide information on website.

Accomplishments Achieved: this is an on-going effort; a page is maintained on the website: <http://nwcoloradobusiness.org/business-assistance/access-to-capital/> and access to capital opportunities are highlighted in all resources bulletins. EDD Director works closely with the Northwest Loan Fund Director to provide this information to businesses in the region. Northwest Loan Fund director refers inquiring businesses that do not fit the loan fund criteria to other possible funding sources.

Quantifiable deliverables:

Number of resources listed for accessing capital in resources bulletins – 20

Number of visits to “Access to Capital” page on nwcoloradobusiness.org - 30

Difficulties Encountered: None.

4. Focus on Projects that Bolster Tourism (Create and Market a Stronger Colorado Brand)

- A. Encourage the expansion of the tourism/recreation and service industries through workshops, monthly resources bulletins, and website.

Accomplishments Achieved: NWCCOG EDD helped to promote several events and workshops offered by partner organizations in 2015 whose focus was the expansion of businesses, and encouraging entrepreneurs in the development of new businesses, in the tourism/recreation industry. We did this through our website and resources bulletins, as well as through promotional partnership agreements.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

- Served as promotional partner for Destimetrics’ The Assembly – a forum for collaborating for year-round tourism held 1/28/15; attended by the NWCCOG EDD Director.
- Promoted 2 Start-Up Weekends (4/2015; 11/2015) held at the 2 Co-working spaces in Frisco.
- Promoted 2 events whose focus was to encourage new business formation in the outdoor recreation industry: Start-Up Ski Summit (Feb. 2015) and Start-Up Bike Summit (Aug. 2015), both held at Elevate Co-Space in Frisco

Difficulties Encountered: None.

- B. Support area tourism businesses and agencies with their activities.

Accomplishments Achieved: continue to support area tourism businesses with their activities through providing information on trainings, workshops, funding, access to capital, and networking through resources bulletins and website.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Number of resources bulletins sent out – 13
Number of clicks to the “trainings and workshops” page – 212
Number of clicks to the “funding opportunities” page – 205
Number of clicks to the “accessing capital” page – 30

Difficulties Encountered: None.

- C. Support and encourage programs that serve to preserve, protect and enhance the natural environment, the region’s most basic asset for health, vitality and the tourism industry. Provide information to towns, counties, nonprofits, and other regional stakeholders on funding opportunities available that support environmental assets in the region including parks, open space, trails, wildlife preservation, etc.

Accomplishments Achieved: continue to provide information on funding resources available to the communities in our region that support environmental assets in resources bulletin and on the funding opportunities page on the website.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Number of hits to website – 5,994
Number of resources bulletins sent out – 13
Number of clicks to the “trainings and workshops” page – 212
Number of clicks to the “funding opportunities” page – 205

Difficulties Encountered: None.

5. Educate, Train, and Attract the Future Workforce

- A. Explore and implement initiatives, projects and programs that build the capacity of the region’s communities to attract and retain human capital. This includes highlighting the amenities the region has that are attractive to this demographic group; i.e. walkable communities, natural environment amenities, 4-year degrees offered by Colorado Mountain College, recreational opportunities, etc. Highlight great built places in the region by doing feature stories in monthly newsletters, and doing a “spotlight on” different towns in the region to highlight their aesthetics and attractiveness to that generation.

Accomplishments Achieved: The region’s amenities are continuously highlighted in resources bulletins. One such story was about Colorado Mountain College now offering more 4-year bachelor degrees. Several spotlight articles were written to highlight specific amenities in the region.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Number of resources bulletins sent out – 13

Number of “success stories” in resource bulletins – 9

Difficulties Encountered: None.

- B. Promote and market the services offered by the Colorado Workforce Center. Partner with CWFC on projects and programs as appropriate.

Accomplishments Achieved: NWCCOG EDD promoted and marketed the services offered by the Colorado Workforce Center through monthly resources bulletin and the website.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Promoted several events, workshops, and services of the Colorado Workforce Center including:

Eagle County Career Fair on 4/7/15

On-The-Job Training Program

Difficulties Encountered: None.

- C. Carry out any work plan items that emerges from the regional Health and Wellness Sector Partnership with respect to workforce development. This includes working with regional partners (Colorado Workforce Center, county public health departments, worksite wellness businesses, NWCOSBDC) on implementing a regional comprehensive worksite wellness program, if funded by grant through the Colorado Dept. of Public Health and Environment (applying September 2014). Continue to serve as regional convener of any/all sector partnerships that emerge. Work with CWDC, OEDIT, etc. Participate in any summits, meetings, events, etc. organized by CWDC and OEDIT on sector partnership development that would benefit the region.

Accomplishments Achieved: NWCCOG continues to serve as convener of the regional health and wellness industry sector partnership (RHWSP). It has convened the partnership once in 2015. NWCCOG served as regional convener for the Sectors Academy offered by the Colorado Workforce Development Council in November 2015. This was an opportunity for our regional team to work on further developing the RHWSP, and to plan for future industry sector partnerships.

NWCCOG EDD has partnered with Eagle County Public Health on a regional worksite wellness program, which is being funded by a grant from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. The RHWSP is serving as the advisory committee to this initiative, being called the “WorkWell Collaborative”. This is a 3-year project commencing in July 2015. NWCCOG EDD will serve as regional coordinator for this project, mainly focusing on convening the advisory committee, and marking/outreach.

Sector Partnerships: Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) Sectors Academy – NWCCOG assembled the core team that has been working on sector partnership development for the CWDC Sectors Academy held November 5 – 6th, 2015 in Denver. CWDC provided our team with a travel scholarship. At the academy, the team worked on ideas for re-energizing the health and wellness sector partnership started in 2013, as well as ideas for developing a new sector partnership in the technology industry. The next step for the health and wellness sector partnership is to hold county-level roundtable discussions with industry leaders, starting with

Summit County on January 13th, 2016. The next step for the technology industry partnership is to have informal discussions with the founders of the two co-working spaces in Frisco, as they are focusing on developing the technology industry in our region. Rachel will meet with Amy Kemp from Elevate on November 23, 2015 to get the conversation started.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

- Regional Health and Wellness Sector Partnership meetings in 2015: 1
- WorkWell Collaborative Advisory Committee meetings in 2015: 2
- Page created on nwcoloradobusiness.org for WorkWell Collaborative: <http://nwcoloradobusiness.org/projects/health-and-wellness-sector-partnership/workwell-collaborative/>

Difficulties Encountered: None.

- D. Partner with organizations/agencies to bring educational workshops to the region. Such organizations/agencies may include Colorado Mountain College, Colorado Workforce Center, NWSBDC, Chambers of Commerce, Small Business Administration, and other economic development organizations, educational organizations, and non-profits throughout the region.

Accomplishments Achieved: served as a vehicle for marketing and outreach with the many organizations offering training and workshops. Maintained a clearinghouse of training opportunities on nwcoloradobusiness.org.

- Promoted CMC/SBDC Business Classes
- Promoted workshops offered by the CWFC
- Promoted educational workshops offered by Chambers in the region
- Promoted educational workshops offered by NWCOSBDC
- Promoted the resources offered by the SBA including on-line resources, classes and workshops being offered
- Collaborated with NWCOSBDC to bring 2 business conferences to the region: Health & Wellness Business Symposium (May 2015) and Women’s Small Business Conference (October 2015).
- Tips for Preparing a Bullet-Proof Loan Application – April 2015 – in collaboration with Northwest Loan Fund and NWCOSBDC

Quantifiable Deliverables:

- Number of hits to the “trainings and workshops” page of website – 212
- Event attendance at NWCOSBDC events – 267

Difficulties Encountered: None.

- E. NWCCOG EDD Manager to continue to serve on Colorado Workforce Development Board for the region. The benefits of WDB membership include having a seat at the table to represent the key industries in the region’s workforce needs; network with business and community leaders; be part of the creation of a system of services that will benefit the region; stay up to date on what’s going on and new programs and services offered by the Workforce Center in the region; learn about new and/or pending legislation affecting businesses and communities; and have a seat at the table to represent the region with respect to workforce issues.

Accomplishments Achieved: Rachel Lunney, NWCCOG EDD Director, participated in 4 Rural Resort Region Workforce Development Board meetings on the following dates:

- 1/21/15
- 4/15/15
- 7/15/15
- 10/21/15

Rachel Lunney also attended the Rocky Mountain Workforce Development Conference on October 5th. This conference provided board members with new information on the new legislation governing the workforce system in Colorado and the nation – i.e. the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This was very beneficial, as WIOA implications will need to be incorporated in the updated CEDS.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

- Number of WDB meetings attended: 4

Difficulties Encountered: None.

6. Cultivate Innovation and Technology

A. Cultivate Innovation

1. Work with the various organizations and projects in the region to support and build the capacity of the entrepreneurial regional ecosystem. Specifically, support the work of the co-working spaces throughout the region, Startup Weekends in the area, Pitchfest Academy (Roaring Fork Business Resource Center) and similar programs, accelerators and all other organizations working to support entrepreneurs and growth companies in the region, which serve to diversity our economy.

Accomplishments Achieved: NWCCOG EDD continues to partner with organizations in the region currently engaged in these activities and continues to explore ways in which we can collaborate, build capacity, expand, and create new programs where appropriate. There is also a page on the NWCCOG EDD website with resources for entrepreneurs:

<http://nwcoloradobusiness.org/business-assistance/resources-for-entrepreneurs/>.

Roundtable on Entrepreneurship Programs in the region: The NWCCOG EDD Working Group met on October 28, 2015 at EVO3 Workspace in Frisco for its last meeting of 2015. At that meeting, presentations were given by Aaron Landau, founder of EVO3, Amy Kemp, founder of Elevate CoSpace (another co-working space in Frisco), and Lindsey Stapay, Director of the Northwest Colorado SBDC. The presentations highlighted some of the programs happening in the region to encourage and support entrepreneurship including Summit County Start-Up Weekend, Next Level Class (in Grand County), Hour of Code (being hosted by EVO3 on December 7th), Startup Ski and Bike weekends (hosted by Elevate), coding classes and salesforce.com trainings (at EVO3), and the development of the mountain co-working alliance.

NWCCOG EDD also helped promote at stop in our region for the Colorado Tech Tour held on July 22, 2015.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

- Roundtable on entrepreneurship programs on October 28, 2015 attended by 20 people.

- Colorado Tech Tour on July 22, 2015 attended by 40 people.

Difficulties Encountered: None.

2. Assist entrepreneurs, growth companies, and existing businesses obtain financing through the Northwest Loan Fund as well by referral to other alternative sources of funding.

Accomplishments Achieved: NWCCOG EDD has strongly marketed the Northwest Loan Fund through monthly resources bulletins, on the website, and at outreach events. This has resulted in increased awareness of the loan fund and surge of inquiries.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Number of inquiries to the Northwest Loan Fund in 2015: 50
Number of referrals by NLF Director to other funding sources: 10
Number of loans closed in 2015: 9
Amount loaned in total: \$487,400

Difficulties Encountered: None.

3. Identify opportunities for the region's communities to serve as business incubators for start-up businesses. Partner with organizations that are working in this area including co-working spaces, accelerators, Startup Weekend, etc.

Accomplishments Achieved: NWCCOG EDD promotes the many assets of the region that may serve to attract start-up businesses through its website (nwcoloradobusiness.org), resources bulletins, and at outreach events.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

Number of resources bulletins sent out: 13
Number of hits to the website: 5,994
Number of outreach events in 2015: 5

Difficulties Encountered: None.

4. Explore establishment of a commercial kitchen business incubator in the region.

Accomplishments Achieved: Kitchen Business Incubator Feasibility Study completed. This study, which was funded by a Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) grant from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), is complete and can be found on the EDD website here: <http://nwcoloradobusiness.org/food-business-resources/>. The study found that a kitchen business incubator could potentially have economic benefits for Summit County. The study recommends that, mainly due to high real estate costs in the region, the kitchen business incubator will need to be implemented in a conservative fashion. The easiest and least financially burdensome method to implementing this program is to partner with an existing commercial kitchen space in the county for the use of the kitchen, and to partner with an organization such as the SBDC to offer the business training portion of the program. This allows the program to operate with limited risk and increases the chance of the program being viable in the long-term. If the program outgrows the partnership, there is always the opportunity to invest in building or purchasing a facility that can keep up with the

growing demand. The next step is to present the study to the newly-formed SBDC Advisory Committee for input and direction on next steps. Funding will need to be secured, even for this conservative approach.

Quantifiable Deliverables: Study completed and posted on website under newly-create “food business resources” page: <http://nwcoloradobusiness.org/food-business-resources/>

Difficulties Encountered: None.

B. Cultivate Technology

1. NWCCOG Executive Director to serve as project manager for regional broadband initiative including coordinating the work of the regional broadband steering committee, and overseeing the work of a regional broadband coordinator. NWCCOG EDD staff to continue to assist Executive Director in the implementation of action steps outlined in NWCCOG Regional Broadband Strategic Plan as appropriate. This includes developing a regional marketing plan to attract private investment in broadband investment.

Accomplishments Achieved: Nate Walowitz has been hired by NWCCOG as the Regional Broadband Coordinator. He is tasked with carrying out action items identified in the Regional Broadband Strategic Plan. Below are some of the accomplishments made in 2015:

Several communities successfully passed an exemption to SB-152, which allows them to pursue the development of broadband infrastructure on their own. These communities include Jackson County, Pitkin County, Summit County, Town of Fraser, Town of Red Cliff, Town of Winter Park, as well as Colorado Mountain College.

FirstNet Colorado (CO OIT) has aggregated statewide information and submitted coverage and usage requirements along with tower/radio site information to FirstNet for their consideration. NWCCOG coordinated the contribution of radio site and tower information allowing FirstNet Colorado to improve the network design for North Central and Northwest Colorado.

Nate Walowitz worked with DOLA and released a map of covered areas, and spreadsheets of location counts per county and total funding by county.

CenturyLink held a CAF II meeting with Jackson County on September 30th, 2015. There are 596 of the possible 661 locations in the County are CAF II eligible. The North Park School District will request E-Rate bids for next year. It is hoped that pricing inequity for broadband can be narrowed. NWCCOG will be working with the County Commissioners and Economic Development to create a strategic broadband and economic development plan for the county. NWCCOG is assisting in the drafting of an RFP for Countywide broadband engineering services. The RFP will be based on the successful Pitkin County RFP.

Pitkin County RFP for a broadband network has closed. They want to have a multi-use fiber/wireless broadband loop connecting all their mountaintop sites and local government buildings for public broadband deployment, public safety communications and County IT network redundancy. The RFP received five responses.

Summit County met with CenturyLink on October 9th, 2015 to discuss CAF II and recent outages. The Town of Montezuma also had a representative at the meeting. The Towns of Heeney and Lower Blue were also discussed as areas of interest within the FCC funding locations. Summit County is looking into the possibility of developing the Lower Blue tower site themselves. NWCCOG has put them in touch with an engineering firm and reached out to COMNET Cellular for possible roaming carrier arrangement. Summit County and Frisco businesses are interested in obtaining business class broadband at lower prices. NWCCOG is working with them and the providers to determine the best way forward; aggregation, affinity marketing program.

Scott Burgess from Red Cliff is working to finalize paperwork to acquire the Battle Mountain half of tower site property. COMNET Cellular is interested in putting cell site on Red Cliff tower, thus a NEPA process has started. Permanent tower and services will not be constructed and available until summer 2016. USFS had declined a temporary site application from HCI/Forethought at Ski Cooper. All parties met with USFS in late September and a new application has been submitted with emphasis on getting an approval for Ski Cooper site by early next summer.

Nate Walowitz, Regional Broadband Coordinator, Nate Walowitz, is listed as a standing agenda item on working group agendas to update all stakeholders on progress on these action items which aim to improve broadband capacity in the region.

Quantified Deliverables:

See above.

Difficulties Encountered: None.

7. Strengthen the capacity of the region's Towns, Counties, and Economic Development Organizations

A. Continue to provide a forum for intergovernmental cooperation on economic development issues to facilitate collaboration among towns, counties, and economic development organizations within the region. NWCCOG EDD provides this forum for exchange of ideas, needs, etc. at its bi-monthly working group meetings. Tentatively, the working group will meet on the fourth Wednesday of every other month beginning in February. Tentative dates for 2015:

- February 25
- April 22
- June 24
- August 26
- October 28
- December 9 (*moved up due to holidays*)

Continue to incorporate presentations of interest on a variety of economic development topics into working group meetings.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

The EDD Working Group, and Board of Directors, met on the following dates, with the following items presentations made:

- 1/22/15 – EDD Board of Directors.
- 2/25/15 – Colorado Fiscal Forum – Mountain Region Session. Presentations, focusing on Colorado's economic trends, made by the following: Colorado Fiscal Institute; Center on Budget

- Policies and Priorities; Bell Policy Center; Colorado Futures Center at Colorado State University.
- 4/22/15 – EDD Working Group. Presentation by Meridith Marshall, Regional Development Director, OEDIT.
- 6/24/15 – EDD Working Group. This session served as a regional planning session on the Colorado Blueprint. Presentations made by Fiona Arnold, Executive Director, OEDIT and Elizabeth Garner, State Demographer.
- 8/26/15 – EDD Board of Directors. This was the strategic planning session for the EDD where the 2016 scope of work was developed.
- 10/22/15 – EDD Working Group. This session served as a **roundtable on Entrepreneurship Programs in the region. Presentations were made by** Aaron Landau, founder of EVO3; Amy Kemp, founder of Elevate CoSpace; Lindsey Stapay, Director of the Northwest Colorado SBDC.
- The 12/9/15 EDD Working Group meeting was cancelled.

B. Continue to serve as a resource to assist local governments and economic development organizations with their economic development activities. Economic and demographic information is provided through quarterly bulletins as well as on the NWCCOG EDD website. NWCCOG EDD staff serves as a resource to direct local governments and stakeholders in the region to appropriate federal, state, regional and local resources.

Accomplishments Achieved: maintain website (nwcoloradobusiness.org) to house clearinghouse of economic and demographic data; invite speakers to board meetings and working groups; continue to assist local governments, businesses, and other stakeholders with specific data requests as needed.

Quantifiable Deliverables:

- Prepared, distributed, and post on website four quarterly regional economic updates in 2015
- Sent out 13 resources bulletins
- Website hits: increased by 340% from 2014 to 2015 (hits in 2014: 1,363; hits in 2015: 5,994.
- Posted a variety of studies and reports containing regional economic data on website: <http://nwcoloradobusiness.org/about-the-region/regional-economic-data/>

Difficulties Encountered: None.

C. EDD staff to participate in training offered by various professional organizations including but not limited to the International Economic Development Council (IEDC); National Association for Development Organizations (NADO), and Economic Development Council of Colorado (EDCC).

Accomplishments Achieved: Rachel Lunney, NWCCOG EDD Director maintains membership in the Economic Development Council of Colorado (EDCC), and keeps abreast of activities of the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) as well as National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).

Quantified Deliverables: Rachel Lunney, NWCCOG EDD Director, attending the following professional development trainings in 2015:

- IEDC Class: Marketing & Attraction (March 12-13, 2015)
- EDCC Spring Conference – April 29 – May , 2015

- Leadership Summit – offered by Colorado Mountain College – this is a 9-month program, beginning September 2015, ending May 2016. Rachel attended 4 out of 9 sessions in 2015.

Difficulties Encountered: None.

- D. Maintain and convene an EDD Board of Directors that complies with EDA requirements; Prepare and submit all EDA-required reports and documents.

Accomplishments Achieved: Rachel Lunney, NWCCOG EDD Director maintains NWCCOG EDD Board of Directors that complies with EDA requirements.

Quantified Deliverables: The NWCCOG EDD met 3 times in 2015:

- January 22, 2015
 - May 28, 2015
 - August 27, 2015
- A quorum was achieved at all meetings. The first meeting of 2016 will be January 28, 2016.

EDA required reports submitted:

- SF 425 for 2014 grant – 1/31/15
- SF 425 for 2015 grant – 7/31/15
- GRPA – 12/15/15
- This report – 12/31/15

Difficulties Encountered: None.

- E. Begin initial preparations for submitting the Updated/Revised CEDS that will be due to EDA on 12/31/16 during next year’s grant award.

Accomplishments Achieved: Preliminary planning has begun for the 2016 CEDS Update.

Quantified Deliverables:

- Participated in NADO/EDA CEDS revision webinar on 2/26/15.
- Regional ED planning session w/ OEDIT – 6/24/15 – preliminary planning for CEDS update
- Updated the EDD Board of Directors on new CEDS requirements/guidelines on 8/27/15
- Updated the Regional Broadband Steering Committee on 12/22/15.

Difficulties Encountered: None.

Evaluation

- **Number of jobs created after implementation of the CEDS**

The NWCCOG EDD first-ever CEDS was approved on November 28, 2011. Since that time, the region has seen an increase in 7,162 jobs, which is an 11.3% increase (compares Q2 2015 to Q2 2012). Some projects that contributed to this job increase include loans made by the Northwest Loan Fund, as well as business consulting provided by the Northwest Colorado Small Business Development Center and Grand Enterprise Initiative in Grand County. It is estimated that the number of jobs created after implementation of the CEDS (i.e. after 11/28/11) related to loans made by the Northwest Loan Fund is 40; related to consulting by NWCOSBDC is 75; and related to consulting by other entities such as Grand Enterprise Initiative and Roaring Fork Business Resource Center is 130.

- **Number and types of investments undertaken in the region**

There have been a number of investments undertaken in the region since implementation of the CEDS in late 2011. While not all-inclusive, here is a summary of some major investments that occurred in 2015:

Investments in transportation:

Improvements along I-70 corridor to alleviate traffic congestion - The Colorado Department of Transportation has provided some fixes in 2015 that could help make travel on I-70 a little bit easier. CDOT widened the eastbound side of the Twin Tunnels in Idaho Springs from two to three lanes, and built a "Peak Period Shoulder Lane"--an express toll lane--from Empire to the Twin Tunnels.

Improvements at Aspen Airport - Construction to expand the secure boarding area at the Aspen/Pitkin County Airport will begin this week, with most of the work conducted at night to minimize the impact on travelers and daytime operations. The secure-boarding space will be enlarged from 4,200 to 6,325 square feet, increasing the capacity from the current 280-passenger maximum to 420 passengers. The first phase of the project is expected to run through mid-January. (source: Aspen Daily News, 12.01.15)

Health and Wellness Industry: Kaiser Permanente built a new facility in Summit County, and will be building a new facility in Eagle County. Augustana Care is building a Continuing Care Retirement Facility in Eagle. The property is located in Eagle Ranch and is valued at approximately \$988,000. The Castle Peak Senior Care Community will be the first of its kind in Eagle County and will include 20 assisted living apartments, 22 skilled nursing suites, 12 memory care suites and 10 transitional care or rehabilitation suites. Castle Peak will serve an estimated 110 people annually at all income levels.

Retail and Other: Major development in Basalt (Willits). New Hampton Inn in Silverthorne. New Natural Grocers in Frisco.

Special Events:

2015 World Alpine Ski Championships held in Eagle County February 2015 – Economic impact estimated at \$150 million.

US Pro Cycling Challenge – Breckenridge was a host city for the US Pro Cycling Challenge in 2015, an internationally-televised event which attracts thousands of tourists to the region. The race traveled

through much of the region giving towns along the way international exposure, which greatly will increase tourism to the area.

Tourism:

Investments in the Ski Industry - Vail Resorts will spend \$100 million to \$115 million on improvements at its nine ski areas for the 2015-16 winter, pushing the resort operator's five-year mountain investments beyond \$500 million. Locally, Vail Mountain is seeing Chair #2, Avanti, upgraded to a 6-person chair, which will greatly improve the flow of skier traffic starting in Lionshead.

New hotel in Aspen - Norway Island Partners, Jeff Gorsuch, Bryan Peterson and the development firm Lowe Enterprises, unveiled plans for the 61-room Gorsuch Haus hotel at the base of Lift 1A. The 75,000-square-foot facility would include 61 hotel rooms, 7 condominiums for rental and 6 wholly owned condominiums of up to 1,900 square feet each that would be private. All required parking would be underground at the site. (-Aspen Times/Aspen Daily News, 12.04.15)

- **Number of jobs retained in the region**

The estimated number of jobs retained in the region since implementation of the CEDS is 50. It is estimated that 5 of those jobs is due to loans made by the Northwest Loan Fund; 25 due to consulting by the NWCOSBDC; and 20 due to other consulting in the region (i.e. Grand Enterprise Initiative and Roaring Fork Business Resource Center).

- **Amount of private sector investment in the region after implementation of the CEDS**

The estimated amount of private sector investment in the region since implementation of the CEDS is \$5.6 million: \$1,135,000 from loans made by Northwest Loan Fund; \$4,490,000 due to consulting services in the region.

- **Changes in economic environment of the region**

Changes in the Region's Economic Condition

The region's economic condition has improved since the CEDS was approved 4 years ago. Specifically, the region has seen an increase in employment and wages. Average employment in the region for the most recent quarter reported (Q2 2015) was 70,417, which is an 11.3% increase over Q2 2012. This is an increase of 7,162 jobs over the last 3 years. Unemployment in all 5 counties in NWCCOG EDD's region for the most recent month reported (October 2015) was lower than the reported rate a year ago. The regional average unemployment rate (3.2%) is lower than that of the State of Colorado (3.8%) and the U.S. (5.0%). The current regional unemployment (3.2%) is considerably lower than the unemployment rate reported 3 years ago (6.5% in October 2012). The labor force for the region has increased by 0.8% over the last 3 years, increasing from 67,459 in October 2012 to 68,024 in October 2015. Average annual wages for the region have increased overall in the last 3 years, increasing by 9.3% when averaging all industries. Wages have increased for most of the key industries in the region with the exception of Accommodations and Food Services (-2.3%) and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (-15.5%), the two industries which account for most of the jobs in the region. Wage growth in key industries is as follows: construction industry +3.9%; financial services +9.0%; healthcare industry

+18.8%. The number of establishments in the region increased by 374, from Q2 2012 to Q2 2015, which is a 4.7% increase. (Source of data: Colorado Department of Labor and Employment).

Schedule

Updated Implementation / Action Plan – See Attachment A.

**Northwest Colorado Council of Governments
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

Attachment 1: Authorized SCOPE OF WORK 2016

Grantee: Northwest Colorado Council of Governments - Economic Development District

Project Number: 05-83-05316-__

The Recipient will perform the following activities:

1. Update the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

A. The region's CEDS is due to be updated by December 31, 2016. This update will be a major focus for the NWCCOG EDD in 2016. NWCCOG is looking to partner with USDA Rural Development to provide facilitation for public meetings. NWCCOG is looking to create an on-line CEDS, therefore will be seeking proposals from consultants for this portion of the project.

2. Build a Business Friendly Environment

A. Provide technical assistance and other resources to assist communities in building a business-friendly environment.

1. Maintain EDD website (nwcoloradobusiness.org).
2. Respond to inquiries from existing businesses and those looking to do business in the region.
3. Create and distribute monthly resources e-bulletins.
4. Work in collaboration with NW Colorado Small Business Development Center (NWCOSBDC) to promote, market, deliver free business consulting services.

B. Build the capacity of the region's communities to make our communities attractive places for entrepreneurs to start new businesses by:

1. Providing information on funding opportunities available to towns, counties, nonprofits through monthly resources bulletins as well as through partnerships with economic development stakeholders such as chambers.

2. Feature different communities throughout the region in newsletters, on the website, and through social media which highlight the community's assets and benefits to doing business in that community. Also feature local businesses in the region on an on-going basis.

3. Retain, Grow and Recruit Businesses

A. Continue to serve as host organization of NWCOSBDC in 2016.

B. Provide data and information to businesses to maximize economic growth opportunities and enhance local business and industry retention and expansion.

- C. Serve as clearinghouse for business resources through direct contact with businesses as well as via website, monthly resources bulletins, and social media.
- D. Work with regional broadband effort in creating a marketing plan for the region.
- E. Serve as liaison between Federal (EDA) and State (OEDIT) government agencies and local communities.

4. Increase Access to Capital

- A. Promote and market the Northwest Loan Fund. Highlight success stories of NLF clients to promote both the NLF and the businesses that benefitted.
- B. Research sources of grant funding available from both government and non-government sources; maintain a page on the website with funding opportunities. Disseminate this information via monthly resources bulletins.
- C. Serve as a clearinghouse to businesses for information on financing/capital sources.

5. Focus on Projects that Bolster Tourism (Create and Market a Stronger Colorado Brand)

- A. Encourage the expansion of the tourism/recreation and service industries through workshops, monthly resources bulletins, and website.
- B. Support area tourism businesses and agencies with their activities where appropriate.
- C. Provide information to towns, counties, nonprofits, and other regional stakeholders on funding opportunities available that support environmental assets in the region including parks, open space, trails, wildlife preservation, etc.

6. Educate, Train, and Attract the Future Workforce; Support the Current Workforce

- A. Advocate for issues that affect the workforce including improvements to the affordability and availability of housing and childcare. This may include compiling best practices, success stories, researching partnerships that have been successful, and researching funding opportunities.
- B. Promote and market the services offered by the Colorado Workforce Center. Partner with CWFC on projects and programs as appropriate.
- C. Continue to serve as regional convener of any/all sector partnerships that emerge. Work with CWDC, OEDIT, etc. Participate in any summits, meetings, events, etc. organized by CWDC and OEDIT on sector partnership development that would benefit this region.
- D. Partner with organizations/agencies to bring educational workshops to the region, as appropriate.

E. NWCCOG EDD Director to continue to serve on Colorado Workforce Development Board for this region (Rural Resort Region).

7. Cultivate Innovation and Technology

A. Partner with stakeholders in the region to support and build the capacity of the entrepreneurial regional ecosystem. This may include partnering with co-working spaces, Startup Weekends, Colorado Mountain College, NWCOSBDC, and accelerators.

B. Pursue, where appropriate, action items of the kitchen business incubator feasibility study completed in 2015.

C. Attend statewide workshops, trainings, events focusing on innovation such as the Colorado Innovation Network Summit (COIN).

D. NWCCOG Executive Director to serve as project manager for regional broadband initiative including coordinating the work of the regional broadband steering committee, and overseeing the work of a regional broadband coordinator.

8. Strengthen the capacity of the region's Towns, Counties, and Economic Development Organizations

A. Continue to provide a forum for intergovernmental cooperation on economic development issues to facilitate collaboration among towns, counties, and economic development organizations within the region. NWCCOG EDD provides this forum for exchange of ideas, needs, etc. at its bi-monthly working group meetings.

B. Serve as a resource to direct local governments and stakeholders in the region to appropriate federal, state, regional and local resources.

C. EDD staff to keep abreast of, and inform stakeholders of, issues before the state legislature as they relate to, and could potentially affect economic development in the region. This may include keeping in close contact with the EDCC legislative committee and our state legislators. Where appropriate, work with the EDD board of directors to advocate for/against issues.

D. EDD staff to participate in training offered by various professional organizations including but not limited to the International Economic Development Council (IEDC); National Association for Development Organizations (NADO), and Economic Development Council of Colorado (EDCC).

D. Maintain and convene an EDD Board of Directors that complies with EDA requirements; Prepare and submit all EDA-required reports and documents.