

**NWCCOG Economic Development District
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy – Regional Action Plan
October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2026
Progress Report: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22
Updated 10.27.22**

Workforce

Strategies:

W1. Support the region’s programs, policies, and incentives which aim to increase the availability and affordability of housing for the workforce

Proposed Actions:

- Assist towns and counties navigate and utilize new funding sources now available via recent legislation passed.
- Continue to monitor state, federal and local legislation as it pertains to affordable and attainable housing
- Provide information to stakeholders regarding programs, funding opportunities, success stories and best practices in affordable workforce housing
- Collaborate with community partners to expand the reach of the region’s workforce housing efforts.
- Convene regional think tanks on key issues like housing, workforce
- Bring attention to the unique needs of our region; advocate for designated funds for the NWCCOG Region

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

- Provide information on funding available via recent legislation passed
- 2023 Regional Workforce Housing Report –will be completed by 12.31.22; published January 2023
- Explore solutions to short-term rentals and their effect on the availability of affordable workforce housing
- Work with Insights Collective, a think tank of destination travel veterans, on Forces at Play (present at 2022 Economic Summit; continued work on Community Assessment project (in 2023)
- Funding opportunities provided in EDD Resources Bulletins (archived here: <http://nwccog.org/edd/business-resources/resource-bulletins/>)

W2. Support efforts that seek to provide affordable health insurance options as well as other benefits such as retirement for individual wealth building

Proposed Actions:

- Assist towns and counties navigate funding sources and new programs which seek to connect the workforce with benefits such as affordable health insurance and retirement plans

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

- Re: Retirement Plans for small businesses –4/13/22 call w/ Sen. Hickenlooper’s Office staff re: 3 bills introduced by Sen. Hickenlooper on encouraging creation of retirement plans for small businesses. 76% of employers in our region have 9 employees and less.
- Sept. 19 workshop on Colorado SecureSavings Program – partner with Anna Stevens
- Outreach Specialist, Colorado Department of Treasury
- Oct 12 Workshop with CDLE on FAMILI program

W3. Support efforts to develop and improve workforce needs and services including broadband, transportation, childcare, education, training, healthcare, and mental health services

Proposed Actions:

- Support actions in NWCCOG Regional Assessment of Child Care Industry Report (Feb. 2021)
- Continue Project THOR to improve broadband in the region
- Provide information on funding sources for improvements to workforce needs such as broadband, childcare, healthcare, mental health services, transportation, education and training

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

- Project THOR
- EDD Resources Bulletins

W4. Network, support, and partner with other organizations on workforce development efforts

Proposed Actions:

- Support local and regional and statewide workforce development efforts which seek to providing training, education, and career pathways
- Work with partner organizations to provide small business development training and education throughout the region
- Engage K-12, CMC, CDLE, Workforce Centers on resources for mapping career pathway opportunities; work with partners to develop and promote programs in this area
- Explore regional training programs for the trades
- Promote on the job training programs within businesses in the region

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

- 7/25 email: Connected Communities Digital Bridge is excited to announce the launch of the first Hubs in Grand County. - initiative that provides workforce stability through digital training; common issues in our Mountain markets, such as skilled labor, trailing spouses, access to living wages, leveraging digital work to create primary jobs, and market diversification.
- Good Jobs Initiative – Results for America (NWCCOG a partner)
- VVP –contracted and working with Learn Formula and Skill Builders Pro for online learning opportunities. This has been successful (Skill Builders) and we’ve recently launched Learn Formula. Our professional development programs can be found at <https://www.vailvalleypartnership.com/vvw/course-catalog/>
- 9/28 – Meet with Erin Young, Employment Coach, CDLE new role and partnerships with NWCCOG EDD in building “good jobs”; will present at Dec. 1 EDD Board meeting.

Economy

Strategies:

E1. Support, strengthen, build capacity in our region's key industries and existing businesses

Proposed Actions:

- Connect economic development stakeholders with resources and information
- NWCCOG EDD Resources Bulletin
- NWCCOG EDD website: nwccog.org/edd
- Establish regional business retention and expansion program/position to support existing businesses and all key industries in the region
- Provide access to capital for existing businesses
- Provide education and workshops on succession planning and exit planning for businesses

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

- Build capacity in Grand Enterprise Initiative – providing free business consulting and technical assistance to businesses in Grand County – grant administrator for DOLA REDI grant (2022)
- Jackson County Enterprise Initiative – providing free business consulting and technical assistance to businesses in Jackson County
- Northwest Small Business Development Center- activity in 2022

E2. Partner with stakeholder organizations to provide business training opportunities

Proposed Actions:

- Provide business training program

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

- Partnership with Summit Chamber/SPI on Co.Starters, Summit Biz Bootcamp program
- 10/12 workshop on FAMLI
- 7/13 email: FIRC working on programming to help locals learn how to start and/or grow their business

E3. Tell the region's success stories through newsletters, website, and other modes of communication to promote a positive vision for the region

Proposed Actions:

- NWCCOG EDD website
- CEDS
- Success Stories Bulletins

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

- EDD Success stories bulletins throughout 2022

E4. Support our communities' efforts towards responsible tourism

Proposed Actions:

- Support local strategies outlined in local destination management plans and other plans dealing with responsible tourism

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

- [Breckenridge Destination Management Plan](#)
- [Aspen Chamber Resort Association’s Destination Management Plan](#)
- [Vail Destination Stewardship Plan](#)
- Grand County – EDA grant awarded for Grand County Tourism and Diversification Strategy

E5. Support the development of an entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region

Proposed Actions:

- Develop entrepreneurial resources in the region including mentorship programs, investors, venture capital, angel investment networks, accelerators incubators, events, co-work spaces, training programs
- Monthly call on workforce, SBDC, CMC, business support community, chambers; organizations working on entrepreneurship

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

E6. Encourage the development of higher-paying jobs outside of the tourism industry

Proposed Actions:

- Support the Digital Workforce Development program currently underway in Grand County (pending EDA funding)
- Support development of “Good Jobs”
- Disseminate and present information in the Colorado Self-Sufficiency Standard; Colorado Legislative Council Cost of Living Study (every other year); have more participation in the development process so that the numbers accurately reflect the conditions in our region; make data readily available and as useful as possible to be used as a benchmark

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

Community

Strategies:

C1. Support efforts to strengthen community infrastructure including broadband, transportation systems, healthcare facilities, mental health services, educational opportunities, and community amenities

Proposed Actions:

- Help communities navigate and take full advantage of new funding available (Federal – American Rescue Plan; State - HB 21-1271 Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies; HB 21-1253 Renewable and Clean Energy Infrastructure; HB 21-1289 Broadband Development.)
- NWCCOG Project THOR; Support efforts to strengthen high-speed internet in the region
- Provide letters of support, grant writing and technical assistance as requested

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

- Disseminate info on funding opportunities from ARPA, IIJT/Infrastructure Act; housing funding provided by DOLA; mental health funding, all funding as a result of 2022 legislative session via monthly resources bulletins and archived on website: <http://nwccog.org/edd/business-resources/resource-bulletins/>
- Project THOR
- Support local communities' efforts with support letters to funding agencies for grant applications (EDA, DOLA, etc.)
- Community Assessment Project/Insight Collectives – seeking funding for this project from DOLA to begin Jan. 2023 –proposal responds to current economic conditions and new economic forces that have emerged over the past several years post-Covid

C2. Serve as a community development and planning resource to our region

Proposed Actions:

- Provide data, research, and other resources to inform policymaking and planning
- Develop and maintain a regional data clearinghouse on the EDD website
- Disseminate regional economic and demographic data on a regular basis
- Respond to data requests
- Conduct studies and prepare reports on topics of regional interest and value
- Collect, present, analyze, and disseminate regional data for use in policy making and business development (Qtrly Economic Updates; community profiles; website)

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

- Quarterly Regional Economic Updates
- County Profiles
- Data requests
- Data Center on website
- Data presentations – EDD BOD mtg 7/7; 10/27

C3. Cultivate placemaking creating desirable places to live, visit, and recreate

Proposed Actions:

- Partner with organizations to offer resources on placemaking

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

C4. Support the region's efforts to combat climate change

Proposed Actions:

- Monitor and disseminate information on new legislation and funding sources to fund sustainable resource use and production
- Encourage installation of renewable energy technologies and sustainable resources
- Monitor and disseminate information on new legislation and funding sources to fund renewable energy technologies
- Create a clearinghouse of plans in the region which encourage use of energy efficiency technologies and share best practices (such as Summit County Climate Action Plan and Sustainable Building Code)

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

Resiliency

Strategies:

R1. Encourage diversity in industry and jobs

Proposed Actions:

- Support efforts to grow new industries not tourism-related
- Support workforce development and training programs which seek to train the workforce in in-demand skills for higher paying jobs in new industries

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

- Summit Biz – training program w/ Chamber/Co.Starters
- Partnerships/work with CDLE
- Possible future work with Digital Hub project in Grand County

R2. Cultivate entrepreneurship as a strategy towards economic recovery and long-term resilience

Proposed Actions:

- Provide access to capital for startups
- Provide equitable access to opportunity

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

R3. Maintain strong partnerships between regional stakeholders to share problems, data, stories, and solutions

Proposed Actions:

- Maintain frequent communication between federal, state, regional, and local partners

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

- EDD board meetings provide forum for information sharing among federal, state, regional, and local partners

R4. Provide a forum for regional communication, collaboration, and information sharing

Proposed Actions:

- EDD Board of Directors meetings (in conjunction with NWCCOG Council meetings)
- Regional Economic Forum – bring back Spring 2022
- Conduct studies/surveys/prepare reports on economic development topics of regional interest and value

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

- Regional Economic Summit held on May 5, 2022. 100 attendees
- EDD Board Meetings (7 in 2022)
- Studies and reports on ED topics of value – Mtn Migration report; NLF report; childcare study; Budgeting practices study

R5. Collaborate with the region’s counties on economic recovery and resiliency plan development

Proposed Actions:

- Partner with counties on DOLA Regional Resiliency Roadmaps (Eagle, Grand, Pitkin, Summit – all submitted applications)
- Carry out all projects/activities/deliverables of the EDA CARES Act grant (\$400,000) - report out on county-level projects; COVID lessons learned/best practices report from RBRC
- Utilize the work of the Mountain Migration Report; present strategies and identify those the region’s stakeholders want to focus on which will bolster the long-term economic durability of the region
- help coordinate best practices for the region on recovery plans

Progress: 10/1/21 – 9/30/22

- Summit Roadmap Project – provided information on economic development/small business resources to consultant (Better Cities); participated in core team meeting on 2/16
- Report out of all DOLA Roadmap teams in NWCCOG region at NWCCOG EDD board meeting – 3/24/22
- Follow up meeting: Regional DOLA roadmap teams in NWCCOG region with state partners, OEDIT and DOLA resiliency office (4/19/22)
- Summit – DOLA Roadmap meetings 5/23 and 6/6

DOLA Regional Roadmap Plans – incorporate into this plan:

Grand County - https://drive.google.com/file/d/17k5yLKLRYYY8oqfmCLVvCCVEroS_jN-J/view

Summit County - https://drive.google.com/file/d/11D7SLMf3oh_ogo7qkaH5qtMLxVGpd5C/view

Pitkin County/Roaring Fork Valley -

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1v5Fpyc1_nR8WmABahswgBjOLH29_ew8v/view

Eagle County -

R6. Encourage opportunities for community collaboration with respect to wildfire preparedness and mitigation

Proposed Actions:

- Climate Change: Gather all county plans together. Convene regional climate change forum
- Disseminate information on funding opportunities and support local efforts for wildfire mitigation and forest health management
- Explore working with Colorado Climate Corps, which will work in 55 of the 64 counties in Colorado to clear trees and ground cover in wildfire mitigation projects as well as clear and contour land to avoid floods and mudslides.

Progress 10/1/21 – 9/30/22