



# AGENDA

**Thursday, September 5, 2024**  
 NWCCOG Zoom  
 NWCCOG 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
 EDD 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

## VIDEO & PHONE CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Join Zoom Meeting <a href="https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88166216134?pwd=MFB0Z2VRVEpHSXhYZHRubVRXc3poZz09">https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88166216134?pwd=MFB0Z2VRVEpHSXhYZHRubVRXc3poZz09</a> Meeting ID: 881 6621 6134 Passcode: 119033
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## NWCCOG COUNCIL MEETING

10:00 a.m.	1.	NWCCOG Council Chair, Alyssa Shenk	
	2.	Roll Call, Introductions and Determination of Quorum	
	*3.	ACTION: Minutes of July 2024 Council Meeting	Pgs. 3-4
	4.	ACTION: COG: 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter Financials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NWCCOG – List of Payments</li> <li>- NWCCOG – Balance Sheet</li> <li>- NWCCOG – Statement of Revenues and Expenditures</li> <li>- Northwest Loan Fund – Balance Sheet</li> <li>- Northwest Loan Fund – Budget vs Actual</li> </ul>	website
	5.	UPDATE COG: NLF Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Documents are for review, not approval</li> <li>- Northwest Loan Fund – Risk Ratings</li> <li>- Northwest Loan Fund – Portfolio Summary</li> <li>- Loan Policy Excerpt as reference for Risk Ratings</li> </ul>	Pgs. 5-10
	6.	UPDATE COG: Strategic Planning Steps for 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- October Budget Workshop – <b>Propose Oct 24 at 11 a.m.</b></li> <li>- Brief review at October Council Meeting</li> <li>- <b>Executive Director Review prior October Meeting – Oct 24<sup>th</sup> 10:00a.m</b></li> <li>- October 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting in Person Silverthorne Office and Online</li> </ul> January new Officers – interest in Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer.	
	7.	UPDATE/ACTION COG: Simulation and Testing Exhibit (training facility) at Gypsum Warehouse. Memo: Doug Jones, Jon Stavney	Pgs. 11-12
	8.	UPDATE COG: Project THOR future and Colorado Broadband Office Memo: Jon Stavney, Nate Walowitz	Pgs. 13-20
		UPDATE COG: Charging and Infrastructure Grant Update with Jonathan Godes (NWCCOG RGN) and Ashley from Sustainable Strategies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Process gathering input to August 28<sup>th</sup> submittal</li> <li>- Content of Submittal, Thank yous.</li> <li>- Other Grant, EECBG Staff Capacity Grant – did not submit memo</li> </ul>	
11:00 a.m.	9.	NEW BUSINESS / DIRECTOR ITEMS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jackson County is returning to NWCCOG</li> <li>- RTCC Summit</li> </ul>	
11:30 a.m.	10.	CONGRESSIONAL UPDATES	Pgs. 20-41
11:45 a.m.	11.	MEMBER UPDATES: 3 minutes per jurisdiction if time allows	
	12.	PROGRAM UPDATES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- See documents in packet and reach out to Jon with any comments</li> <li>- Executive Director New Business</li> </ul>	Pgs. 42-45
Noon	*13.	ACTION: Adjourn NWCCOG Meeting	

**NEXT NWCCOG MEETING:**

Thursday, October 24, 2024 Conference Call 10am – 12pm

Will Schedule Budget Workshop Call prior to this meeting for those interested in a deep dive into the details of the budget, then Budget Hearing will not be so long. Offering in-person option to see new conference room and offer food for those willing and able to travel

**NWCCOG Officers:** NWCCOG Council Chair – Alyssa Shenk, NWCCOG Council Vice-Chair – Patti Clapper NWCCOG Council Secretary-Treasurer – Carolyn Skowyra

**NWCCOG Executive Committee:** Region XII County members –Nina Waters, Patti Clapper, Tim Redmond, Jeanne McQueeney and Randal George. Municipal members – Alyssa Shenk, Geoff Grimmer, Glen Drummond, Kristen Brownson and Carolyn Skowyra.

\* requires a vote

**NWCCOG ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (EDD) BOARD MEETING**

12:30 p.m.	1.	Call to Order – EDD Board Chair, DiAnn Butler	
	2.	Roll Call and Determination of Quorum	
	*3.	ACTION EDD: July 2024 EDD Meeting Minutes	Pgs. 46-47
12:30 – p.m. 2:30p.m.	4.	<b>Strategic Discussion</b> - The EDD Board will engage in a strategic discussion on EDD board member roles and responsibilities	Pgs. 48-49
2:30 p.m.	*8.	Adjourn NWCCOG Meeting	

**NEXT EDD BOARD MEETING:**

Thursday, October 24, 2024 Conference Call from 12:30pm – 2:30pm

**EDD Officers:** EDD Chair – DiAnn Butler, EDD Vice-Chair – Patti Clapper, EDD Secretary-Treasurer – Ashley Macdonald

\* requires a vote

Please notify office@nwccog.org 5 days in advance if you require any accommodation to attend this meeting.



# Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

## NWCCOG Council Meeting

July 11, 2024

### **Board Members:**

Alyssa Shenk, Town of Snowmass Village  
Jena Skinner, Town of Avon  
Diane McBride, Town of Frisco  
Kristen Brownson, Town of Breckenridge  
Sara Nadolny, Town of Basalt  
Micheal Buccino, Steamboat Springs  
Randy George, Grand County  
Nina Waters, Summit County  
Carolyn Skowrya, Town of Dillon  
Steve Child, Pitkin County  
Geoff Grimmer, Eagle County  
Jacob Zook, City of Glenwood Springs  
Jonnah Glassman, Town of Silverthorne  
Melissa Matthews, Town of Red Cliff

### **Others Present:**

Erin McCuskey  
John Bristol

### **NWCCOG Staff:**

Jon Stavney  
Dana Wood  
Nate Walowitz  
Becky Walter  
Doug Jones  
Rachel Tuyn  
Jonathan Godes

### **Call to Order**

Alyssa Shenk, NWCCOG Council Chair, called the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) meeting to order at 10:02 am. Roundtable introductions were completed, and a quorum was present for the group.

### **Approval of December 2023 Council Meeting Minutes**

***M/S: Alyssa Shenk/Geoff Grimmer*** approve the June 2024 Council Meeting Minutes as presented.

***Passed: Yes***

### **Update Northwest Loan Fund Reports**

Jon explained the NLF Fund Report was a summary of all the loans that are outstanding, what the balances are, what the loan was for, as well as risk ratings and additional information.

### **Question for Quorum**

Jon posed the question on how many Council Members were planning to attend the September 5, 2024, Council Meeting to ensure there would be a quorum. The question arose because it is the week of Labor Day and the chance of people traveling could impact quorum. The majority of Council members committed to attending the September 5, 2024, meeting, more than enough to have a quorum.

### **Action: Proposed 2025 Member Dues**

Becky Walter presented, starting with the calculation of dues. Factors include new population numbers, assessed valuation of member entities, etc. Huge jumps were present in the valuation of NWCCOG entities. Using the weighted percentage of population and valuation for our members would have increased dues by 23%. The lowest valuation was in Glenwood at 26% with the highest in Snowmass at 69%. To account for this, the weighted valuation was lowered to factor dues calculation and weigh it higher on population as those numbers are more stable. The final increase in dues came to 6.5%.

***M/S: Kristen Brownson / Nina Waters*** to approve proposed 2025 NWCCOG Member dues structure.

***Passed: Yes***

**Discussion: Propositions 50 and 108 on the ballot for November**

Brought up in connection with future funding (per the NWCCOG dues) and how government organizations will adjust if property taxes are capped. Jonnah added a link if anyone would like to read more about the Propositions and CASTs opposition: [CAST on Props 50 & 108](#)

**Action: Enable NWCCOG to submit for the EV Infrastructure Funding Grant**

Jonathan Godes presented the grant available for \$20M for funding EV Infrastructure along the I-70 Corridor as well as State Highways through the NWCCOG territory. Jon asked that the motion would be to enable NWCCOG to apply/submit the application for Charging and Infrastructure Grant and to contract with Sustainable Strategies as the grant writer. The expected timeline of getting the groundwork done would be in 2026.

***M/S: Alyssa Shenk/Geoff Grimmer*** approve the EV Infrastructure Funding Grant.

***Passed: Yes***

**Action: EECBG Colorado Staff Capacity Grant**

Jonathan Godes presented to pursue a state grant for the purpose of increasing capacity and foster regional collaboration to advance local clean energy and sustainable programs. NWCCOG would pursue this \$240,000 three-year opportunity.

***M/S: Alyssa Shenk/Carolyn Skowyra*** approve the pursuit of the EECBG Colorado Staff Capacity Grant.

***Passed: Yes***

**Discussion: Vacancy Tax**

The Town of Eagle is trying to diversify the attainable housing stock through a steady stream of funding. A proposed vacancy tax for homes that are not utilized for the majority of the year would supplement the funding for attainable housing. Ultimately, this did not pass with the Town Council of Eagle, with concerns that second homeowners should pay a new assessed tax of 1% after the fact, when the tax did not exist when they purchased their home. This proposed tax is also a way around the short-term rental tax that has become a very polarizing topic in the area. Discussion on whether this type of tax could result in the same type of lawsuits that have come with short-term rental tax as initiating a tax to pay for wear and tear to the community when the house is empty is not a strong argument. This type of tax would have to apply to every home in Eagle, not just homes in a specific value bracket. Discussion continued with what the impact of vacant housing has on community affordability, and real estate transfer tax and housing solution.

**Discussion: Dillon Amphitheater Usage and Rental Fees**

The Town of Dillon went through some issues with the Dillon Community Church usage of the Amphitheater for church services. Through this issue, the Dillon Town Attorney resigned, leaving the Town of Dillon in a situation where business could be halted until a new attorney is found. The background being that the original Amphitheater from 40 years ago was an open venue and free for the use of anyone. Six years ago, the Town of Dillon invested \$10M in a new amphitheater that came with different legal requirements, liquor licenses, fencing, etc. When the management of the Amphitheater switched over 2 years ago, it was required for users of the venue to have a contract for the use of the venue. The Dillon Church agreed to this, but in doing so, meant that any private group that wanted to use the venue could not be turned down, they must be given the same opportunity as the church. Rental fees for usage would be around \$30K for private users, but the church was paying \$1.1K for the whole summer. Legally, this would mean that the Town of Dillon was subsidizing a church's use of a town facility. The summary being that members of the Town Council did not heed the attorney's advice and wanted to keep the agreement with the church. Lessons learned from this included having public servants become more familiar with Council Rules of Conduct and what it means to serve the whole community. Council cannot make motions on items that are not on the agenda. When issues like this arise, a policy needs to be created before an agreement is made.

**Adjournment**

***M/S: Alyssa Shenk/Nina Waters*** adjourned the NWCCOG Council meeting at 12:02PM

***Passed: Yes***

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Alyssa Shenk, NWCCOG Council Chair

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Date

Risk Ratings Report through 08/01/2024

By Master Loan

Grouped by Risk Rating > Loan ID

08/01/2024 08 24 PM

LoanID	Borrower	Loan Amount	Principal Balance	30d	30d +	60d +	90d +	120d +	150d +	180d +	Risk Rating	Rating Date	Reserve Percentage	Reserve Amount
Risk Rating: A. Satisfactory														
2021-0408-2	[REDACTED]	200,000.00	150,374.41								A. Satisfactory	07/19/2021	1.00%	1,503.74
2021-0610-1	[REDACTED]	162,665.38	101,045.11	1,100.00							A. Satisfactory	10/15/2020	1.00%	1,010.45
2021-1014-1	[REDACTED]	243,000.00	188,748.78								A. Satisfactory	11/09/2021	1.00%	1,887.49
2021-1116	[REDACTED]	40,000.00	20,671.86								A. Satisfactory	01/10/2022	1.00%	206.72
2023-0413	[REDACTED]	300,000.00	269,131.89								A. Satisfactory	05/05/2023	1.00%	2,691.32
2023-0608	[REDACTED]	80,000.00	72,513.46								A. Satisfactory	06/08/2023	1.00%	725.13
2023-0914	[REDACTED]	300,000.00	285,121.20								A. Satisfactory	10/31/2023	1.00%	2,851.21
2023-1011	[REDACTED]	100,000.00	95,836.97								A. Satisfactory	10/31/2023	1.00%	958.37
A. Satisfactory : 8 loans		1,425,665.38	1,183,443.68											11,834.43
Risk Rating: B. Watch														
2014-0313	[REDACTED]	20,000.00	1,261.38								B. Watch	03/31/2020	10.00%	126.14
2017-0914	[REDACTED]	250,000.00	127,995.42								B. Watch	03/31/2020	10.00%	12,799.54
2018-0305	[REDACTED]	280,000.00	129,919.71								B. Watch	03/31/2020	10.00%	12,991.97
2018-0510	[REDACTED]	25,000.00	5,520.08								B. Watch	03/31/2020	10.00%	552.01
2019-0516-1	[REDACTED]	95,000.00	59,745.87								B. Watch	03/31/2020	10.00%	5,974.59

Risk Ratings Report through 08/01/2024  
 By Master Loan  
 Grouped by Risk Rating > Loan ID

08/01/2024 08 24 PM

LoanID	Borrower	Loan Amount	Principal Balance	30d	30d +	60d +	90d +	120d +	150d +	180d +	Risk Rating	Rating Date	Reserve Percentage	Reserve Amount
2019-0516-1R	[REDACTED]	295,000.00	200,563.27								B. Watch	03/31/2020	10.00%	20,056.33
2019-0516-2	[REDACTED]	50,000.00	2,223.86								B. Watch	03/31/2020	10.00%	222.39
2019-0910	[REDACTED]	79,500.00	56,600.95								B. Watch	11/21/2023	10.00%	5,660.10
2019-1010	[REDACTED]	100,000.00	35,511.44								B. Watch	08/04/2022	10.00%	3,551.14
2019-1216	[REDACTED]	50,000.00	30,777.85								B. Watch	03/31/2020	10.00%	3,077.79
2020-0326	[REDACTED]	51,000.00	8,356.64								B. Watch	03/31/2020	10.00%	835.66
2020-0330	[REDACTED]	100,000.00	31,360.08								B. Watch	03/31/2020	10.00%	3,136.01
2020-0331	[REDACTED]	60,000.00	50,281.01								B. Watch	11/21/2023	10.00%	5,028.10
2020-0514	[REDACTED]	170,000.00	131,195.98	1,500.00	1,500.00						B. Watch	07/28/2021	10.00%	13,119.60
2021-0610-2	[REDACTED]	54,000.00	13,121.00	1,025.24	102.52						B. Watch	01/10/2022	10.00%	1,312.10
2021-0610-3	[REDACTED]	75,000.00	7,268.72	2,256.25	2,256.25	225.63					B. Watch	07/28/2021	10.00%	726.87
2021-0708-2	[REDACTED]	80,000.00	61,889.90								B. Watch	08/10/2021	10.00%	6,188.99
2021-1014-2	[REDACTED]	56,000.00	45,193.13								B. Watch	11/08/2021	10.00%	4,519.31

Risk Ratings Report through 08/01/2024

By Master Loan

Grouped by Risk Rating > Loan ID

08/01/2024 08 24 PM

LoanID	Borrower	Loan Amount	Principal Balance	30d	30d +	60d +	90d +	120d +	150d +	180d +	Risk Rating	Rating Date	Reserve Percentage	Reserve Amount
2022-0113-2	██████	250,000.00	204,591.65								B. Watch	02/16/2022	10.00%	20,459.17
2022-0714	██████	232,650.00	168,811.69								B. Watch	08/04/2022	10.00%	16,881.17
2023-0206	██████	18,700.00	10,238.19	600.00							B. Watch	02/23/2023	10.00%	1,023.82
2023-0209	██████	100,000.00	89,552.24	1,636.00							B. Watch	02/16/2023	10.00%	8,955.22
2023-0413-2 R	██████	46,428.00	43,296.86								B. Watch	04/28/2023	10.00%	4,329.69
2023-0713	██████	61,800.00	54,160.19	1,300.00							B. Watch	07/22/2023	10.00%	5,416.02
2023-511	██████	565,000.00	493,016.14								B. Watch	05/16/2023	10.00%	49,301.62
2024-0314	██████	162,000.00	39,346.26								B. Watch	03/19/2024	10.00%	3,934.63
2024-0314-2	██████	202,500.00	192,633.37								B. Watch	04/15/2024	10.00%	19,263.34
2024-0509	██████	25,000.00	24,603.86								B. Watch	06/17/2024	10.00%	2,460.39
2024-0613	██████	100,000.00	98,425.34								B. Watch	06/25/2024	10.00%	9,842.53
B. Watch: 29 loans		3,654,578.00	2,417,462.08											241,746.24
Risk Rating: F. Foreclosure														
2022-0113	██████	80,000.00	64,908.64	1,520.00	1,520.00	1,520.00	1,520.00	1,520.00	1,520.00	13,680.00	F. Foreclosure	09/08/2023	80.00%	51,926.91
2022-0113-R9	██████	50,000.00	40,636.23								F. Foreclosure	11/01/2023	80.00%	32,508.98
F. Foreclosure: 2 loans		130,000.00	105,544.87											84,435.89
<b>Report total: 39 loans</b>		<b>5,210,243.38</b>	<b>3,706,450.63</b>											<b>338,016.56</b>





Portfolio Summary Report -- ACTIVE ACCOUNTS  
By Master Loan  
(All transactions)

08/01/2024 08 22 PM

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LoanID	Borrower	Close Date	Loan Amount	Principal Balance	Cumulative Pmts		Latest Pmts		Periods Past Due						Days Past		
					Principal	Interest	Amount	Date	30d	30d +	60d +	90d +	120d +	150d +		180d +	
2020-0326	[REDACTED]	03/30/2020	51,000.00	8,356.64	42,643.36	4,356.64	1,000.00	07/19/2024									< 30
2023-0608	[REDACTED]	06/08/2023	80,000.00	72,513.46	7,486.54	5,513.46	1,000.00	07/19/2024									< 30
2022-0113-R9	[REDACTED]	01/25/2022	50,000.00	40,636.23	9,363.77	3,143.38	3,837.92	08/04/2023									< 30
2020-0514	[REDACTED]	05/18/2020	170,000.00	131,195.98	38,804.02	32,560.11	1,650.00	07/01/2024	1,500.00	1,500.00							30 +
2021-0610-2	[REDACTED]	06/21/2021	54,000.00	13,121.00	27,592.80	4,087.12	2,050.48	07/01/2024	1,025.24	102.52							30 +
2021-0610-3	[REDACTED]	07/28/2021	75,000.00	7,268.72	67,731.28	6,499.34	2,256.25	07/01/2024	2,256.25	2,256.25	225.63						60 +
2021-0408-2	[REDACTED]	07/19/2021	200,000.00	150,374.41	49,625.59	22,080.66	2,048.75	07/03/2024									< 30
2023-0914	[REDACTED]	10/19/2023	300,000.00	285,121.20	14,878.80	11,296.93	3,739.39	06/26/2024									< 30
2023-0209	[REDACTED]	02/16/2023	100,000.00	89,552.24	10,447.76	10,821.24	1,636.00	06/05/2024	1,636.00								< 30
2019-1010	[REDACTED]	11/07/2019	100,000.00	35,511.44	64,488.56	16,617.44	1,115.00	06/26/2024									< 30
2021-0610-1	[REDACTED]	10/15/2020	162,665.38	101,045.11	60,247.16	11,823.15	1,100.00	06/09/2024	1,100.00								< 30
2023-0413-2 R	[REDACTED]	04/28/2023	46,428.00	43,296.86	3,131.14	4,877.60	800.79	07/01/2024									< 30
2024-0314-2	[REDACTED]	04/15/2024	202,500.00	192,633.37	9,866.63	3,293.37	6,580.00	06/26/2024									< 30
2023-0413	[REDACTED]	05/05/2023	300,000.00	269,131.89	30,868.11	18,174.89	4,604.00	07/03/2024									< 30
2024-0509	[REDACTED]	06/17/2024	25,000.00	24,603.86	396.14	119.86	516.00	07/11/2024									< 30
<b>Report total: 39 loans</b>																	
			5,210,243.38	3,706,450.63	1,439,133.22	579,414.37	198,836.31		10,937.49	5,378.77	1,745.63	1,520.00	1,520.00	1,520.00	13,680.00		



## 2022 Risk Ratings – Northwest Loan Fund

Loan Grades and percentage of loan balance in Allowance for Loan Loss

LOAN GRADE	GUIDING DESCRIPTION	% OF LOAN BALANCE IN ALLOWANCE FOR LOAN LOSS
Satisfactory	Performing As Agreed and well secured	1%
Watch	New Loans - Non Real Estate secured	10%
Substandard	Issue with performance	30%
Doubtful	Concern for full collection	60%
Foreclosure	Foreclosure	80%
Probable Loss	Probable Loss-keep on reports until Charge-Off	100%



# MEMORANDUM

**To:** NWCCOG Council  
**From:** Doug Jones, Energy Program Director and Jon Stavney, Executive Director  
**Date:** 21 August 2024  
**Re:** **UPDATE: Simulation and Testing Exhibit at Gypsum Warehouse**

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**INTERNAL PROBLEM:** Energy Program staff must be Building Performance Institute (BPI) certified within 18 months of date of hire by NWCCOG according to the Colorado Training Standards stipulated by the Colorado Energy Office. Most other states have constructed and operate Training Certification centers, many recently utilizing ARRA funds. Certification requires both a certified facility and a certified trainer. There are many other trainings and certifications, some required for advancement that best practice is to be tested in a controlled test facility rather than in the field. These include pressure testing, appliance testing, troubleshooting heat pumps, and various environmental air testing of a home. NWCCOG hires most Energy Technicians at an entry level and trains them throughout their tenure for advancement. A lack of qualified BPI inspectors, energy auditors and other key qualified staff is a regular impediment to workflow. BPI certification now is performed at a home in Fort Collins with a trainer who is flown in from elsewhere. There is no training at all on the Western Slope. Various levels of the certification can be completed in a day or a week at a center. NWCCOG staff require training that involves extensive travel and logistics. Having our own certified Simulation and Testing Exhibit (STE, like a tiny home) would save significant time and travel cost.

**COMMUNITY BENEFIT OPPORTUNITY:** Beyond convenience and savings for the Energy Program, the lack of BPI and related training is an impediment to deployment of sustainable goals and work opportunities for the private sector. For instance, Energy Smart Colorado would utilize our STE to do contractor training which could include as many as 30 existing employers who need to each train new employee annually. To qualify for insulation rebates such as getting an attic blown from Excel, the contractor must be certified. These also could be done at this facility. Note that the volume of trainings is unlikely to make the STE become an income generator Energy Staff estimates that fees for use of the STE would likely cover operational costs, and that the facility is unlikely to have so many training events as to need a dedicated administrator in the foreseeable future.

**FUNDING for STE:** In meeting with Energy Program leadership, and the Finance Director, we discussed that the CEO has twice applied for a Enhancement & Innovation Grant (requiring 50% match) for up to \$2M that would enable the CEO to create an on-line platform to standardize training across the state that would dovetail with the STE facility at our Gypsum Warehouse and fund the STE. They will be meeting to decide if they want to take the lead in that grant if it is successful or defer to NWCCOG to be the lead agency on the DOE grant. We may or may not want to take responsibility for other statewide projects envisioned in the grant (such as the on-line platform). In either case, that funding is unlikely to become available until 2025 and require significant additional procurement procedures and stipulations.

(more)

**PREFERRED SOLUTION:** The NWCCOG Energy Program fee-for-services revenue of which 50% funds the employee profit sharing is on track again to produce \$300,000 of gross profit in 2024. Energy leadership proposes allocating all of the remaining \$150,000 towards construction of the STE. The building will be constructed on piers in the yard behind the Gypsum warehouse. It is 12' x 22' with a gable roof so insulation can be blown in the attic. Below is a VERY preliminary budget:

The architectural and engineering (paid)	\$4,000
Materials takeoff estimate	\$75,000
Consultant Frammer (guess)	\$10,000
HVAC	Free
Other trades, (el. and gas) estimated	\$10,000.
Permitting	(seeking)

Energy Smart Colorado wants to pay for the entire HVAC system. A local builder had estimated framing the project for \$125,000 which is why Energy would like to do this in-house. Energy leadership instead proposes utilizing two Energy Techs dedicating 160 hours over two months supervised by an experienced framing contractor. A more detailed budget is being constructed currently.

**REQUEST:** this project could be considered part of the Energy Program training plan with budgeted funds which would not require Council approval. It could also be considered an additional enterprise, especially if it becomes a regional or state-wide training facility at some point that could also require an administrator and perhaps have a budget of its own. Therefore, as Executive Director, having discussed thoroughly with Doug and his team, and because the STE has the potential gain accolades for the program and further burnish it's brand, and cement our Energy Program's role as a leader in the field, I am requesting Council approval to move forward.



# MEMORANDUM

**To:** NWCCOG Council  
**From:** Nate Walowitz, Regional Broadband Director and Jon Stavney Executive Director  
**Date:** August 15, 2024  
**Re:** **State RFP for Middle Mile includes Integration of Project THOR**

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**BACKGROUND:** On June 24<sup>th</sup>, NWCCOG, along with Regions 10, and 9, NWCCOG Broadband program staff convened a meeting with the Colorado Broadband Office (CBO) and DOLA in Montrose. Our purpose was to seek clarity from two state agencies about the future of state involvement in middle mile broadband, and funding for the two statewide Regional Broadband Director (RBD) positions. Those positions have been 50% grant funded by DOLA which indicated in recent years that it would no longer fund the position (Nate), nor would DOLA continue the \$5M/year dedicated Broadband Fund.

Though I have had lengthy regular conversations with CBO, they have not been prepared or authorized to take on either funding the RBD or Middle Mile broadband projects. Since hiring former Eagle Town Manager Brandy Reitter to run CBO, the agency has primarily focused on distribution of the CPF, mapping and BEAD funding from federal government. In the final weeks of this past legislative session, Brandy and her team sought and were granted authorization and funding to focus on the Middle Mile business, and to take over funding streams including the Broadband Deployment Fund. CBO plans to absorb CDOT's fiber leasing program to be more customer facing with ISPs over the next 12 months starting with a pilot project this fall. They have also been in discussions with CDOT about altering the lease fees for public entities.

As I've discussed with Council each budget season and with recent enhancement grants, NWCCOG is proud to have stood-up a "carrier grade" middle mile network, operated it successfully and to have developed long-term operating budgets for it. Concurrently, in many respects Project THOR has outgrown us, so Nate and I have actively sought the next platform for its evolution. Nate and I have thought of Project THOR as a de-facto State Broadband Network for some time. Quite similarly, Region 10 (six counties from Delta/Montrose to Gunnison) has operated a middle mile broadband network that has extended infrastructure far beyond its boundaries. They too manage the network with a department of one employee supported by contracted services. Over time, our collective infrastructure has become critical to many Internet Service Providers, 911 call centers, hospitals and schools across much of Western Colorado. Project THOR's dynamic rerouting software and various fiber loops have had many fewer and shorter interruptions than incumbent networks serving the same geography. This spring with Regions 10, and 9 (five counties around Durango) we explored what structures might exist within Colorado State law for us to coordinate operations, align business plans, and perhaps consolidate the networks. Together we contracted with Kissenger & Fellman to clarify which structures for regional or statewide networks might exist in Colorado law. They brought in CTC to provide some examples of how larger networks worked in other states. We also came to understand that the CBO had been initiating some of the same explorations at a state level. At the meeting in Montrose, we sought clarity from DOLA and CBO to align efforts or understand what handoff may have occurred from DOLA to CBO with regard to middle mile broadband; specifically we asked:

1. Which state entity would fund broadband technical assistance after 2024?
2. Which state entity would be funding middle mile infrastructure after 2024?
3. Will either entity fund a grant for the five regions present in Montrose to transition networks into a coordinated super-regional network?
4. Implied was the question, wouldn't it be better for the CBO to step in and take the lead on that effort?

In our Montrose presentation we made a point. Together we are essentially already operating a quasi-state middle mile broadband network through a patchwork of funding and business models. For the Montrose meeting, we also included two other entities that recently received funding from CBO for Middle Mile Broadband networks, SCEDD, Region 8. When combined with Region 8 (six counties across the San Louis Valley), and Southwest Colorado Economic Development District which covers 13 counties from Lake to Kiowa and Baca, our geographic reach of current or future MM networks covered  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the state, and roughly 40 of the 64 counties across the state. Each the regions presented. NWCCOG explained the history of funding for Broadband in Colorado, celebrating DOLA's role and setting up the conversation, and the other regions presented on their current operations and plans.

**ANNOUNCEMENT:** Although Brandy Reitter and I, have had parallel conceptual talks about it, an Nate and CBO staff have been talking for some time about Project THOR being a building block for a state network, to our surprise and the complete astonishment of the other regions, **Brandy announced to this group that the CBO would be putting out an RFP this summer for a consultant to advise her agency on how to structure and operate a state network, and that part of that scope would be a first step of integrating the Project THOR into a state-owned/managed network.** The RFP release is forthcoming, but the integration of Project THOR may be on an independent track, and that our network could begin transitioning to the CBO in 2026. Eric Bergman, in his first month on the job as the Director of Local Government Program at DOLA agreed that the agency would extend funding for the RBN position in 2025 (just submitted for August 1 round).

**CAVEAT:** There has to date been no formal announcement by the state. Nate and I are waiting to put out a Press Release until the steps and timeline are established for the transition. The implication was that the CBO would want NWCCOG's (Nate's) expertise through the transition and possibly beyond. This outcome has put the other regions question about funding to interconnect each of their regions essentially in a holding pattern. We are ecstatic that Project THOR, which was conceived, designed, implemented, operated and recently upgraded under NWCCOG's leadership will become a flagship for the State moving forward.

**NOTE:** It's been 11 years that DOLA has funded the technical assistance position at NWCCOG, and 12 years that the EIAF (Mineral Impact Fund) has matched local government investment in broadband across the state for a total of \$93,428,618 in projects. Our region has benefitted to the tune of \$30.5M of that, nearly 1/3 of the total, not the least of which has been in helping stand up Project THOR which has become critical infrastructure for much of NW Colorado. NWCCOG's PPT from Montrose is available upon request.



# MEMORANDUM

**To:** NWCCOG Council  
**From:** Jonathan Godes, Regional Grants Navigator  
**Date:** 21 August 2024  
**Re:** **CFI Grant Update Memo (Presentation at Council Meeting)**

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At the September 5<sup>th</sup> Council meeting, Ashely Badesh of Sustainable Strategies, and I will present on the final scope of the project that will be submitted August 28<sup>th</sup>.

To catch up on how we arrived here, in June following robust approval from NWCCOG Council to contract with Sustainable Strategies and pursue it, we embarked on a NWCCOG-led federal grant application to dramatically expand electric vehicle (EV) charging stations throughout the region. The \$20 million dollar grant was submitted August 28<sup>th</sup> which included 153 charging ports in 21 municipalities across a 7-county region (Eagle-30, Garfield-22, Routt-11, Moffat-2, Pitkin-36, Grand-30, Summit-22) with a mix of level 2 and level 3 fast chargers. The memo in the June packet has more details about the grant announcement. Our intent this meeting is to present specifically what will have been submitted the week prior to the Council meeting.

Discussions about this grant opportunity arose in late April and circulated through a number of groups. In gathering support to decide whether to pursue the grant in the first place, our team coordinated with leaders at the county level by asking each for a \$5,000 contribution each to hire Sustainable Strategies (SS), a federal grant writer whose firm had written six CFI grants last cycle. SS represents municipalities, counties and special districts in our region and has a high degree of familiarity with our communities. Following the NWCCOG Council decision, we transitioned from collecting and coordinating interested partners to putting in order the nuts and bolts of determining charging locations and technical writing. In that outreach and scoping phase, we designated County leaders who were responsible for working with their municipalities on locations and obtaining letters of support. Without this leadership, NWCCOG could not have coordinated 21 municipalities on our own in the short timeframe that this came together.

At the recommendation of CLEER, we enlisted private sector contractor Winn-Marion, whose technical knowledge of infrastructure and charger costs were invaluable for project scoping. Grant awards are announced in November. Whether successful or not in the region winning a grant award, this could not have happened without the co-ordination from Transportation Coordinator Dana Wood, grant writer Ashely Badesh (SS), Dan Blanchard with Winn Marion, the established Regional Climate Solutions group lead by Gina McCrackin, and the enthusiasm of Jon Stavney, and the NWCCOG Council to empower this collaboration.

Federal Highway Administration web page for grant: [Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grant Summary](#) (CFI)



August 19, 2024

The Honorable Jared Polis, Governor  
State of Colorado

Shoshana Lew, Executive Director  
Colorado Department of Transportation

Dear Governor Polis and Director Lew,

The I-70 Coalition, represented by 27 towns, counties and businesses along the I-70 mountain corridor, continues to advocate for completing Phase I of the West Vail Pass Project as designed. We understand that a number of factors, many out of anyone's control, resulted in having to remove several critical safety improvements from the project. The reduced scope elements now being referred to as Construction Package 6 (CP6), includes almost two miles of the eastbound climbing/auxiliary lane and a section of westbound curve straightening at a location that has one of the highest crash rates on I-70.

We understand that every year in the late summer/early fall the Federal Highway Administration distributes unobligated federal Transportation Redistribution Funds to each state and that each state Department of Transportation has discretion on how these funds are spent. **We are writing to request that CDOT consider dedicating the 2024 federal Transportation Redistribution Funds to fund West Vail Pass CP6.** Please know that there is local commitment in the Vail Valley for completing the project. The Intermountain Transportation Planning Region (IMTPR) members from within Eagle County are considering reprioritizing their current number one IMTPR project from Dowd Junction to West Vail Pass CP6.

The two miles of eastbound auxiliary lane and the section of westbound curve straightening are significant components of the project, and have been identified by local emergency services as some of the most needed improvements from a safety perspective. We hope that CDOT will proactively work with I-70 corridor stakeholders to identify the funding needed to complete this important project as designed. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ryan Hyland".

Ryan Hyland, Chair

Cc: Senator Michael Bennet  
Senator John Hickenlooper  
Congressman Joe Neguse  
Barbara Bowman, Transportation Commission  
Jason Smith, Region 3 Transportation Director



May 3, 2024

Governor Jared Polis  
State of Colorado

Shoshana Lew, Executive Director  
Colorado Department of Transportation

Members of the Colorado Transportation Commission

Dear Governor Polis, Director Lew & Transportation Commissioners,

The undersigned stakeholders are deeply concerned and discouraged by the Colorado Department of Transportation's decision to reduce the scope of the West Vail Pass Project, specifically the eastbound "Narrows" auxiliary lane from mile marker 185-187 and the curve smoothing improvements westbound at mile marker 186.

The undersigned request CDOT leadership come to the table in a productive way to determine the best path forward to complete the project as was agreed to and supported by a long list of corridor stakeholders.

This project was a product of the I-70 PEIS Record of Decision (ROD), and the subsequent Environmental Assessment for the West Vail Pass Auxiliary Lanes. As with many components of the I-70 ROD, projects are difficult and expensive to both fund and construct. The Intermountain Transportation Planning Region (IMTPR) wrestled with how to advance projects such as Vail Pass and Floyd Hill when competing against other regional priorities. The IMTPR has a history of advancing significant projects during its nearly thirty-year history including Glenwood Canyon and Highway 82. Now, after enduring a nearly 11-year hold on I-70 projects until the PEIS concluded, we are advancing those on Interstate 70; however, regional allocated program funds alone will never support completion of a mega project such as the West Vail Pass Project.

Thanks to the actions that Governor Polis took in the U.S. House of Representatives, the I-70 corridor from Denver to Salt Lake City was designated a "Corridor of High Priority" in 2015. The then-CDOT Executive Director Shaileen Baht, said of the amendment that bestowed the designation, "This amendment rightfully recognizes what the people of Colorado already know, that Interstate 70 is not only important regionally, but nationally as well."

The West Vail Pass is also a project of significant statewide importance, so much so that the other three TPR's in Region 3 and the Mesa MPO committed "off the top" Senate Bill 267 funds so that this important project would be funded before any of these funds were distributed and prioritized amongst other Region 3 regional projects.

It is with this same determination that the undersigned request the completion of the project components currently removed from the project scope. We would like to work with CDOT leadership to determine how the project can be funded and completed as part of the current and ongoing construction efforts.

The stakeholders are very concerned that when audited by the Secretary of the US Department of Transportation Office, the reduced project will not align with the benefits promoted when awarded the

federal INFRA grant, at the time the largest grant in CDOT history. The reduced scope puts CDOT at risk of having to repay a portion of the funds, which would create more funding shortfall.

Vail Valley IMTPR members are considering reprioritizing the number one IMTPR project, Dowd Junction, if this would ensure completion of the West Vail Pass project as designed. Another source of funding would be to once again determine if there are some funds within Region 3, the three TPR's and Mesa MPO. Perhaps additional funding can be secured through other statewide programs or through Transportation Commission Contingency funds.

If the project bid had been significantly closer however still over the budget, there would have been additional funding allocated to award the project. We request that these funds remain available as a source of funds to complete the project. We also request that Colorado's upcoming share of federal Redistribution Funds be assigned to the West Vail Pass Project.

This project will never be cheaper to complete than it is today. Costs for remobilization, price escalation, and additional administrative costs to complete the project in the future will detract from other important projects on the horizon. We understand that additional funds will be required for the completion of the West Vail Pass project including the narrows and westbound curve straightening. Given that, we specifically ask that the Transportation Commission and CDOT headquarters provide the leadership and direction to work with corridor stakeholders in securing funding to complete this critical project.

Sincerely,



Travis Coggin, Mayor, **Town of Vail**



Chris Romer, Executive Director, **Vail Valley Partnership**



Matt Scherr, Chair, Board of **Eagle County** Commissioners



Will Cook, CEO, **Vail Health**



Amy Phillips Mayor, **Town of Avon**



Ryan Hyland, Chair, **I-70 Coalition**



Duke Gerber, Mayor, **Town of Red Cliff**



Earl Bidez, Mayor, **Town of Minturn**



Randy Wheelock, Commissioner, **Clear Creek County**



Chuck Harmon, Mayor, **City of Idaho Springs**

CC:

Speaker Julie McCluskie

Senator Dylan Roberts

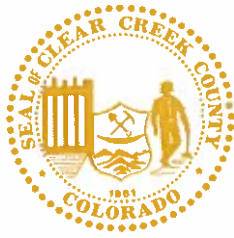
Representative Meghan Lukens

Senator Michael Bennet

Senator John Hickenlooper

Congressman Joe Neguse

John Cater, Federal Highway Administration



# Clear Creek County

POST OFFICE BOX 2000  
GEORGETOWN, COLORADO 80444

TELEPHONE: (303) 569-3251 • (303) 679-2300

July 2, 2024

Emily Hoskins  
Outreach Manager, Energy Program  
Northwest Colorado Council of Governments  
PO BOX 2308  
Silverthorne, CO, 80498

Dear Ms. Hoskins,

The Clear Creek County Board of Commissioners would like to express their appreciation for NWCCOG's administration of the weatherization programs available to our residents. The Colorado Weatherization Assistance Program (WEP) and the Colorado Affordable Residential Energy Program (CARE) for Clear Creek County have provided home improvements to many Clear Creek residents over the years. NWCCOG's active participation with our Housing and Human Services Departments (in conjunction with the Low-Income Energy/Assistance Program, LEAP) has further enhanced this program's success.

Over the past 4 years, NWCCOG has weatherized 70 homes in Clear Creek County through the CARE and WEP programs. As of September, 2023, they were on track to serve at least 14 more homes. Our Clear Creek Housing Department has been working with NWCCOG since the County Housing Department's inception in 2014 to provide many residents heating, water heater, and weatherization renovations/replacements to improve their lives.

Thank you for your efforts to work with the County to provide an active marketing campaign including an in-person educational event, radio interviews, flyers, and CCC Forum to make sure our county residents are aware of these services. Due to the work that NWCCOG, CCC Housing and Human Services Departments have done, this program is well introduced to our county residents. NWCCOG's excellent work has more than fulfilled expectations and is an asset to the county.

Our County looks forward to continuing collaboration with NWCCOG and appreciates NWCCOG's valuable administration of their programs. Thank you for providing these services over the years and continuing to improve the quality of life for our residents by providing no-cost improvements to their homes.

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## Colorado AG weighs formal role as Supreme Court reviews oil-train case

Proposed Uinta Basin rail project in Utah could result in surge of hazardous shipments along Colorado River

BY: **DAVID O. WILLIAMS** - AUGUST 6, 2024 1:40 PM



The Colorado River flows through Ruby and Horsethief canyons area near Mack, June 9, 2023. The railroad is at left. (William Woody for Colorado Newsline)

Colorado's attorney general recently left open the possibility he will take a formal role in [a case before the U.S. Supreme Court to help block a proposal that would send a massive surge of oil trains along the Colorado River.](#)

Attorney General Phil Weiser last week expressed disappointment that the [court in June agreed](#) to review [Eagle County's 2023 appellate court win](#), which derailed the proposed Uinta Basin

[Railway project in Utah](#). The project would likely result in a [dramatic increase in hazardous oil shipments](#) traveling through the Colorado mountains and Denver toward Gulf Coast refineries.

“The proposed plan to run two-mile-long trains filled with hundreds of thousands of barrels of waxy crude oil along the Colorado River daily poses an extreme risk to this critical water source and the communities, industries, and farmers that rely on it,” Weiser wrote in an email statement to Colorado Newsline. “This proposal was rightfully tossed out by an appellate court. I am presently considering all options to protect the Colorado River – that includes weighing in with the U.S. Supreme Court as it reviews the case.”



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The U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit last year ruled the U.S. Surface Transportation Board, which is the primary federal regulatory agency overseeing U.S. rail projects, erred under the National Environmental Policy Act and ordered the agency to fix significant problems with the proposed 88-mile rail spur’s environmental impact statement.

The [appeals court found](#) the STB failed to properly weigh both the upstream and downstream impacts of oil production, including accident data, downline fire risks and the impact to endangered fish from predicted oil spills in the Colorado River.

The seven Utah counties surrounding the Uinta Basin oil fields, which formed the Seven County Infrastructure Coalition, [petitioned the Supreme Court](#) to hear the case in March. The Seven County Infrastructure Coalition v. Eagle County [case](#) will be [heard](#) during the high court’s next session, which begins in October.

Weiser – a former Supreme Court clerk to justices Byron White and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, former dean of the University of Colorado law school, and former U.S. Justice Department attorney in the anti-trust division – has been one of the top state officials critical of the Uinta Basin Railway project.

“I am disappointed the Supreme Court heard (the Uinta Basin) case. We won an important decision,” Weiser said in a phone interview last week. “I have been a vocal critic of the idea of taking what seems to me a high-risk move through a fragile ecosystem by allowing there to be the shipping of oil in railway cars that could lead to the sort of ecological harms we’ve seen happen elsewhere.”

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I'm worried about all of our environmental statutes if the mindset is, 'How do we gut any environmental protections?' We as a society are going pay a price for that, whether that's coming from the Supreme Court or a second Trump administration.

– *Phil Weiser, Colorado attorney general*

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Weiser points to the environmental devastation of Norfolk Southern railroad’s East Palestine, Ohio, chemical train derailment last year.

“It doesn’t take much for a single incident to create extraordinary and lasting damage, and that, too, is a good basis for prohibiting (the Uinta Basin) project for going forward, so we’ll continue to make that case,” Weiser said. “I worry that a Supreme Court that is not interested in protecting our land, air and water could be less sympathetic to this point. We did see that lack of sympathy in the case involving the Clean Water Act.”

In last year’s *Sackett v. the Environmental Protection agency* case, decades of federal wetlands protections under the Clean Water Act were [stripped away by the court](#), forcing Colorado to stand up its own regulations after a [compromise with Republicans in the state Legislature](#).

Weiser said the only silver lining in that case was that conservative Justice Brett Kavanaugh sided with the liberal minority, joining Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and Ketanji Brown Jackson in dissenting against the ruling.

“We were successful in that case with Justice Kavanaugh, but obviously we were still a vote short,” Weiser said. “I’m worried about all of our environmental statutes if the mindset is, ‘How do we gut any environmental protections?’ We as a society are going pay a price for that, whether that’s coming from the Supreme Court or a second Trump administration.”

From an antitrust standpoint, Weiser says consolidation in the railroad industry has opened up new risks of harm, because less competition leads companies to be less committed to reliable, safe service and adequate staffing. While federal legislation is stalled, [Colorado lawmakers took up the issue](#) last session and set up a new state rail safety office.

“Part of the challenge from a competition standpoint is the Surface Transportation Board I believe has had the sole authority to evaluate mergers in rail, and they’ve been willing to approve mergers in rail that really highly concentrated that industry,” Weiser said, specifically referring to the U.S. Justice Department objecting to the Union Pacific merger with Southern Pacific in 1996.

“I think the system of oversight that does not allow the Justice Department to stop anti-competitive mergers is problematic, and it’s problematic that the Surface Transportation Board took action in this case and did not take the Department of Justice competition concerns more seriously,” Weiser added. Now Union Pacific controls most east-west freight through Colorado and is currently [negotiating with the state](#) for a new lease at the state-owned Moffat Tunnel.

[Eagle County officials have said they hope the state will take a more active role in the Uinta Basin Railway battle going forward, citing \\$450,000 in legal fees.](#)

[Democratic Colorado Gov. Jared Polis](#), in a rare statement on the Utah oil-train project, which has united the state’s Democratic lawmakers in opposition, said that if the Supreme Court greenlights the Uinta Basin Railway this fall, it will have “profound implications across the West.”

“It’s a legal case that we’re following, of course,” [Polis said recently in Vail](#), as quoted in the Colorado Times Recorder. “We’re actively monitoring it. It would have a major impact on our state for sure, in terms of transportation. I don’t have any say over it. It’s not up to the governor. It’s a pending court case, so we’re aggressively



monitoring it, and it would have profound implications across the West.”

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**DAVID O. WILLIAMS**

David O. Williams is an award-winning freelance journalist based in EagleVail, Colorado. His work has appeared in more than 75 publications around the world and he owns and operates [RealVail.com](#).

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# Summit County's wages lag behind other High Country resort communities, federal data shows

## Hospitality industry pay impacts average wages in Western Slope counties that largely rely on tourism

News [FOLLOW NEWS](#) | Aug 3, 2024



**Kit Geary** [FOLLOW](#)  
kgeary@summitdaily.com



Downtown Breckenridge is pictured Sept. 3, 2023. Federal wage data from that period demonstrates Summit County's average wage lags behind that of other Western Slope resort counties, even those considered to have a similar cost of living.

Tripp Fay/For Summit Daily News

Recent data from the [U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis](#) shows the average worker in Summit and Grand counties make less than those in comparable Colorado resort communities.

[Northwest Colorado Council of Governments](#), an association of county and municipal governments that collaborates on mutual interests and benefits for the region, gave its quarterly update in June based off the newest set of federal wage data for the fourth quarter of 2023.

Out of the Western Slope resort counties included in the data, Pitkin led the pack with an average wage of \$84,396, which is anywhere from \$17,000 to \$33,000 more than other Colorado resort counties that were analyzed and over \$5,600 more than the state's average wage.

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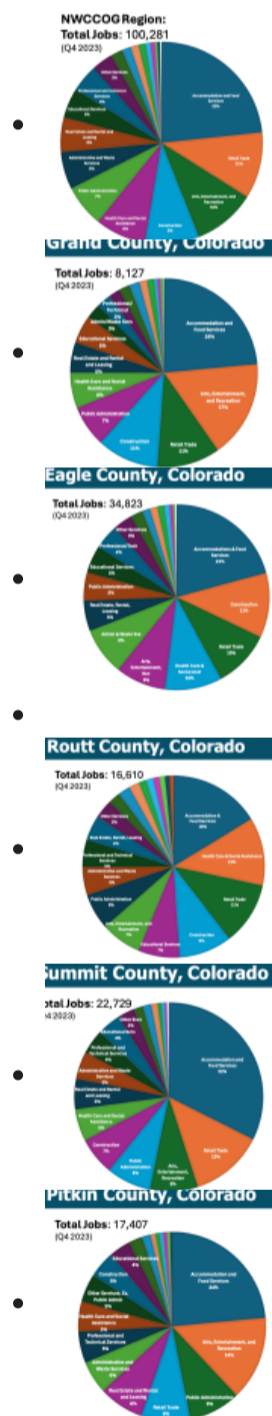
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Christy Gonzales with the Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium said that while the economies in these five counties are all driven by tourism, those counties with increased diversification of industries saw higher average wages.

“Pitkin County and Routt County have a more diversified economy compared to Summit County because (they) have a higher concentration of industries like finance, real estate and professional services,” Gonzales said.

Northwest Colorado Council of Governments Economic Development Director **Rachel Tuyn** said the accommodation and food service industries have some of the most significant effects on average wages across the region.

For these rural resort communities, the accommodation and food service industries make up anywhere from 16% to 32% of the workforce, making them the most popular industries in all five counties.



[Show Captions](#)

Summit County has the largest percentage of accommodation and food service jobs in its workforce out of the five counties, accounting for 32%. Tuyn said it is considered one of the primary contributing factors causing Summit’s average wage to lag behind counties that are considered to have a similar cost of living.



Summit's highest-paying jobs are more scarce. Professional and technical services, which data shows paid an average salary of \$107,172, and upper-level managerial positions, which had an average salary of \$182,780, make up around 4% and 0.26% of the workforce, respectively.

Organizations in Summit, such as the [Summit Economic Partnership](#), are working on diversifying the local economy through various initiatives to help startups solidify themselves in the business landscape. The organization works individually with companies on how to increase economic factors such as revenue and customers.

"We want to increase wages. That's going to create a more solid, local middle class here, where people aren't moving around," Summit Economic Partnership Executive Director [Thayer Hirsh](#) said. "We want generations living here."

Also on the lower end of regional average wages, Grand County had 24% of its workforce employed in accommodation and food service industries. In Grand, these workers made an average salary of \$34,528. Behind the hospitality industry is the arts, entertainment and recreation industries, which account for a total of 17% of the jobs in the workforce with an average salary of \$34,632. High-paying salaries have even less of a presence in Grand, with next to no industries paying six-figure salaries, according to The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Grand's two highest-paying industries, utility jobs and upper-level managerial positions for companies, had average salaries of \$97,916 and \$96,044, respectively. Yet, utility jobs account for 1.8% of jobs in the workforce, and upper-level managerial positions account for 0.12% of total jobs.

Pitkin County also has accommodation and food industry jobs accounting for a large portion of its total at 24%, yet the wages these workers make are significantly higher than in Grand. Data shows workers in these industries make an average salary of \$51,168. Eagle County has the second-highest regional wages in these industries at an average of \$41,288.

[Tuyn said](#) Routt County, which is in the middle of the pack for average wages, has fewer accommodation and food service industry jobs, making up 16% of the workforce, which results in a higher average wage in comparison to the other counties.

"In Routt County, 12% of jobs are in the health care and social assistance industry, which tends to be higher-skilled jobs which require a certain amount of education and training and pays higher wages," Tuyn said, noting the industry pays an average salary of \$75,452 in Routt.

To help facilitate wage growth, the Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium is working on talent development in the region and encouraging transferable skills in employees who are in the hospitality industries.

"Being able to have that versatility and flexibility during those off-peak seasons are really going to help them when those different job opportunities happen to be limited," Gonzales said. "It also helps with career advancement."

In addition, the consortium is working on supporting local apprenticeships in industries like the trades. Northwest Colorado Council of Governments supports similar efforts and works with local organizations like the Summit Economic Partnership to help boost its initiatives, as well.

[Overall, the region Northwest Colorado Council of Governments covers — including the five resort counties and Jackson County — had around 100,000 jobs in the fourth quarter of 2023, which is a near 4% year-over-year increase.](#)

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## BRIEFLINE

## Bipartisan dredge and fill regulations get Colorado Senate approval

BY: LINDSEY TOOMER - MAY 7, 2024 3:02 PM



 A Sandhill Crane performs a ritual mating dance as tens of thousands of cranes fly in at sunset to roost for the night in the wetlands of the Monte Vista Wildlife Refuge on March 8, 2008 in Monte Vista, Colorado. (Doug Pensinger/Getty Images)

The Colorado Senate unanimously approved a now-bipartisan bill that will implement new protections for waters left vulnerable by a U.S. Supreme Court decision that [narrowed the reach of the Clean Water Act](#).

While the Colorado Legislature initially considered [competing bills](#) creating different permitting programs, Sen. Barbara Kirkmeyer, a Weld County Republican and

original sponsor of [Senate Bill 24-127](#), joined the Democratic sponsors of [House Bill 24-1379](#) following negotiations.

The bill would create a permitting program under the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment for dredge and fill activities that impact state waters including streams, rivers and wetlands, with a variety of exemptions related to certain activities, particularly involving agriculture.



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Following the 2023 Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency ruling, many small streams and wetlands are no longer covered by the Clean Water Act, meaning states need to introduce new regulations if they want to protect those waters.

House sponsors Speaker Julie McCluskie, a Dillon Democrat, and Rep. Karen McCormick, a Longmont Democrat, pushed through 23 amendments on the House floor before the bill made it to the Senate.

The Senate bill, which Kirkmeyer originally supported, intended to house the permitting program under the Department of Natural Resources and further limit which waters were subject to the program. She now is a co-sponsor for the House bill, while the Senate bill is no longer scheduled for further discussion this session.

One final amendment in the Senate Finance Committee brought many of the organizations that initially favored the Senate version of the bill to support the House bill. Sen. Dylan Roberts, a Friso Democrat and House bill sponsor, said the amendment was “crucial” in getting the overall support the bill now has.

That amendment clarifies that permits are subject to guidelines established in the Clean Water Act and says those guidelines cannot be reduced by future

administrations, Roberts said. Roberts said this is to avoid the confusion that's come up previously as Clean Water Act provisions have changed based on who is in the White House and what their administration prefers.

"We want to set in place where we are in Colorado so that we can give assurance and no more changes," Roberts said to the Senate Finance Committee.

Roberts said the amendment also adds clarification on stream restoration, grandfathering existing projects, and flexibility and maintenance allowances for irrigation ditches. The amendment also requires CDPHE to report to the Legislature with quarterly reports to the Joint Budget Committee on how the program is going.

"We don't want a backlog of permits. We don't want things to get slowed down," Kirkmeyer said. "We want to make sure that the Joint Budget Committee, if necessary, needs to do some additional funding to make sure that they have the resources necessary to be successful with this program, that's what we want to do."

Kirkmeyer told Newsline she and Roberts sat down with stakeholders including the health department, environmental groups, the Colorado Water Congress and those who will have to implement the permit program "and we hammered it out and we got to an agreement."

"Are there things in there maybe that they wish were a little bit different?" Kirkmeyer said. "Yes, but everybody's got to give when we're trying to get to something to ensure that we protect our streams and wetlands and our water resources here in the state of Colorado, and that's what we did."

The House will need to approve the Senate amendments on the bill before it goes to Democratic Gov. Jared Polis for a signature.

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### LINDSEY TOOMER

Lindsey Toomer covers politics, social justice and other stories for Newsline. She formerly reported on city government at the Denver Gazette and on Colorado mountain town government, education and environment at the Summit Daily News.

Colorado Newsline is part of [States Newsroom](#), the nation's largest state-focused nonprofit news organization.

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August 7, 2024

## START WITH THE TRUTH



August 2, 2024

Eve Lieberman, Executive Director  
Office of Economic Development and International Trade  
State of Colorado  
Via email

Update: August 13, Rachel and I had a call with Eve who apologized for year delay in reimbursement. Said was not processed correctly by OEDIT staffer, now working with state comptroller to correct to get COGs paid.

Dear Executive Director Lieberman,

We the undersigned executive directors of our respective regional councils of government and economic development organizations have been partnering with the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) on many critical projects and initiatives over the years. We have enjoyed a great working relationship with your team, and we collectively have much progress to show for that collaboration with enhanced economic activity and opportunity across Colorado.

However, over the past year or so, one challenge we all face is the inability to be reimbursed for work performed under agreements we have in place with OEDIT. In some instances, we prepared federally approved Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) documents, with agreements to be funded certain amounts by OEDIT, but have yet to be fully reimbursed. We were encouraged to prepare CEDS documents to be consistent with the concurrent statewide process. Other regions with active CEDS were granted funds to forward a CEDS project priority. Funding was advertised in the May 2023 Rural Opportunity Office newsletter and applications due June 30<sup>th</sup>. Awards were announced in late August. Projects included providing staff support for coordinating regional opioid settlement work among other regional priorities.

Since throughout 2023, many of us have submitted for reimbursement repeatedly and others have delayed starting projects due to not being able to fund the work upfront. We have also had to let other grant opportunities lapse based on the continued promise that funding is forthcoming but has not come through. In our efforts to seek reimbursement, we have sent numerous emails and placed multiple phone calls with little or no response or explanation from OEDIT for the continued delays for payment. We understand that this may be beyond the control of the Rural Resiliency Office, and thus we wanted to bring this to your attention. A list of our agencies and the status of reimbursable amounts is attached.

In many of these instances, the dollar amounts may appear to be relatively small on the surface, however they have significant impact to us. For our finances, many of us operate primarily as grant-driven, reimbursable organizations, and we have to balance grant funds in our budgets with local dollars that are used for match and other non-reimbursable expenses. To put that in perspective, if one of us lost out on \$20,000 for a project that we understood would be funded by OEDIT, that unanticipated loss would then be required to be backfilled with limited local funds. Having to repurpose \$20,000 in local funds that would otherwise have been used as match on a 10% matchable grant means that we're unable to put \$200,000 to use in our work plans, so that impact is compounded and significant.

We would appreciate any guidance you can offer in terms of how to resolve this issue around timely and full reimbursements. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Laura Lewis Marchino ([laura@region9edd.org](mailto:laura@region9edd.org)), Chair of the Colorado Association of Regional Organizations (CARO)

and Executive Director of Region 9, or Andrew Gunning (agunning@ppacg.org), Executive Director of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments. Thank you,

Andrew Gunning, Executive Director, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments

Laura Lewis Marchino, Executive Director, Region 9 Economic Development District

Tiffany Dickenson, Executive Director, Associated Governments of Northern Colorado

Michelle Haynes, Executive Director, Region 10 League for Economic Assistance and Planning

Leslie Mastroianni, Executive Director, Southern Colorado Economic Development District

Kenneth Mooney, Executive Director, Northeastern Colorado Association of Local Governments

Candace Payne, Executive Director, East Central Council of Governments

Douglas Rex, Executive Director, Denver Regional Council of Governments

Jon Stavney, Executive Director, Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

Richard Werner, President/CEO, Upstate Colorado Economic Development

Cc: Jeff Kraft, Deputy Director

Katharina Papenbrock, Director, Rural Resiliency Office

Attachment: Regional organizations and the outstanding reimbursables by OEDIT

**Regional organizations and OEDIT reimbursable status**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Total agreed upon amount with OEDIT</b>	<b>Reimbursed amount so far</b>
Pikes Peak Area Council of Govts.	CEDS development	\$40,000	\$14,000
Region 9 EDD	CEDS implementation	\$40,000	\$10,000 in March 2024. Purchase Order received in July 2024.
East Central Council of Govts.	Recovery Roadmap and CEDS implementation	\$41,000 (recovery) \$40,000 (CEDS implementation)	\$0
Southern Colorado EDD	CEDS implementation	\$120,000	\$69,565
Denver Regional Council of Govts.	CEDS development	\$40,000	\$0
Associated Governments of Northern Colorado	CEDS implementation	\$40,000	\$0
Upstate Colorado Economic Development	CEDS development	\$40,000	\$0
Northwest Colorado Council of Govts.	CEDS implementation	\$40,000	\$10,000
Northeastern Colorado Assoc. of Local Govts.	CEDS development	\$40,000	\$0

NEWS: BUSINESS

# Colorado resort communities want to impose a vacancy tax on unoccupied homes

The legislative agenda for the Colorado Association of Ski Towns includes a first-ever vacancy tax as well as a real estate transfer fee on all property sales to help fund affordable housing

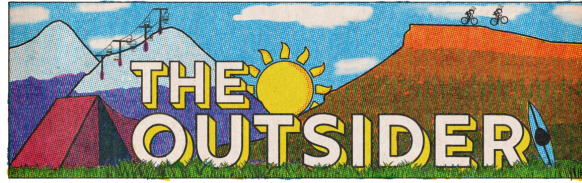


Jason Blevins

3:50 AM MDT on Aug 7, 2024 Updated 5:36 PM MDT on Aug 8, 2024



Large family homes sit above the Snake River Arm, July 19, 2024, in Summit County. The Summit Cove neighborhood has a few listings on Airbnb. (Hugh Carey, The Colorado Sun)



**A** consortium of mountain towns will push Colorado lawmakers this year to pass legislation that would enable local governments to ask voters to tax homes that sit empty for most of the year.

There are no communities in Colorado that tax empty homes, but the growing challenge of building affordable housing for workers in mountain communities where real estate prices are soaring and as many as 40% of homes are unoccupied by full-time residents is fueling creative thinking around new revenue sources.

“We are not asking the legislature to make it so. This just clears some potential land mines for communities who might want to do this,” said Jonathan Godes, a councilman in Glenwood Springs and president of the Colorado Association of Ski Towns, or CAST, which is promoting the legislation for the coming session.

CAST is asking its 28 resort town members to support a bold legislative agenda this year. The group also is hoping for lawmakers to **approve legislation** that will enable local governments to approve fees on every real estate transaction.

(There are 12 Western Slopes communities that have real estate transfer taxes — from 1% to 3% on all property transactions — that were established before passage of the 1992 Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights, or TABOR, which prevents new taxes without voters approval. Those communities — Aspen, Avon, Breckenridge, Crested Butte, Frisco, Gypsum, Snowmass Village, Telluride, Vail and Winter Park — are **collecting record revenues in recent years** as home prices soar.)

CAST also plans to lobby for legislation that would smooth the process for asking voters to allow taxes on short-term rentals. In recent years, voters in **at least 10 mountain towns** have overwhelmingly approved taxes on vacation rentals.

Local governments are preparing for **potential ballot initiatives in November** that would slow property tax collections as real estate values climb. Proposition 50 would cap property tax increases at 4% a year. Initiative 108 would cut assessment rates for residential and commercial property.

 Listen here!

Go deeper into this story in this episode of The Daily Sun-Up podcast.



The Daily Su...

Should homes that...

00:00 / 13:31

If those measures pass, “counties are thinking about how we diversify our revenues so that we’re not solely reliant on property taxes,” Summit County Commissioner Tamara Pogue said. “The wild swings are hard on our residents and also hard on those of us who care about good governance and balanced budgets, both of which require an ability to forecast. That’s becoming increasingly difficult with the annual decreases in the assessment rate.”

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CAST **last year pushed for a real estate transfer fee** but the legislation never advanced.

CAST is careful to call the real estate transfer revenue proposals a “fee” to sidestep the legal requirement for voter approval of new taxes under TABOR. While the tax on vacant homes would require voter approval, a real estate transfer fee could be passed by local elected officials.

“If the real estate transfer fees are fees, not taxes, used to defray the cost of a particular government service, such as affordable housing, then TABOR does not apply,” reads an **April memo** from the association’s attorneys at the Sherman & Howard law firm. That memo cites the **2018 decision by the Colorado Supreme Court** that ruled Aspen’s 2011 ordinance charging 20 cents for paper bags at local stores was a fee to offset costs of waste reduction and not a tax that would require voter approval under TABOR.

There are other vacancy taxes under consideration outside the state as destinations grapple with a housing crisis in areas with large numbers of vacation homes.

In South Lake Tahoe, voters this fall will weigh a tax on homeowners whose properties are empty more than 182 days a year. The tax — **\$3,000 per unit for the first year of vacancy** and \$6,000 for subsequent years — would support building more housing for working

locals. A recent survey showed **44% of the 16,276 homes in South Lake Tahoe are vacant**, up from 33% in 2000. Proponents vying to get the vacancy tax on the fall ballot say it could be the city's largest single revenue source.

In Hawaii, lawmakers have spent **two years debating legislation** that would impose a 3% tax on the assessed value of homes that are vacant for more than 180 days a year. The legislation is meant to deter real estate speculation in a state where investors from afar now spend as much as \$5 billion a year on homes, up from \$500 million in 2008.

## READ MORE

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**Short-term rental owners show up in force to oppose Colorado lawmakers' plan to tax their homes at a much higher rate**

3:50 AM MDT on Nov 1, 2023

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**Lawsuits challenging Summit County regulation of short-term rentals dismissed by federal courts**

3:50 AM MDT on Jul 22, 2024

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**Plan to quadruple property taxes on short-term rentals in Colorado fails in late-night Capitol committee vote**

10:53 AM MDT on Apr 17, 2024

Crested Butte voters in 2021 rejected a proposal for a \$2,500-a-year **empty home tax** on homes that were vacant half the year.

Most vacancy tax proposals point to Vancouver in British Columbia, where a 3% annual tax rate based on the assessed value of empty homes that launched in 2017 has raised **\$142 million in revenue** for affordable housing in the city while reducing the number of vacant homes in the city by 54%.

The proposal from CAST says the vacancy tax legislation would authorize local governments "to disincentivize those vacancies."

"Local programs could then use the tax revenue to incentivize renting those vacant homes to the local workforce," a position statement from the association reads. (Publicly funded programs in Breckenridge, Eagle County, Summit County and Winter Park **offer cash to owners** who stop renting their properties to vacationers and sign long-term leases with working locals.)

There are **more than 4,000 active licenses** for short-term rentals in Summit County, where federal courts last month **dismissed lawsuits filed by property owners** challenging recent local tax plans and limits. Owners of second homes and vacation rentals are growing weary of the **recent deluge of regulations** and legislative proposals, said Toby Babich, who runs a property management company in Breckenridge and serves as board president of the Summit Alliance of Vacation Rental Managers.

Babich said lodging occupancy is declining and tax revenue from short-term rentals and traditional hotels is falling in Summit County. With the decline, the additional caps, taxes and hurdles are threatening tourism economies, Babich said. Those 4,000 licensed properties are supporting local businesses by hosting visitors, he said.

“I don’t know if we’ve reached a breaking point as much as it is already broken and these local governments are looking for the short-term rental industry to go away,” Babich said. “There is definitely a place for taxation and regulation and we understand there is a need for housing and it’s difficult to live up here. We want to be part of the solution. But we can’t be the whole solution.”

The legislative position from the ski town association defines vacant homes “as those not used as homes for most of the year.” It is unclear if a home filled with vacationers — and not necessarily the owner — would be considered vacant.

The U.S. Census Bureau, for example, counts homes that are rented to short-term visitors as unoccupied because no one is living in the house. The latest U.S. Census **American Community Survey in 2022** showed a total of 205,621 homes that were not occupied by owners in Colorado and 2.38 million occupied homes. The survey showed 90,728 of those unoccupied homes were for “seasonal, recreational or occasional use” and 43,819 of those vacant homes were available for rent. Colorado legislators have counted about **24,100 homes in Colorado** that are available as short-term rentals, many of those clustered around resort communities.





Large homes fill the landscape in front of Breckenridge ski area, Aug. 9, 2023, in Summit County. (Hugh Carey, The Colorado Sun)

Many of the finer points in the legislative plan — like how many days a house would need to be unoccupied to be considered vacant — would be hammered out with specific lawmakers who craft the legislation. And some of those details around a vacancy tax would be addressed in local ballot questions, Godes, the Glenwood Springs councilman, said.

“In my opinion, speaking with my council hat on, a home filled with short-term renters and sometimes (the owner’s) family, I do not think that home is vacant,” he said. “But that might be different for different communities.”



# PROGRAM UPDATES

**To:** NWCCOG Council  
**From:** NWCCOG Program Directors and Staff  
**Date:** September 2024  
**Re:** Program Updates

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The following are events of note occurring since the July 2024 NWCCOG Council meeting.

## Regional Business – *Jon Stavney, Executive Director*

Immediately following our July 11 meeting, I left for 9 days in Idaho on a raft trip which was fantastic. I then worked remotely from Oregon from my parents home, helping them with some health issues. During this time and for a week or more upon returning, keeping up with the daily business of the organization and assisting Directors with a variety of challenges more than kept me occupied and prevented embarking on some of the larger projects on my plate.

The DOLA grant for the Regional Broadband Director was submitted for the August cycle. This is anticipated to be unquestioned because of previous conversations between NWCCOG, DOLA and CBO in Montrose earlier this summer. See Memo in packet about Project THOR and CBO. That has taken significant work in the background this year.

The second of two insurance claims was finalized in July also requiring a review of all materials and submittal of a full documentation of the issue to AIG which has confirmed receipt. CIRSA has already paid on the claim. Silverthorne PD continues to pursue the Warrant at BMO/Harris bank in California to disclose the account holders names.

I've presented the "Education" benefit to the Energy and Elevator staff this summer and we have our first applicant and award following a Directors meeting in which we reviewed the application. Note for the upcoming budget that our allocation for 2024 for this is not likely to be fully utilized because of this being announced and deployed later in the year than anticipated.

I've been working with Margaret at CAST to gather data and put together a narrative on real estate transfer taxes. Rachel has been helpful in that.

## Broadband Program – *Nate Walowitz, Regional Broadband Director*

Project THOR continues to expand services offered to ISPs and community anchor customers. We have added additional ISPs and expanded services in Glenwood Springs, Kremmling and Granby. We also ordered new 100G connections to support the new Middle Park Health facility in Fraser (Spring 2025) at their request. I have been contacted by a few new ISPs to the region to connect to Project THOR over the next few months. I continue to work with Town of Frisco and their broadband engineering partner to assist as needed, including providing a quote for Project THOR middle mile access and services.

As previously reported, we have encountered a few network software challenges that we are working through with Ekinops. They have been very responsive and appreciate the critical nature and service requirements of

our network. Encountering and resolving software and hardware issues is a normal part of large network integrations. We have 15% of our network connections migrated over because we can reliably provide fully protected connections for these communities. All other communities will stay on the old network equipment until we can provide them with fully protected connections. This is one of the features that distinguishes the Project THOR network from other network providers.

Jon Stavney and I have worked with State of Colorado Broadband Office (CBO), DOLA, and CDOT during the 2024 legislative session to help shape broadband policies that continue to support our communities and middle mile broadband networks across our region and the state. We have been in conversation with CBO's Brandy Reiter and Jonas Durham as they seek to learn more about the middle mile broadband space and ideas for how they can use existing state owned middle mile assets to provide broadband services to state agencies. Nate is working on a project for CBO to connect a state park to CDOT fiber. Please see an additional memo regarding the state's middle mile initiative and the bright future for Project THOR going forward.

**Mobility Manger** – Dana Wood, Mobility Manager

**RTCC Summit**

**September 12, 2024 9am-3pm**

**Frisco Community and Senior Center**

**Agenda:**

- a. 9am: Welcome/ Agenda Overview
- b. 9:05am: Keynote, Margaret Bowes, I70 Coalition
- c. 9:15am: Bustang Panel Discussion (include rider story) (Mandi to moderate)
  - i. Bustang Outrider: Confirmed for Summit (Jeff Prilowitz)
  - ii. Bustang: Confirmed for Summit (Ben Gellman)
- d. 10:15am: Q&A
- e. 10:30am Transit trivia w/ prizes
- f. 10:45am Micro Transit Panel Discussion (Dana to moderate)
  - i. Lone Tree: Confirmed for Summit (Dan Raine)
  - ii. Longmont Micro Transit: confirmed for Summit (Phil Grenwald)
  - iii. Summit County RTA/Micro Transit: confirmed for Summit (Ann Findley)
  - iv. La Junta Micro Transit: confirmed for Summit (Dawn Block)
- g. 11:45am: Q&A
- h. 11:55am: Lunch
- i. 1pm: Joint New Ideas Presentation:
  - i. Mountain to Rail project (Denver to Craig): confirmed for Summit (Michael Buccino)
  - ii. Brainstorm: Gypsum to Rifle connections (RFTA and EVTA)
- j. 2pm: Q&A
- k. 2:10pm Other Project Updates (potentially IMTPR updates, Dana to check with Brian, RAISE grant recipients)
- l. 2:40pm: Final Thoughts
- m. 2:45pm: End

**Economic Development District (EDD)** – Rachel Lunney, Director Program

Strategic Discussion at September 5<sup>th</sup> EDD Board meeting - The EDD Board of Directors began a discussion about the roles and responsibilities of the EDD board of directors at the July 11 EDD board meeting. This discussion was continued with a smaller group of EDD board members on a planning call on July 22. The result of those discussions was to have a more in-depth strategic discussion at the September 5 EDD board meeting. The 2-hour meeting will be dedicated to an interactive discussion on the topics outlined in the memo for the EDD meeting. If there are any topics you do not see on this list and would like to discuss, please bring forward at the meeting or email me your thoughts.

**NWCCOG in the news** – EDD Director was interviewed for an article in the Summit Daily on jobs and wages in the region: *Summit County's wages lag behind other High Country resort communities, federal data shows Hospitality industry pay impacts average wages in Western Slope counties that largely rely on tourism:*  
<https://www.summitdaily.com/news/summit-eagle-grand-pitkin-routt-county-wages/>

**Elevator Inspection Program (EIP)** – *David Harris – Director*

Elevator program is integrating a new software platform replacing a proprietary software that is only supported by an individual, going to an industry standard platform which will integrate all paperwork, notices and correspondences with clients as well as accounting. These are now cumbersome in how Quickbooks, GIS, Outlook and the proprietary software integrate (and often fail to do so). This and a personnel issue which has been resolved have resulted in the EIP program being behind revenue benchmarks from which there is a possibility may be recovered by the end of the year.

**Energy Program** – *Nate Speerstra, Manager*

See Memo. Hiring continues. Significant discussions have occurred with Energy and NWCCOG Admin staff about retention, onboarding to strategize how these may be improved. We also met recently to review the staffing structure following nearly three years of major growth. Otherwise, no out of the ordinary circumstances to report at this time.

**Northwest Loan Fund (NLF)** – *Anita Cameron, Director*

Three new loans have been approved this year.

Two new loan recommendations will go to Loan Committee on Sept 13.

In late May, five site visits occurred across North NLF territory.

The NLF participates in the Colorado Start Up Loan Funding. It was used to fund one of loans this year and includes monies earmarked for *Coal Transition*.

**Northwest Region Healthcare Coalition (NWRHCC)** – *Readiness and Response Coordinator*

Becky continues to work closely with the contractors and with CDPHE on evolving budget and compliance. No out of the ordinary circumstances to report at this time.

**Regional Grant Navigator (RGN)** – *Jonathan Godes, Regional Grants Navigator*

**Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG)**

In our July meeting the Board gave support to pursue a state grant for the purpose of increasing capacity and foster regional collaboration to advance local clean energy and sustainable programs. While NWCCOG pursued this \$240,000 three-year opportunity initially, we ultimately elected to not submit for the following reasons.

1. There were only three \$240,000 three-year grant awards for the state.
2. CLEER which is based in Garfield County but represents much of our region has an existing grant with the Colorado Energy Office that they felt was a duplication.
3. Routt County was pursuing a grant. NWCCOG does not want to ever compete with member agencies for funding.
4. Staff technical capacity was identified as the largest need for the region, but the grant limited total awards to \$80,000 a year which is limiting.
5. While a COG could have served as the lead applicant, any funding awarded to a COG had to be passed on to the local government members of the partnership in its entirety. No local government had the capacity to administer this grant for our 5-county region, especially given the 45 day grant deadline.

There were lessons learned about capacity (NWCCOG and members), ensuring the funding is worth the effort and outsourcing key pieces to outside experts. Both of these opportunities will better position NWCCOG for future state and federal opportunities.

**Water Quality & Quantity Committee (QQ)** – *Torie Jarvis, Director*

Torie provides summaries after each QQ meeting. If you don't receive these but would like to, let Moira or Torie know so they can add you to the list.

**Vintage** – *Erin Fisher, Director*

**Skilled Nursing & Assisted Living Closure at Casey's Pond in Steamboat: The Role of the Ombudsman**

The [closure of Casey's Pond](#) in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, marks a significant shift in the local healthcare landscape, affecting residents, their families, and the community at large. As the community grapples with this change, the role of the long-term care ombudsman becomes increasingly vital in ensuring that the dignity and rights of affected residents are upheld. Its closure has left many families in a challenging position, scrambling to find new homes for their loved ones. The sudden change disrupts the lives of residents who rely on the stability and familiarity of their environment.

**The Role of the Ombudsman**

In the wake of the closure, the long-term care ombudsman serves as an independent advocate for residents.

- Provides education and information to residents and families about various options for long term care. Ombudsmen promote and protect the residents' rights to choice and other rights that are outlined in state and federal regulations.
- Ombudsmen do not work as case managers or as a locator service. The ombudsman can provide information and referrals regarding these services.

To contact Tina Strang, your local ombudsman for Routt County, please reach out using the following information:

Email: [tstrang@nwccog.org](mailto:tstrang@nwccog.org)

Telephone Number: 970-531-2980

**Senate Passes OAA Reauthorization Bill and Releases FY 2025 Proposed Funding Levels**

On July 31, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee passed their Older Americans Act (OAA) reauthorization bill (S.4776), which is endorsed by USAging, the national association for Area Agencies on Aging. The bill reauthorizes OAA titles through FY 2029 with a 4.62% increase each year starting in FY 2026. It also includes many of USAging's priorities: contracting and AAA independence, Title III D flexibility, nutrition flexibility, prioritization of social isolation national training and technical assistance and increased authorization levels.



# Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

## NWCCOG EDD Meeting

July 11, 2024

### **Present:**

Julie Kline – Solomar International  
DiAnn Butler – Chair for EDD  
Erin McCuskey – Eagle County  
Chris Romer – Vail Valley Partnership  
Marion Champoux-Pellegrin – Rocky Mountain Employee Ownership Center  
Thayer Hirsh – Summit County Economic Partnership  
Nina Waters – Summit County Commissioner  
Cory Minh  
Jonah Glassman – Town of Silverthorne  
Chris Romer  
Jen Skinner

### **NWCCOG Staff:**

Jon Stavney  
Rachel Tuyn  
Moira Vander Meer

### **Call to Order**

DiAnn Butler, EDD Council Chair, called the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) meeting to order at 12:32 am. Roundtable introductions were completed, and a quorum was present for the group.

### **Marion Champoux-Pelligrin Presentation**

Erin McCuskey made the introduction of Marion and the Rocky Mountain Employee Ownership Center. Marion's presentation covered the pathway of employee ownership to build a more just and sustainable economy through employee ownership. Key takeaways – Exit planning should start long before the owner is ready to retire. Refer business owners to their local SBDDC. Focus especially on legacy business. The full presentation is available from Rachel.

### **Discussion: Destination Stewardship**

Presented by Julie Klein – discussion the branding and economic of tourism and resident composition of the Rocky Mountain Region. The Strategic Stewardship Plan has 12 strategies and how the EDD can help with the implementation of those strategies. With all this data, it was put out of how the NWCCOG EDD would serve in the role as Regional Destination Stewardship Coalition. Thoughts included that it was a compliment to our current work and role. Further discussion in the next meeting will delve deeper.

### **Discussion: Community Assessment Project**

CAST and NWCCOG just completed the Community Metric Project. With all the information that the project brought out, what are the next steps for the EDD to act on this information and how might it tie in with Destination Stewardship? Consensus was that the Metric Project and Destination Stewardship should be looked over in more detail and brought back for the September meeting for actionable items. There was also mention of the Energy Grant that is available and how the EDD could help with the information sharing of these opportunities to their constituents.

### **New Business**

Thayer Hirsh shared that he has just wrapped up his first mini accelerator program with 10 local companies who have the potential to be scalable – to expand their customer base outside of Summit County. The companies created pitches and 80 different investors and leadership evaluated those pitches with the winner being Code Beetle from Frisco. Code Beetle is online coding curriculum for kids.

Chris Romer shared that Vail Valley Works just received a \$1.7M federal grant to support the career counselors in Eagle County Schools and support the apprentice program.

Jena Skinner shared the Town of Avon just received a \$160K grant to explore the formulation of a regional housing authority.

DiAnn Butler shared that Grand County was awarded an EDA grant for a small business and feasibility study. Space to Crate is getting ready to break ground in Grand Lake.

**Adjournment**

***M/S: Nina Waters/Thayer Hirsh*** adjourned the NWCCOG EDD Council meeting at 3:02PM

***Passed: Yes***

\_\_\_\_\_  
DiAnn Butler EDD Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# MEMORANDUM

To: NWCCOG Economic Development District Board of Directors  
From: Rachel Tuyn, EDD Director  
Date: August 20, 2024  
Re: NWCCOG EDD Strategic Discussion

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## **Background:**

The EDD Board of Directors began a discussion about the roles and responsibilities of the EDD board of directors at the July 11 EDD board meeting. This discussion was continued with a smaller group of EDD board members on a planning call on July 22. The result of those discussions was to have a more in-depth strategic discussion at the September 5 EDD board meeting. At that meeting we will dedicate the 2-hour meeting to have an interactive discussion on the following topics (If there are any topics you do not see on this list and would like to discuss, please bring forward at the meeting or email me your thoughts):

How has the EDD Board been functioning to date:

- Has been serving as advisory board
- Budget is overseen by NWCCOG Council; budget simple, flat revenue for last 12 years, mostly staff costs
- EDD functions as a program underneath the NWCCOG umbrella

Roles of EDD Board:

CEDS Advisory Committee - *Doing*

- EDD Board is also CEDS Advisory Committee
- Current CEDS: Oct. 1, 2021 – Sept. 30, 2026
- Next CEDS: Oct. 1, 2026 – Sept. 30, 31
- Planning Process for New CEDS: Begins Oct. 1, 2025; start with local plans
- Monitor current CEDS
- Monitor regional action plan
- Develop Goals, Objectives, and Action items for next CEDS

Serve as Forum for Regional Information Sharing, best practices sharing, opportunities for collaboration and cooperation to avoid duplication - *doing, could be doing more*

Serve as Workforce “Board” - *Doing*

- RRR and NW Workforce Boards thru CDLE were disbanded and EDD board now serves as forum for discussions on CDLE Workforce Topics



### Collaborate on Statewide Initiatives with State Agencies – *could be doing more*

- DOLA Roadmaps
- OEDIT CO|Align
- Statewide Destination Stewardship Plan – EDD board to serve as advisory committee to this effort
- Statewide CEDS

### Actively Seek Funding Opportunities for Larger Regional Projects – *could be doing more*

- Example: Grant Opportunity: EDA Announces New \$25 Million Good Jobs Challenge Notice of Funding Opportunity  
The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is now accepting applications for the FY 2024 Good Jobs Challenge Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) which will invest in high-quality, locally led workforce training programs that lead to good jobs. Find the [press release](#) and notice of funding opportunity [here](#). The NOFO deadline is September 27, 2024

### Other Regional Projects

- Community Metrics Project – what is the role of the EDD board with this effort? Do we want to dig in deeper to the data and analyze at future meetings?

### Board Makeup

- Current Board makeup per bylaws
- Board member and officer terms
- New officers this January 2025: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary/Treasurer
- Have category change from “stakeholders” to “partners”
- Invite others to the table as “partners”? example: CAST

### Board Meeting Agendas

- Current: “business” (i.e. approval of minutes); presentation, CDLE Workforce Update; EDD Director program update; roundtable updates from EDD members
- What do we want to do differently to make EDD meetings most effective and valuable?

### Future Agenda Items

- Set EDD BOD Calendar one year ahead with topics
- Ideas for presentations?