

REGION

Leveraging Resources for
Stronger Communities

10

League of Economic Assistance & Planning



Regional Development Plans

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Stronger Economies Together

Colorado Blueprint

Regional Development Plans

- Stronger Economies Together
 - USDA Sponsored Training
 - 80 Participants * 9 Meetings
 - Data Based
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
 - Economic Development Administration
 - 5 Year Plan with Annual Updates
 - Based on SET Data and Goals
 - Regional Committee
- Colorado Blueprint
 - State Identified Goals and Industries
 - Local Input
 - CEDS Crosswalk to Blueprint

CEDS Goals

- Business Development
- Tourism
- Transit/Transportation
- Agriculture Diversification
- Education
- Natural Resources
- Community Development

Business Development

- **Goal: Increase Primary Employment in the Region.**
 - **Strategies:**
 - *Formulate a collaborative effort to replicate a business recruitment and retention model throughout the entire region.*
 - Define a business recruitment and retention model
 - Create a strategic business toolbox
 - *Monitor the business regulatory process at the local and state level.*
 - Encourage local governments to evaluate the impact of regulations on local businesses.
 - Possible considerations include development of a tool kit; local survey; and best practices indicators.
 - *Educate local government leaders about best practices that will attract and retain business.*
 - *Increase financial capital available for small business development by at least \$150,000 in FY2013/2014.*
 - Develop BLF Loan Referral Network
 - Explore SBCD satellite site and promote small business education opportunities.
 - Determine resources for alternative capital funding, including venture, accelerator and other models.

Business Development

- **Goal: Increase Primary Employment in the Region.**
 - **Strategies Continued:**
 - *Promote environment to support increase in Advanced Manufacturing. Consider as component of sectors partnerships: Agriculture, Natural Resources, Health & Wellness*
 - Identify existing key small manufacturers in the region and determine what characteristics of the region attracted them and what resources they still need to become more successful.
 - Conduct online research into regions that have successfully grown their small manufacturing base to determine what actions were taken to attract and retain them.
 - *Through the use of innovative agricultural technologies grow the sustainable agricultural sector by 10% by 2018.*
 - *Support Creative Industries as a means of regional economic development.*
 - Identify existing members of the creative class in the region and determine what characteristics of the region have attracted them and what resources are still needed.
 - Conduct online research into regions that have successfully grown their creative classes to determine what steps were taken to attract and retain members of the creative class
 - *Identify and promote innovative models, Determine successful innovative models and determine if replicable in local and regional communities.*

Tourism

- **Goal: Increase Regional Tourism to outpace state growth.**
 - **Strategies:**
 - *Create, promote and market a regional brand.*
 - *Advocate for increase in state tourism dollars.*
 - *Improve Regional Reputation for Hospitality*
 - *Regional Tourist Asset Map*
 - *Conduct a study to identify the public and private facilities and other assets that are needed to attract business and other conferences, youth sports events, etc. Determine whether adding those assets is feasible in our region.*

Transit/Transportation

- **Goal:** Develop a strong integrated multi-modal regional transit system, increasing public access and utilization of public and alternate transit models.
 - **Strategies:**
 - *Identify Priority Transit Routes and permanent funding for services.*
 - *Support and maintain quality air service for the region.*
 - *Create/Utilize Community Multi-Modal Hubs*
 - *Utilize conversion of existing railways to expand service opportunities*

Agriculture

- **Goal: Diversify and broaden Agriculture Industry, increasing related revenues.**
 - **Strategies:**
 - *Establish Network & Database of Agricultural Industries and Producers/Suppliers for local market.*
 - *Increasing Local Distribution of Local Ag Products*
 - *Address Labor Barriers for Ag Community*
 - *Access to USDA processing for Regional producers*
 - *Support regional agriculture exporters*

EDUCATION

- **Goal:** Integrate job development with business creation and multi-generational education to create a skilled and talented workforce to meet needs of 21st century jobs.
- **Strategies:**
 - *Support Regional Workforce organization*
 - Identify and develop basic job skills and testing for career adaptability (eg, work keys)
 - Educate re: workforce availability and programs
 - *Identify regional workforce strengths and weaknesses*
 - *Supplement the business educational opportunities in the region*
 - *Promote veteran's learning services/support*

Natural Resources

Goal: Convene a stakeholders group to develop a holistic approach to management of all Natural Resources and uses.

- ***Strategies:***

- *Identify the regions natural resources*
- *Prioritize for the region the utilization of identified Natural resources.*
- *Promote the environmentally and economically responsible development of natural resources, to include water, forest products, and minerals.*

Community Development

Goal: Recognizing business and economic development cannot be accomplished or sustained without vibrant, healthy communities, support activities and projects which address these needs on a regional basis.

- **Strategies:**
 - *Increased regional broadband support will enable businesses to consider relocation/expansion into rural areas.*
 - *The community will have access to health and wellness opportunities*
 - *Assist local communities in creating vibrant hometown atmosphere to support retention and relocation.*
 - *Replicate successful creative districts, downtown improvement, and main street projects.*
 - *Develop plan to mitigate Disaster impacts on local businesses.*
 - *Create regional access to grants.*



Regional Data

Examples of Largest Employers

- Crested Butte Ski Area
- Montrose Memorial Hospital
- Delta Memorial Hospital
- Russell Stover
- Mountain Coal Company

Top 5 Key Industries by Employment

1. Food & Agriculture
2. Health & Wellness
3. Tourism & Outdoor Recreation
4. Energy & Natural Resources
5. Advanced Manufacturing

Top 5 Regional Assets

- Noteworthy commercial air services in three geographically-dispersed airports.
- Distinct Colorado lifestyle with high-quality natural resources, productive agricultural land, diverse geography and many recreational amenities
- Two universities and one technical college are willing to administer workforce development programs
- Resourceful, hardworking international workforce with an entrepreneurial spirit.
- Commerce-friendly governments and straightforward regulatory environment

Where the Region would like to be in 5 years

- The region will increase overall employment by 8.6%, thereby reducing unemployment to less than 5%

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Central Western Slope region (Region 10) includes the counties of Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray and San Miguel. It encompasses over 9,500 square miles with a population of just over 100,000. The region's clean air and sunny year-round climate is complemented by millions of acres of public land including one national park, two national forests, 14,000-foot peaks, grasslands and canyons. Two major ski resorts and several all-season resort communities are set among Colorado's most spectacular mountains. There are three major service, supply and retail hubs with more than a dozen small farming and ranching communities.

The population for Region 10 in 2000 was approximately 89,960 and in 2012 it was 100,562, which is a 11.79% change. Montrose County was the fastest growing within the region at 18.3%, with Delta, Ouray and San Miguel also posting increases in population. People move here for the unique lifestyle, quick recreational access and safe, hometown atmosphere. Noteworthy air service, affordable land, abundant water and a simple regulatory environment makes doing business in the area accessible and convenient, which is demonstrated by the numerous global companies that are headquartered in the area.

The region's economic development priorities include improving the communications and transportation infrastructure, as well as supporting responsible natural resource-based economic activity. Collaborative economic development efforts focus on fully developing existing companies and attracting innovative businesses and industry.

VISION

The Central Western Slope region is a thriving and engaged group of communities that works collaboratively to provide a rich quality of life that attracts an entrepreneurial and creative workforce with an economy that is both globally connected and rooted in a unique hometown spirit.

MISSION

The Central Western Slope works together to develop and attract high quality, sustainable economic activity that fits our unique location and culture by:

- Providing exceptional infrastructure, including telecommunications
- Expanding quality, reliable commercial air service
- Maximizing the potential of the two universities and one technical college to develop the existing entrepreneurial, skilled workforce
- Connecting business endeavors with local, state and global sources of capital
- Supporting commerce-friendly public initiatives and a straightforward regulatory environment

QUICK WINS

- The Telluride-Montrose Regional Air Organization and the Gunnison Valley RTA have partnered to guarantee air service to local airports
- Western Colorado State University and Colorado Mesa University - Montrose Campus upgraded to full-service universities. CMU-Montrose is in the process of a campus expansion
- The Southwest Regional Tourism Association was awarded a grant to promote regional tourism

- The West End of Montrose County established a new economic development organization: West End Economic Development Corporation
- The Region launched the Health & Wellness Industry Sector Partnership
- The Region hosted the first annual Hospitality Conference in the City
- Montrose, and CMU-Montrose is now offering a Hospitality Certificate curriculum program
- The Region hosted the Colorado Resource Center's Rural Philanthropy Days in Ouray
- The region has three officially designated

- Creative Districts: the North Fork Valley Creative Coalition, Town of Telluride and the Town of Ridgway
- The 'Our Side of the Divide' campaign, downtown revitalization initiatives, Cottage Foods Bill, and other innovative programs have boosted agritourism, local business investment and heritage tourism