

Community Initiatives and Collaboration

Community Vision

Across the country, thriving cities have common denominators for success, and key elements and strategies that make them stand out as economically vibrant communities.

In terms of relevant community initiatives, broad-based strategic planning is a necessity to sustainable economic growth. Each community should take an honest inventory of its strengths and weaknesses, and determine what priorities can be addressed to create a comprehensive economic development plan.

Information is presented in this section on “Operations 6035” (launched in Colorado Springs in 2009). This is a broad study of the Pikes Peak region, which resulted in the development of a comprehensive regional economic development strategic plan. This study will only be successful because of the diverse coalition of community, government, and business participation. The most important outcomes of studies such as Operations 6035, are the share vision and initiatives that are created. www.operation6035.com

Thinking Local

Another example of a collaborative community initiative is a “Buy Local” policy. Many advantages exist when communities make a concerted effort to keep the flow of money and goods within the community. In Colorado Springs, the EDC presented a “Think Local” program to city and county governments to build awareness of the community’s need to support local business, and the benefits that will result from that support. Such programs help to recirculate money locally, and create and retain local jobs.

Materials to develop and implement a Buy Local program or campaign can range from an official resolution encouraging this, to a strong, detailed program (special discounts, window decals, etc.) An example of an official resolution is included in this section. www.bigboxtoolkit.com

Community Collaboration

Collaboration among community partners has proven to be a key success factor for the Colorado Springs Economic Development Corporation's expansion program. Diagrams are presented in this section, which showcase the types of collaboration necessary for success. When evaluating community partnerships that are necessary to achieve results, consider how existing groups work in relationship to on another. (See "Sustainable Business Climate/Culture" and "How we are connected" charts). These ideas can be tailored to each community, and can be used as a launching pad for the creations of partnerships.

In Colorado Springs, we have a created a formal group of key partners, called the "Economic Vitality Group." This group works specifically to improve the business climate as a team. Results of the team have been impressive over the years, and it is known as the "go to group" by local businesses needing assistance.

OPERATION | 60THIRTYFIVE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Operation 6035” Underway – Initial Findings to be Presented

*Consultant to present initial findings of the Pikes Peak region’s
Market Assessment*

Colorado Springs, Colo. (April 14, 2009) - - Operation 6035 (“sixty-thirty-five”) launched by a diverse coalition of community, government and business organizations has released the initial findings of the first phase of a comprehensive regional economic development strategic plan for Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region. The mission of Operation 6035 is to create a shared vision for the Pikes Peak region’s economic future, assess the region’s current competitiveness and outline specific implementation strategies.

AngelouEconomics (AE), an economic development consulting firm based in Austin, Texas, has conducted a community engagement process that included over thirteen focus groups, over fifteen one-on-one interviews with key community leaders and received responses via an online survey from over 1,200 residents and business owners in the Pikes Peak region.

“The level of response and the quality of feedback we’ve received is impressive, particularly from residents using the Operation 6035 website,” said Chris Jenkins, president of Nor’wood Development Group and co-chair of the project’s Steering Committee. “It is giving us a true ground-up look at the challenges to economic development in our community, and it shows that we have an engaged and educated populace that truly cares about the future of the Pikes Peak region.”

The initial phase of the study will help the consulting team learn more about the region’s opportunities, issues, and strengths. The team has benchmarked the Pikes Peak region against competing cities (including Fort Collins, Colo.; Tucson, Ariz., Portland, Oreg.; Austin, Texas; and Boise, Idaho) to determine the region’s competitiveness for attracting quality jobs and businesses.

“This is an important step in gaining a clear understanding of the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities in regard to our region’s economy,” said Pam Shockley Zalabak, Chancellor of the University of Colorado – Colorado Springs and Co-Chair of the Steering Committee. “The information contained in the Market Assessment will help shape the final recommendations to the community.”

Key findings presented at the press conference included:

- The Pikes Peak region has an extremely competitive cost of living – 8% below the national average and well below all benchmarked regions.
- The Pikes Peak region benefits from a strong existing technology industry base and workforce, which positions the region competitively for future growth.
- Residents in the region are highly educated, over 35% of residents have earned a bachelors degree or higher, 3% above the national average.

- The region has experienced a decrease in the percentage of young professionals (those ages 25-44). This age group, most often part of a community's "creative class" and almost always the engines of innovation, are extremely important for economic growth. The Pikes Peak region has experienced a 7% decrease in this important age range.
- The region lacks a unified and collaborative vision for economic development. This issue was identified as the number one challenge to future economic growth on the online survey. More and more communities are learning that competitive advantages in this advanced and integrated economy are gained through a collaborative, regional approach.
- Competing regions are aggressively marketing to companies in the Pikes Peak region with significant incentive programs often unmatched by the region. Incentive programs in other states put the Pikes Peak region at a competitive disadvantage. Many states are providing upfront cash grants to attract companies while maintaining public confidence through various clawback provisions.
- The region must build upon existing entrepreneurial and start up support programs for emerging companies and take advantage of the growing opportunities at UCCS.
- The Pikes Peak region is positioned competitively to build existing amateur sports assets such as the USOC to continue to attract sports and sports related industries such as medical device manufacturers and related research and development activities.
- The Defense and Homeland Security industries and military presence have a significant positive impact on the region. Future efforts should focus on continuing to attract military related research and development activities and programs.

"The critical findings shed light on the region's competitiveness and lay the foundation for future strategies and a unified vision for economic development. This community engagement process has been one of the most successful efforts our firm has conducted. We applaud the efforts and time of everyone involved" said Angelos Angelou, principal executive officer with AngelouEconomics.

About AngelouEconomics: AngelouEconomics is recognized as one of the most innovative economic development and site selection firms. The firm has consulted with more than 150 public and private clients; including countries, states, regions, communities and Fortune 500 companies.

For more information and to view the Preliminary Market Assessment Report, visit www.AngelouEconomics.com.

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Contact:

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AngelouEconomics: Chris Carucci, Project Manager, 512-225-9326

Resolution No. _____

A RESOLUTION REAFFIRMING EL PASO COUNTY'S "THINK LOCAL" ATTITUDE WHEN PROCURING GOODS AND SERVICES

WHEREAS, the Colorado Springs Regional Economic Development Corporation ("EDC") and El Paso County (the "County") recognize the economic benefits of utilizing local businesses when procuring goods and services; and

WHEREAS, the EDC has developed a "Think Local" program to build awareness of the community's need for local businesses and to educate local consumers on the advantages of supporting the growth of these businesses; and

WHEREAS, El Paso County has long maintained a "Think Local" attitude which has the benefits of retaining/creating jobs, re-circulating money locally, reducing environmental impacts, promoting local businesses that invest in the community and maintaining stability and diversity of the local economy; and

WHEREAS, El Paso County desires to encourage all companies to "Think Local" and raise awareness of the need for the "Think Local" program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF EL PASO COUNTY, THAT

Section 1: The term "local" is defined as any company doing business within the County, as defined by its procurement policies and regulations, regardless of where the company is headquartered.

Section 2: The County will continue to mentor local companies by providing training, advice and support in completing responses to the County's solicitations to include Requests for Proposals (RFP), Invitations For Bids (IFB), or Requests for Quotes (RFQ).

Section 3: The County will continue to conduct periodic presentations, trade-shows, and workshops designed to educate the local business community on how to do business with the County and inform them of available solicitation opportunities.

Section 4: The County will act responsively to any request by a local company to provide "feedback" and/or debriefings (within the limits of the County procurement policies and regulations and the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA)) as to why the company's proposal or bid was not accepted and how the company might improve its competitiveness.

Section 5: The County has adopted a policy to promote and ensure that the procurement of products, construction, and services is conducted in an open, unrestricted

and fair manner that affords all responsible businesses an equal opportunity to compete for County opportunities

Section 6: The County will continue to encourage participation from local suppliers whenever and wherever such competitive local sources exist, and where no sacrifice or loss in price or quality would result.

Section 7: In compliance with its procurement policies and regulations, the County may recognize local companies with a higher ranking reflecting the County's "Think Local" attitude when applicable, recognizing that a degree of service may be enhanced by being a local firm.

Section 8: In the event of a tie bid between a local company and a non-local company, the award will be made to the local company if all other factors, including price, quality, terms, and delivery, are determined to be equal.

Section 9: The County will continue to encourage local and non-local companies to partner with local companies in the delivery of goods and services to the County.

Section 10: The County will exercise due diligence to maintain and increase departmental local contracting goals of 50% or greater.

Section 11: The County will promote a "Think Local" message and encourage others in the community to adopt guidelines that encourage local involvement in support of regional economic growth.

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of the County on October , 2010.

EL PASO COUNTY, COLORADO

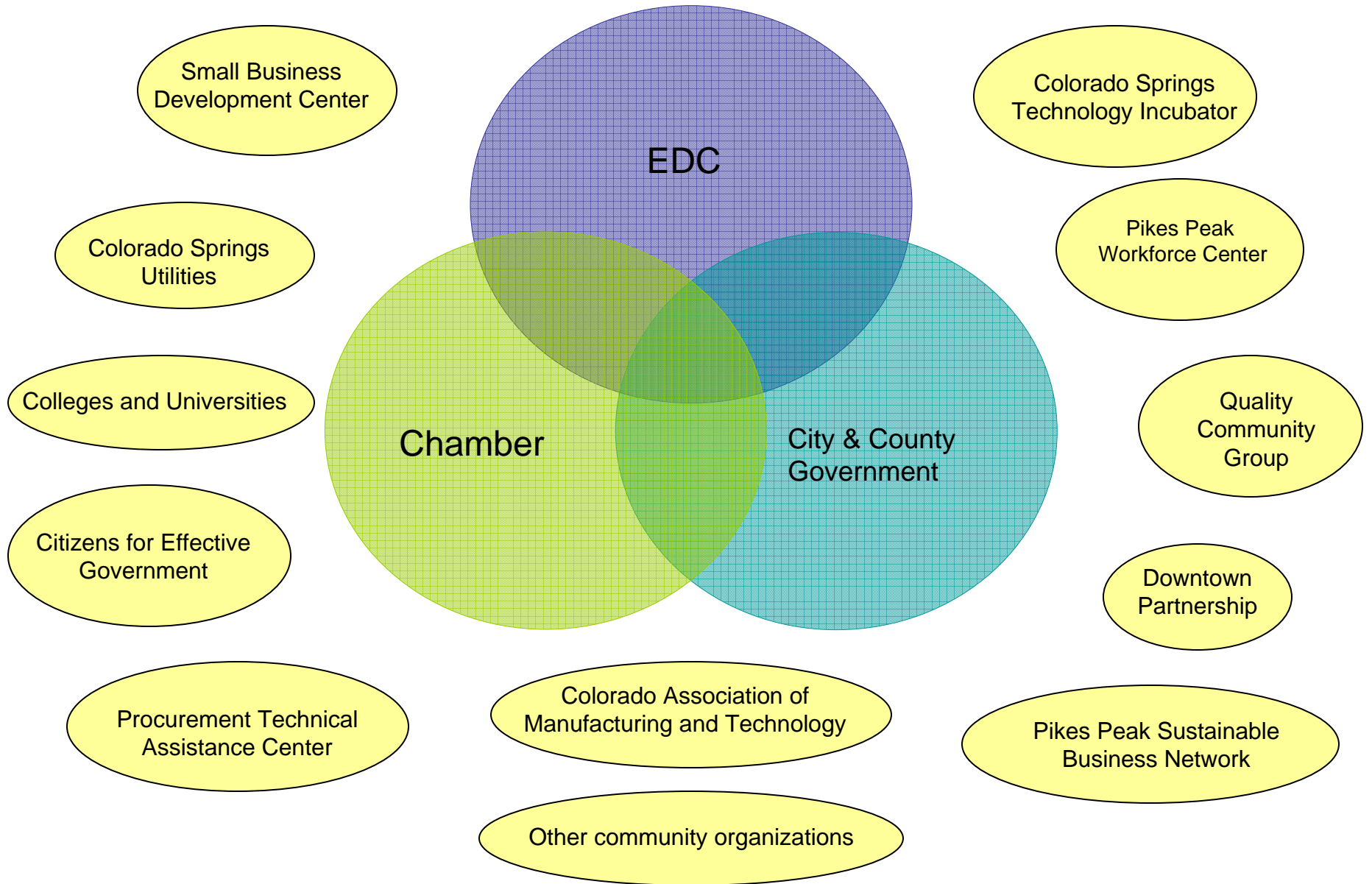
By _____
Chair, Board of County Commissioners

[SEAL]

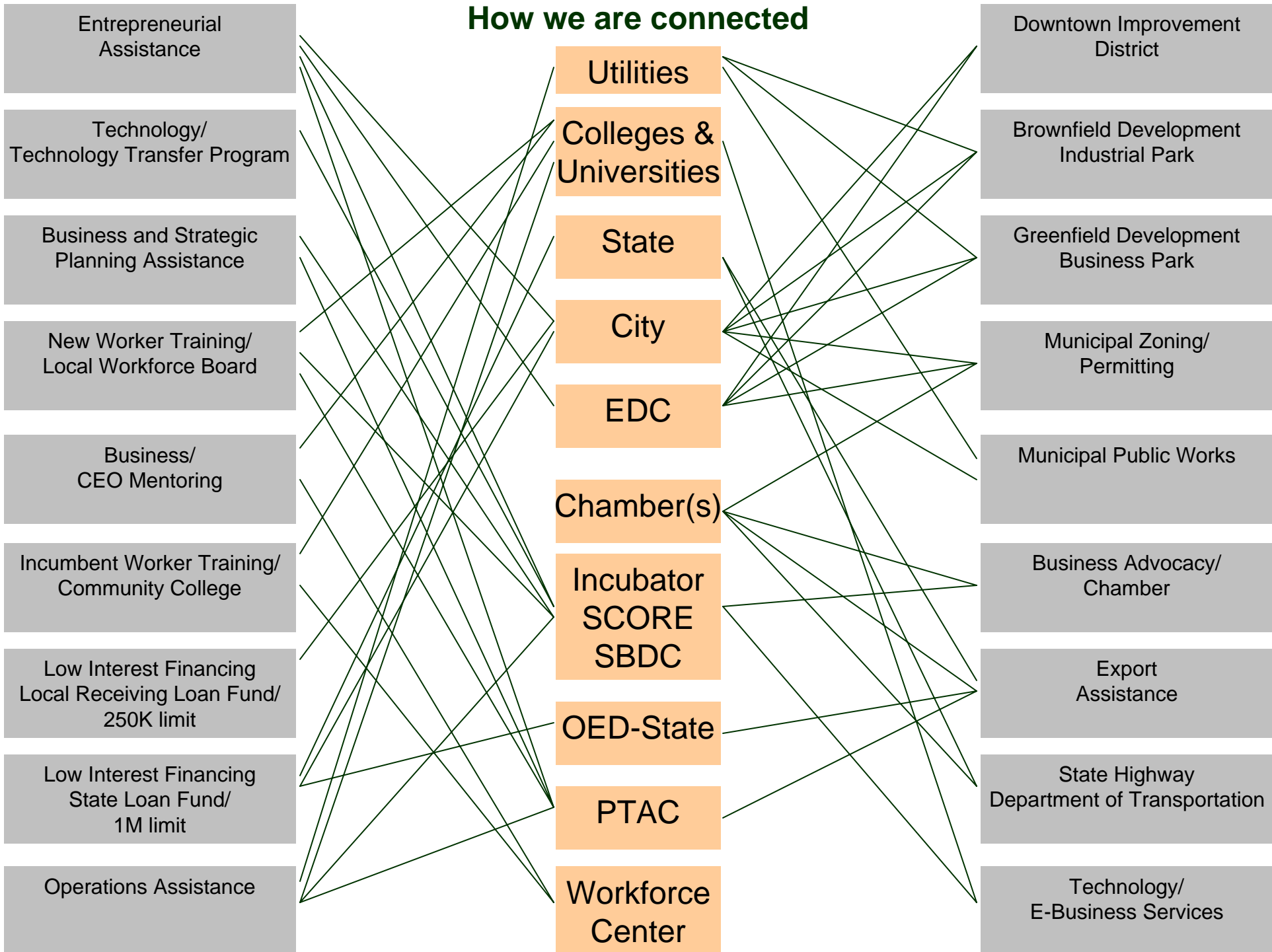
ATTEST:

By _____
County Clerk

Sustainable Business Climate/Culture



How we are connected



Cross-Collaboration



each other's organization during the conversation.



The EDC, City and Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) have visitation programs with their respective customers. However, these three groups often visit the same organization, but for different reasons. During 2009 the EDC worked closely with the City and CSU to develop a much stronger collaborative effort to customer visits. Meetings were held between the organizations to provide "cross-training" of the mission and purpose of each organization's visits. The intent was to reduce the amount of redundancy during the visit and provide opportunities to introduce

As a result of this effort, the EDC, City and CSU are much more synchronized in their visits and the amount of redundancy has been greatly reduced.

Acknowledgements

The Local Industry Program at the EDC is a collaborative effort – the successes and accomplishments of the program, and the benefits provided to primary employers in the Colorado Springs area are the result of the efforts of many organizations and individuals. The Colorado Springs Regional Economic Development Corporation, Colorado Springs Utilities and the City of Colorado Springs are all funding partners for this program.

First, many thanks are owed to the executives, managers, human resources professionals and other individuals from the companies we visited in 2008/09. We greatly appreciate the time taken out of busy schedules to share their perspectives on the business climate in Colorado Springs. This feedback provides a roadmap for community and economic development leaders.

Thank you to the organizations and individuals who comprise the Economic Vitality Group (EVG) for their collaboration and efforts toward improving the business climate in the area. The EVG is a unique asset to the Colorado Springs area, in that many communities do not have a group of organizations committed to this business climate mission.



Economic Vitality Group Members:

Matt Barrett – Small Business Development Center
George Boutin – Colorado Springs Office of International Affairs
Dave Csintyan – Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce
Dan Dandapani – University of Colorado – Colorado Springs
Connie Dudgeon – The Colorado College
Stephannie Finley – Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce
Jerry Fritz – Pikes Peak Community College
Tyrone Johnson – Colorado Springs Utilities
Jim Kynor – Pikes Peak Workforce Center
Rob MacDonald – Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
Gary Markle – The Colorado Springs Regional Economic Development Corporation
DeAnne McCann – El Paso County Economic Development Division
Greg Mitchell – Colorado Technical University
Elena Nunez – City of Colorado Springs
Laurie Spear – City of Colorado Springs
Stephanie Steffens – Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade
Jon Stepleton – Pikes Peak Community College Foundation
Jennifer Taylor – The Colorado Springs Regional Economic Development Corporation
Karen Yunker – Colorado Springs Utilities

In addition to the EVG, we would like to thank the City of Colorado Springs, Colorado Springs Utilities, and County leadership. Their involvement demonstrates a strong commitment to the economic health and well-being of the primary employers in the region.

// The Economic Vitality Group

Mission

The Economic Vitality Group exists to enhance the competitiveness of Colorado Springs' primary employers, through economic development and infrastructure support services.

Member organizations

