



Listening Tour Synthesis of Ideas

Listening & Learning to be Informed & Poised to Act Quickly

In March and April of 2021, CO Governor Polis, in collaboration with State Treasurer Young, State House & Senate Leadership and legislators from both sides of the aisle convened a series of meetings to hear directly from Coloradans from across the State's diverse communities, industries and areas of interest.

The state leaders had a simple yet ambitious goal: Listen to and learn from thousands of Coloradans with unique perspectives and expertise to inform and help focus the use of state and federal stimulus funds.

*April 23, 2021 Report from the Build Back Stronger
Listening Tour held March 28th – April 9th, 2021*



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Introduction & Report Overview

In April of 2021, as Colorado state leaders continued their work to craft a stimulus bill as part of the economic recovery and officials in Washington, D.C. worked on the details of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), a significant challenge was unfolding: How to maximize the impact of those funds. As part of preparing for that challenge, CO Governor Polis, in collaboration with State Treasurer Young, State House & Senate Leadership and legislators from both sides of the aisle convened a series of meetings to hear directly from Coloradans from across the State's diverse communities, industries and areas of interest. The state leaders had a simple yet ambitious goal: Listen to and learn from thousands of Coloradans with unique perspectives and expertise to inform and help focus the use of state and federal stimulus funds.

The Build Back Stronger (BBS) listening tour was designed to gather this input and to help state leaders prioritize spending of the approximately \$3.9bn in ARPA funds over which the state has a level of discretion (within federal guidelines). Build Back Stronger listening sessions were scheduled across seven geographical regions and ten additional audience or topic specific sessions were held. To support the independent facilitation of the listening sessions, the Office of the Governor partnered with the Keystone Policy Center, to manage and facilitate the sessions.

The listening sessions were conducted via Zoom with options for dialing in by phone and to watch live-streams of the sessions on multiple online platforms including YouTube and Facebook. Each session included welcoming remarks from state leaders including the Governor, Treasurer and state legislators followed by a presentation on state and federal stimulus packages by leaders from the Colorado Office of State Planning and Budget (OSPb) (See Addendum A for the presentation). Following the presentations, the majority of the time in each session was dedicated to listening and learning from attendees who were split into multiple smaller breakout groups.

During the breakout sessions, participants offered their thoughts on three questions:

- *What is one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?*
- *What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?*
- *If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?*

These questions were selected and designed to help state leaders understand, from each participant's and each group's perspectives, how to leverage the stimulus funds to spur the recovery, what types of bigger system level changes were sought by the public and the aspirational vision of the future Coloradans have and believe progress toward reaching can be made by strategically investing the funds.

The Report

This report is a synthesis and summary of the ideas generated during the BBS listening sessions and a collection of ideas submitted. The report does not attempt to make recommendations, to score or conduct any type of assessment of any individual idea. To the extent possible, this report does offer the perspective of the independent team who facilitated the breakout sessions on the dominant themes, specific ideas offered and hopes for Colorado's economic recovery and future. To the extent possible, an overview of themes and ideas is offered for each listening session and for the tour as a whole.

Meeting Notes

To provide maximum transparency, the notes from each listening session are included in Addendum B. While the notes have been subject to an abbreviated proofread, they are otherwise raw and unedited to maintain integrity of the accuracy and completeness of information being shared directly with state leaders and all Coloradans. To respect privacy, personally identifying information is not included.

Addenda

In addition to the opportunity to participate in the BBS listening sessions, participants and members of the public were invited to submit written comments via email. More than 20 individuals and organizations submitted ideas that ranged from short emails with a list of ideas or questions to formal organizational letters and reports. All of those are included with this report as Addendum C.

Themes & Ideas

Throughout the BBS Listening Tour, there were topics, ideas and aspirations for the future that were raised so frequently and with such similarity in both the perceived current problem or shortfall and the desired end state such as the availability and accessibility of childcare that it is appropriate to identify them as themes. Similarly, there were specific ideas that emerged in multiple if not most sessions in various forms that it is appropriate to highlight those in this report. All ideas raised are captured in the notes contained in Addendum B and submitted comments and letters in Addendum C.

While the conversations during the listening sessions were informal and participants were not asked to label or categorize their ideas, throughout the nearly 20 sessions and in briefings with state leaders, the facilitators found that the ideas and recommendations fell into three general categories:

Recovery & Stimulus

A number of ideas and needs were identified specifically aimed at jump-starting the economy in regions, specific industries and the state as a whole. These ideas ranged from incentives to employers for hiring or rehiring and a wide variety of infrastructure construction projects to promotion of Colorado's conference centers, tourism destinations and restaurants and direct relief to families and individuals struggling to meet financial challenges or find employment.

Systemic Transformation

In discussions of the once-in-a-generation nature of the funds, many participants shared ideas about utilizing some portion of the funds to make investments to transform systems or address challenges that state budgets have not been able to adequately tackle. These ideas included a comprehensive transformation of education from early childhood through K-12 and higher education to making major investments in multi-modal transportation and to significant investment to relieve Colorado's housing crunch particularly to address affordable housing and disparities in home ownership.

Budget & Programmatic Gaps

A number of ideas were raised that spoke primarily to the value of certain programs but the need to more fully fund or expand the programs. Numerous participants raised concerns about the ability to adequately fund a variety of programs ranging from behavioral and mental health to community economic transitions, transportation infrastructure and supports for homeless populations and transitions.

Throughout all conversations and categories noted above, participants raised the issues of equity and expanded opportunity. Some ideas raised like targeting childcare supports to lower income and working poor urban and rural communities alike or targeting hiring incentives to communities hardest hit were specific to addressing equity and opportunity. Other consistent input from participants provided strong desires for state leaders to consider these issues in every investment of stimulus funds and to ensure spending narrows the inequities whenever and wherever possible.

Within each of the above, participants identified opportunities (and needs) for investments of three types:

Things

From building roads to improving the condition of heavily trafficked parks, building childcare facilities and affordable housing to the state's agricultural supply chain system and regional water treatment facilities, participants saw significant need for some funds to be used for capital expenses, construction and hard asset acquisition or development.

Systems

Participants recognized that many of the issues needing investment or transformation require addressing underlying systems. Discussions ranged from how schools educate children to how funds for housing or start-up businesses are allocated and managed and bigger system change like in healthcare, mental health and the support of homeless transition services.

People

At the heart of every conversation were people and the need to make both direct and indirect investments in our people. Ideas ranged from job training or upskilling and access to education to substance abuse counseling, access to healthcare, destigmatizing mental health and providing direct support to Coloradans who have been historically marginalized and those who were hit particularly hard by the economic downturn during the pandemic.

The Listening Tour

Regional Meetings

- Pueblo & Southern Colorado
- Western Slope
- Northern Colorado
- Denver Metro North
- Denver Metro South
- Colorado Springs
- Eastern Plains

Audience Specific Meetings

- ❖ Events, Dining & Tourism
- ❖ African American Community
- ❖ Workforce
- ❖ Clean Energy & Conservation
- ❖ Local Governments
- ❖ Quality of Life
- ❖ Latino Community
- ❖ Rural & Agricultural
- ❖ Healthcare, Human Services & Behavioral Health
- ❖ Asian American & Pacific Islander

What We Heard

Among the dominant themes with recurrence across most if not all meetings were the following:

- Consumer Confidence: Coloradans & Tourism
- Job creation & Business growth: Biz incentives, Job skill training
- Transportation: Roads, rail, multi-modal
- Water: Storage, treatment, usage
- Broadband: Education & business
- Affordable Housing including workforce housing. More inventory, less red tape
- Early Childhood Education & Childcare: Physical facilities + personnel
- K-12 Education: Teaching profession, Learning Loss, Facilities
- Higher Ed: College access, adult upskilling/reskilling
- Behavioral Health & Mental Health
- Support for Small Businesses: Technology, grants, pooling of support services
- Clean Energy Economy: Infrastructure/utility & businesses
- Agricultural Industry: Supply chain, farm ownership
- Environmental: Restoring heavily used lands, expanding metro parks/trails
- Equity: In targeting of all spending, especially education, small biz, childcare

While most ideas identified the challenge and offered generally high-level solutions, participants did also offer specific areas in need of investment and some specific program ideas. Below are some of the specific ideas offered that generated substantive support in the group discussions.

- Consumer Confidence
 - Local & national PR Campaign about CO's business status (open)
 - Direct investment in Main Street revitalizations
 - Full, ready access to WiFi for remote learning, working etc. in our key corridors
- Jobs
 - Incentives for employers to hire & partner w/re-skilling entities in lower income areas
 - Clean energy jobs & incentives
 - Use tuition free certifications as eco devo tool – tech, manufacturing, CDL licenses
 - Strong, targeted support for small biz & rehiring incentives
- Transportation
 - Front range rail investment
 - I-25, particularly in Pikes Peak/CO Springs Region

- Education
 - Facility Upgrades
 - Tuition free Higher Ed for 2-3yrs in future jobs, light manufacturing, entrepreneurship
 - Targeted support of community colleges & other providers of credentials, certificates
 - FAFSA completion support
 - Expanded access to ECE/child care - state developed facilities, fast tracked licensing
- Housing
 - Expanded access and inventory of affordable housing
 - Targeted programs to increase home ownership
 - Transitional housing as foundation for security, independence
 - Workforce housing as key component to continued business growth
- Environment
 - Conservation Corps to rebuild
 - Improved fire mitigation
- Equity
 - Targeted investments in housing, transitions in lower income urban & rural
 - Startup funds, education improvements, access to tech in underserved communities
 - Major investment in homeless transition supports
- Tourism
 - National PR to visitors, event planners, corporate
 - Pooling of resources to support smaller towns
- Economic Development
 - Workforce training – major effort in partnership w/biz leaders, higher ed
 - Small business lending, grants and access to financing for start-up and growth
 - Education: Childcare, K-12 & Higher Ed
 - Partnerships with 4yr IHEs & Community Colleges to foster business creation, start-up
 - Community transitions (coal, mining)
 - Targeted support and relief for unemployment insurance
 - Support for 1 industry towns f/tourism to all in eco devo & expansion
 - Strategic investment in ag supply chain including processing, manufacturing & transportation
- Clean Energy
 - Invest in EV infrastructure
 - Clean Energy grid & infrastructure

Meeting Summaries

The following provides a high-level summary of the conversations and ideas from each of the BBS Listening Tour meetings. With 125+ participants in all sessions and many with closer to 200, there was often limited time for each specific idea. As noted earlier, the intention of the listening sessions and this report are not to score or identify consensus but rather to capture as many ideas as possible and, to the extent practical and accurate, highlight where there were common themes across meetings or even across the multiple breakout groups in each meeting. Where ideas are highlighted below does not imply unanimity of support or even consensus but rather that the idea(s) were surfaced by multiple participants in multiple groups.

Pueblo & Southern Colorado Regional Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Transportation
- Broadband Access
- Parks & Outdoor Space
- Job Training & Upskilling
- Daycare/Childcare
- Education

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, regional issues included:

- Local trails and parks;
- Local transportation systems including electric vehicle charging, public transportation & Hwy 12;
- Workforce housing
- Fire mitigation

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- State and nation is saying "Why is Pueblo so far ahead!?!?!"
- Frontline rail north and south from Trinidad to Fort Collins to reduce traffic on I-25;
- A Data Center in Southern Colorado, housing development and more jobs;
- Secure our water future. Infrastructure, educating our public;
- Less separation between communities in Colorado – a more statewide approach;
- More equitable funding across the state in general. No matter where you sit on diversity scale, you have a living wage and access to health care;
- Everything covered in art;
- Food supply chains – state offsetting expenditures during food shortages and distribution.

Western Slope Regional Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Workforce Training & Recruitment;
- Affordable Housing
- Mental Health Supports
- Broadband Access
- Education

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, regional issues included:

- Agricultural supply chain and infrastructure;
- Funding for non-profits and community organizations;
- Small business supports;
- Aviation workforce for regional airports;
- Community health centers.

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- All Coloradans will have the opportunity to upgrade skills, participate in the evolving economy by accessing job skill training – adult basic ed, technical skills;
- Well skilled workforce meeting the needs of small business and providing new jobs;
- Every single person has access to the services they need (telehealth, education);
- People would be living successfully, housing would be affordable;
- Be on a pathway to equity.

Northern Colorado Regional Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Broadband Infrastructure;
- Childcare & Afterschool Programs;
- Roads & Transportation;
- Job skills and Upskilling;
- Housing.

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, regional issues included:

- Higher Education Access & Enrollment;
- Business incubation & startup supports;
- Land & water conservation, use

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- Public lands and mountains are vibrant and not overrun;

- New businesses will be community's lifeblood – but help support the businesses that cannot operate because of restrictions (event centers, etc.) to help bridge the gap;
- Direct payments to citizens to spend at local small businesses;
- Colorado is positioned to succeed in future;
- Economic prosperity through higher education.

Denver Metro North Regional Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Construction Projects
- Transportation + Public Transit
- Higher Education
- State Worker Supports
- K-12 Education
- Housing
- Parks & Environment
- Mental & Behavioral Health

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, regional issues included:

- Support for farmers, including next generation and younger farmers;
- Support for non-profits and charitable food infrastructure;
- Clean energy industry & infrastructure;
- Workforce development and skill training;
- Technology in government offices.

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- If we get this right, we will have a generation who are truly engaged locally and nationally. People who are able to pursue their passions – whether that's public transit to work a job or the resources to start their own biz instead of leaving for CA or elsewhere;
- Kids have opportunities within their own community to work, live, and play post graduation; they can get livable wages and affordable housing, and jobs in line with passions;
- CO will be on the leading edge of health, economic sufficiency and real equity in these and in issue like food insecurity;
- There is a competition on this continent for best place to live. It's real and we can compete. We can make this the best place to live FOR ALL people. Crushing it in education. Our children will grow to be powerful. Business will come here;
- If we get it right with education, that will be the key to everything. Our kids will be able to compete, to lead and we will attract national and global biz here.

Denver Metro South Regional Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Education
- Childcare
- Small Business Support
- Mental Health
- Transportation

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, regional issues included:

- Mental health programs and access in schools;
- Address childcare deserts;
- Broadband equitable access;
- Workforce housing access;
- Rewarding frontline workers;
- Apprenticeship and skilled trade education.

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- A Colorado where everybody who wants to get to work can get a good job. Pay off the debts we are creating. You're able to get to the mountains, state parks, open spaces locally. Good quality of life
- Building back better is dismantling systemic racism which is not just police brutality: it's vaccine equity, education, environmental, access to health,
- A more fair, just, equitable CO where people have good paying jobs, can own a house (which you can pass to your family), education... A CO where people feel they are welcome.
- A CO that truly emulates our belief affordable housing, sustainable energy, climate, healthcare,
- Climate of civility, care and concern for people in our state. I'm grateful that incidents of prejudice have been few for me but I'm very aware that has not always been the case across the state. We now hear whispers of some of that. What is each of our role in utilizing resources in building the future for all Coloradans.
- No empty store fronts, more affordable housing, talent pipeline

Four Corners Regional Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Broadband Access
- Education supports
- Public Services & Employees
- Mental & Behavioral Health
- Childcare

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, regional issues included:

- Community health centers
- Job retraining
- Workforce Centers & Incentives
- Regenerative Agriculture
- Affordable Housing Options
- Support for smaller town infrastructure projects

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- All Coloradans will have the opportunity to upgrade skills, participate in the evolving economy by accessing job skill training – adult basic ed, technical skills,
- I want to be able to look back at this moment in History and to say that Colorado took care of the people who stepped up. We did what it took to keep all of Colorado safe, healthy, and fed during this crisis.
- Affordable and equitable where people can live and stay here, work here, have opportunities, access to affordable health care.

Colorado Springs Regional Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Small Business Support
- Transportation
- Broadband
- Mental Health
- Education

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, regional issues included:

- Job training support including older adults & all adult re-skilling;
- Light rail on front range;
- I-25 & other roads South of CO Springs;
- Support for creative class;
- Housing – workforce and affordable, lower income;
- Tourism
- Outdoor spaces and gathering facilities.

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- Without education we can't have any of this. It is so important to take a moment and debrief what we learned, that so many systems didn't work and need to reinvent and embrace all opportunities we have to educate.
- People have access to healthcare, people have access to the things they need, people can travel around. We can go enjoy outdoors and get into transit that will take us places.

- We will have made meaningful progress addressing root causes of inequities.

Eastern Plains Regional Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Infrastructure including water
- Childcare
- Housing
- Broadband

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, regional issues included:

- Rural hospital and care facilities;
- Support for English Language Learners;
- Agricultural infrastructure including processing, transportation;
- Rural education centers & extensions for upskilling;
- Energy production diversification.

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- Businesses open, new ones coming and streets busy with residents, tourists, deliveries, kids riding bikes and people walking along the streets. Highways without potholes! Grocery store shelves full!
- More equitable scenario where families all decent housing, knew where their next meal was coming from, can afford childcare, can afford to be educated, earn a living wage and climb out of poverty.
- State would be inclusive and collaborative. Tear down walls and supposed divisions.
- Erasing equity gaps in education, housing, health care and among different diverse populations and regions of Colorado.

Events, Dining & Tourism Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Consumer Confidence
- Transportation
- Technology & Broadband
- Public Lands Maintenance

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, sector or community issues included:

- One industry town economic diversification;
- Funding to service workers;
- Housing for service industry, especially in tourist towns;
- Small business resource pool & marketing

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- The state will be a leader in using technology – digital leaders for the future.
- Exceeding pre-pandemic numbers – build back quickly, but that is sustainable for our communities and a net positive.
- High level of market share that we have ever had!
- The most inclusive state – staffing, visitation, DEI efforts. This should be an important framework as we think about our recovery and position ourselves for the future.
- Sustainable efforts to be more diverse and more connected – diversity, ebikes available, managing our public lands and forests better. Create sustainable use and visits. We can then better manage increased use as well as prepare for what the future brings (next pandemic, etc.)
- Rebuild our creative economy – support arts community – work/art housing, address homeless and housing issues. Uplifting our arts culture to be included in conversations in our communities

African American Community Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Healthcare
- Home Ownership
- Higher Education Affordability

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, sector or community issues included:

- Compensation for frontline workers;
- Equitable access to high quality education;
- Small & startup business support;
- Support for black owned businesses, non-profits and faith based organizations;
- Justice reform;
- Rehiring & job skill training incentives.

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use of stimulus funds, participants said:

- Wealth gap will have narrowed
- We would really know and be able to pinpoint where those inequities are and name things like systemic racism
- We would start to see thriving communities, we will see community cohesion, less isolation. Overall, our communities would be thriving
- Wealth gap will have been narrowed on its way to elimination. Homeownership gap narrowed. Housing cost burdens will be stabilized especially for renters. Incarceration gap and inequities addressed.

Workforce Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Housing

- Education
- Childcare
- Mental Health
- Higher Education

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, sector or community issues included:

- Work Based Learning & On the Job Training program expansion;
- Inclusion of 50 & up population in job training;
- Conservation Corps
- Regenerative Agriculture
- Public Lands Conservation
- Return to work infrastructure (childcare, transportation, skill training)
- Outdoor recreation economy
- Marketing, PSAs and public relations campaigns
- Just transitions and economic transition supports

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- We will have a robust, talented & locally built talent workforce through training, upskilling
- We would be importing less talent and maximizing our talent
- Every business is thriving, less age battles, sector battles, workforce is strong
- In 5yrs, a successful program will have varied sources of training, we need to make more investments into local communities & orgs that can make sure we reach all demographics, communities.
- We will have a talent pipeline from areas of CO for all Coloradans
- We will have recognized how much the economy & workforce has shifted – instead of talking, we will have made the move to support those industries and that workforce. We're a place people want to come to start a biz and people here have talent

Clean Energy & Conservation Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Clean Energy Industry & Infrastructure
- Utility Infrastructure
- Transportation & Transit Systems
- Regenerative Agriculture

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, sector or community issues included:

- State Park expansion, maintenance;
- Private land conservation;
- Human – Animal conflict mitigation
- Recreational infrastructure;

- Fire Mitigation & Forest Health;
- Wildlife Management
- Green Building Incentives

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado’s leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- Regenerative economy on local production of food, renewable energy, and shared prosperity on a healthy planet
- Thriving and sustainable
- Wildlife friendly
- Fulfilling the goals of Colorado climate plan
- Biodiversity – statewide recreation and conservation plan and statewide water plan
- People centered not capitol centered
- Healthy lands, air and water; thriving people and resilient communities.
- increased climate resiliency with healthy rivers and wildfire mitigation
- Climate resilience - protecting our natural ecosystems, creating healthy, vibrant communities.
- Working with institutions to become carbon neutral by 2030

Local Governments Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Infrastructure
- Childcare
- Mental & Behavioral Health
- Education
- Broadband

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, sector or community issues included:

- Public land management including forest management;
- Rental assistance programs;
- Expansion of definition of “infrastructure” beyond roads, bridges & transportation;
- Funding of capital projects;
- Housing inventory and affordable housing;
- Job training and skill development for jobs of today and future;
- Maintenance and repair of outdoor spaces;
- Law enforcement and mental health partnerships and training.

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado’s leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- We won’t have people in jail because of substance abuse or behavioral health. Children won’t be in school so frustrated they become violent b/c they will be getting the treatment they need. It’s infrastructure – but it’s mental health infrastructure – so we are not criminalizing and keeping people held back or limited.

- We will have reduced barriers so all Coloradans can truly access their basic needs.
- No matter how money is spent, we need to make sure our laws are not barriers to what we want to accomplish or make it too difficult to work through
- Upskilling, reskilling and next-skilling. It needs to be for a lifetime. Needs to not require people to stop earning while learning.
- Broadband no matter where you live, what your income

Quality of Life Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Affordable Housing
- Education (and access equity)
- Mental Health / Behavioral Health
- Transportation
- Childcare
- Infrastructure

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, sector or community issues included:

- Substance abuse treatment and transition support;
- Mental health, victim services;
- Small business supports including agricultural;
- Workforce development and job training;

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- We will look back and see that we combined our efforts to lift all people up and it was not a zero sum game
- We would see an absence of the pain and suffering we see today, the giant lines at food banks
- We would see real movement of the needle on the key measures on things like affordable housing
- When urban and rural Colorado all feel relevant, tended to
- Young people are not leaving rural areas for cities for more opportunities.
- The housing funding talks about targeting downtown and urban areas. We should look at opportunities beyond those and not just perpetuate the legacy of redlining. If we do this right, not just more housing, we'll have it in the right places.

Latino Community Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Education
- Mental Health
- Childcare
- Technology Access & Knowledge

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, sector or community issues included:

- Support for Spanish speaking entrepreneurs accessing programs, supports;
- Education including K-12 and higher ed access supports;
- Support of local non-profits and community organizations closest to community;
- Childcare – cost, access, availability;
- Higher ed affordability, FAFSA, preparation;
- Support for MWOB.

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- A community where Latinx thrive and are valued
- More Latinx students in higher ed, with degrees, with less debt, with basic access to education and to broadband services in rural areas, and leaving higher ed feeling hopeful and successful
- An equitable and healthy community where we are all accepted
- A Colorado of solidarity and justice

Rural & Agricultural Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Rural & Small Town Capital Projects
- Transportation including Rural Highways
- Broadband (Last Mile included)
- Workforce Development
- Targeted Economic Development Initiatives
- Rural Healthcare
- Mental Health

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, sector or community issues included:

- Agricultural Infrastructure
- Farm Industry Education & Job Training
- Support of rural education extension programs
- Food Systems & Supply Chain Supports
- Farm & Ranch Product Supply Chain

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- Rural economies would be vibrant
- Higher capture of dollars staying in our rural communities & it would be more inclusive and accessible for all Coloradans
- Colorado has to promote an image of an Ag friendly state that has its arms open to our Livestock and Farm Commodity industries. Building capacity and streamlining Farm to Market and Wholesale distribution and retail distribution in every sector of Agriculture.

- Connected community - where people can live and work anywhere!
- Colorado has to promote an image of an Ag friendly state that has its arms open to our Livestock and Farm Commodity industries. Building capacity and streamlining Farm to Market and Wholesale distribution and retail distribution in every sector of Agriculture.

Healthcare, Human Services & Behavioral Health Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Mental Health
- Workforce Recruitment, Training
- Broadband
- State Infrastructure
- Substance Abuse & Behavioral Health

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, sector or community issues included:

- Assisted living alternatives;
- Addressing social determinants of health;
- Healthcare workforce diversification;
- Rural healthcare infrastructure;
- Food insecurity and food support infrastructure;
- Breaking down barriers between physical, mental and behavioral health providers.

Vision of the Future

In describing the future if Colorado's leaders maximize the use stimulus funds, participants said:

- We will see high quality early childcare that empowers parents, pays ECE teachers as professionals they are. Our children are well cared for.
- Our systems will have shifted f/compliance/policing to a healing state & approach.
- From mental health perspective, next time we have a crisis, we will be better ready to serve & support all.
- We will have fundamental mental health literacy and it will be accepted and understood – people would know they.
- We will have a holistic approach to health where Doc collaborates w/therapist & engages nutritionist & the psychiatrist... and insurance should be an enabler, not a roadblock.
- Come back to a system that is better prepared and provides what folks really need when we face an emergency.
- Build expansion opportunities across the state that incentivize people that go into areas where we don't have staff needs met – scholarship programs, loan forgiveness programs. Opportunity to build capacity so we can treat people who need it the most.
- Rural communities and people have access to quality of care in rural communities and life expectancy.
- More equitable outcomes no matter where you are in Colorado.
- Increased access to early childhood services, affordable housing, ample access to healthy food!!

Asian American & Pacific Islander Meeting

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Education
- Small Business Support
- Infrastructure

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, sector or community issues included:

- Address language barriers to accessing public and private services;
- Direct support for AAPI businesses and entrepreneurs;
- Language Justice & Cultural Competence;
- Fair treatment of AAPI immigrants, first generation in grant programs.

Vision of the Future

Time did not allow this discussion.

Chambers of Commerce & Economic Development Councils

Dominant Themes

Themes common across groups included:

- Affordable & Workforce Housing
- Job Training
- Education: Pre-K – Higher Ed
- Transportation
- Broadband

Region Specific Issues & Ideas

In addition to issues that applied statewide, sector or community issues included:

- Technology access;
- Childcare;
- Tourism, Consumer Confidence;
- PPP to support upskilling, reskilling;
- Expansion of government procurement focus on small and MWOBs;
- Green energy development;
- Just transitions and community economic transition;
- Alignment of education with future of work;
- Backfilling the Unemployment fund;
- Sustainable tourism;
- Small farm, ranch, ag support;
- Rural incentives and jump start expansion.

Vision of the Future

- Spreading wealth and prosperity out of I-25 corridor and not just to tourism-based economies. Broadband is one avenue we have for small communities.

- Trend towards not just blurring lines but eliminating lines between education and work. Employers need to get more engaged in the education system at all levels and the education system needs to consider themselves as a pipeline. Engagement needs to be made easier for employers to work with HS students. Incentives and better ed across state level to get employers to open-up to these types of programs.
- Colorado will have the most robust and competitive economy in the country. Measured by traditional metrics and from an equity lens that ensures our bottom quartiles are brought along and not left behind.
- Build back beautifully, with a continued emphasis on affordable housing.
- Infusion into education to help close any gaps caused by the pandemic and ensure those students are not left behind.

OVERVIEW OF THE FEDERAL STIMULUS PACKAGE

American Rescue Plan Act Overview		
	Program	Funding (in \$B)
Aid to Individuals	Stimulus checks	\$6.74
	Unemployment Benefits	\$2.60
	Child Tax Credit	\$2.00
	Housing/Rental/Utility	\$0.47
	Additional Programs	Vary
Aid to Businesses	Program	Funding (in \$B)
	Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)	\$7.25 nationally
	Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) funding	\$0.20
	Restaurant Revitalization	\$0.52
	Business New Hire/Retention Tax Credit	\$0.19
	Program	Funding (in \$B)
	National vaccination	\$1.10
COVID Related Relief	State and Local Governments	\$6.19
	Education, mostly public K-12 Schools	\$1.64

- Funds from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 are distributed in the following ways:
 - Directly to households and businesses
 - Direct funding to specific State & Local programs
 - Aid to State & Local governments
- The State of Colorado should receive about \$3.9 billion for public health, economic relief and recovery for households and businesses, revenue backfill, and infrastructure.

WHAT AREAS ARE GETTING DIRECT RESOURCES IN FED RELIEF?

H.R. 133 \$14B to Colorado *preliminary estimates*

- \$2.9 billion in stimulus checks
- \$4.5 billion in PPP
- \$1.5 billion in unemployment
- \$440 million for housing/utility
- \$400 million hiring/retention tax credit
- \$400 million nutrition benefits

American Rescue Plan \$27B to CO *preliminary estimates*

- \$6.7 billion in stimulus checks
- \$2.6 billion in unemployment \$300/week through September
- **\$2.3 billion to local governments**
- \$2 billion in child tax credit expansion
- \$520 million for restaurants and venues
- \$500 million in child care
- \$470 million for housing/utility

WHAT AREAS ARE WE MISSING?

- The State’s efforts are intended to complement the direct Federal spending and fill in the gaps when necessary to build a stronger recovery tailored to our local needs
- Our overarching goals:
 - Add stimulus to create jobs, attract and grow businesses, and meet our workforce challenges
 - Make transformative investments that position Colorado to succeed and lead to a brighter future
 - Provide relief to those in need where direct federal funds may leave gaps
 - Prioritize one-time spending to avoid outyear costs that we can’t afford

POSSIBLE STIMULUS PROPOSALS

- Supporting Small Business
 - Provide loan and technical support programs, partnering with Small Business Development Centers and Local/Regional Economic Development Centers, to help small businesses across the state, including those that are minority and women owned and rurally located, and to those that were most severely impacted by capacity restrictions during the pandemic.
- Rural Hospital Investments
 - Help rural hospitals transform service offerings and affordability capabilities that can stimulate local economies long term
- Aligning Education with the Jobs of the Future
 - Pay for the cost of attendance for Coloradans pursuing CTE credentials that lead to good paying jobs and fill critical workforce needs (e.g., healthcare, welding, early childhood education, mental health, etc.)
- Climate Equity Building Investments
 - Investments in clean energy, energy efficiency, health and quality of life building upgrades to communities most disproportionately impacted by economic, social and environmental factors, particularly low-income and communities of color

ALLOWABLE USES OF FEDERAL FUNDS

The ARP limits the aid to state and local governments to the following allowable uses:

- To respond to the pandemic or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality;
- For premium pay to eligible workers performing essential work (as determined by each recipient government) during the pandemic, providing up to \$13 per hour above regular wages;
- For the provision of government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue due to the pandemic (relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year prior to the emergency);
- To make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure;
- Funds may not be used to offset tax cuts made since March 3, 2021

Addendum B: Meeting Notes

The following pages contain the unedited notes from each meeting including:

Regional Meetings

- Pueblo & Southern Colorado
- Western Slope
- Northern Colorado
- Denver Metro North
- Denver Metro South
- Colorado Springs
- Eastern Plains

Audience Specific Meetings

- Events, Dining & Tourism
- African American Community
- Workforce
- Clean Energy & Conservation
- Local Governments
- Quality of Life
- Latino Community
- Rural & Agricultural
- Healthcare, Human Services & Behavioral Health
- Asian American & Pacific Islander

Meeting: Southern Colorado/Pueblo

Date of Meeting: 3/28/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- Strategic planning to support nonprofits and small businesses. Support for planning for sustainability and planning for bad times.
 - Visioning – who do we want to be in the next 5-10 yrs.
 - Campaign to let visitors/businesses know that Colorado is open for business.
 - The state will look different in 10 years. Diversity and inclusion – make sure the state targets small businesses – voices that are not traditionally heard or at the table.
 - Small businesses are the life of our community -additional support for these businesses is needed.
 - Look at community drivers/center – acknowledge these drivers – healthcare, renewable energy. Focus on these drivers. Create vision – what community does well, our foundation. Build on what we do well.
 - Continue to help/support the workforce – recruit and retain the individuals for the workforce, skill building.
 - The children of today are the caregivers of tomorrow.
 - Don't want to just stand-up programs and hire people for programs that go away when funding goes away– sustainable funding, strategic investments to move education forward.
 - Increase access to broadband.
 - Financial aid for CTE programs in some cases.
 - Area is experiencing an aging population. This needs to be taken into account.
 - How do we recruit young families and young workers to this community?
 - Support business growth; promote buy/support local.
 - Education needs to change with the changing needs of our communities. There are not people to fill the available jobs. Encourage students to stay in the community and help the community to grow.
 - Impacts on our healthcare system from dealing with COVID
 - Access impact – physical human impacts. Help rebuild the healthcare system in this community and in an transformative way – regain what we have lost and prepare us for the future.
 - Lack of and access to Broadband. Technology needs to be a part of every conversation we have.
 - Housing – cost tom compensation levels are not sustainable.
 - Example of solution - Vacancy tax
 - Outdoor recreation toolkit for rural communities – we should continue to build upon that. Help continue that wave of recreation.
 - Eliminating gaps and redundancies in services among local nonprofits
 - Infrastructure which includes broadband plan, Educational plan with workforce skilled training, and Health care services, and Agricultural farm to table programs. Colorado Proud Agriculture.
 - Bring additional services to seniors to ensure that they can stay at home if they choose to do so – better meet the needs of seniors.
 - Protecting our Watersheds and making sure security of water and the water plan programs.
- Transportation
 - Lack of **transportation**. Believe we could do things to build out infrastructure that allows people to better transport around city, access to stores/biz/restaurants. Would like to drive less. Want more workable bus system and access to downtown.

- Disabled and elderly
 - Electric vehicle or trolley to service downtown area
 - North-South transportation including SW Chief
 - Also need East-East thoroughfare through the state, expansion of 160 would be incredible
 - Availability of transportation to make it more efficient and cleanliness of transportation facilities and letter people know they are clean.
 - Funds should be focused on electric fleets and vehicles, electric charging stations, etc.
- Broadband
 - Learned a lot from COVID and working remotely. **Broadband** and highspeed internet infrastructure is needed. **Housing** boom in northern Colorado is flowing to Las Animas County. Housing and Construction boom would be complimented by broadband.
- Senior Care
 - Fund and support **long-term assisted living**. Hard time **retaining staff** for elderly core services because of low wage assessments.
- Tourism
 - HWY 12 designated federal byway and should **bring in more tourism**/interest – could use some funding. Could potentially do broadband along r
 - **Tourism** attraction to the area – messaging, PR, etc.
- Good Governance
 - Important to coordinate among all the entities that will be getting funding to make sure money is used in best way possible. Not duplicating services. Can state funds match local initiatives?
 - Ensure due diligence to assist all portions of the state, including rural Colorado. Agriculture, rural health and broadband are all important
- Affordable housing
 - Would help with new students coming out of school, retain youth in community. Transportation is an issue that would help youth and artists in the community. Lots of influx in the area which drives up real estate prices. Makes it hard to keep employees.
- Fire Mitigation
 - Fire mitigation and alternative options when fire comes through the valley
 - Accelerated growth in general aviation. CDOT aviation has been generous with funding. Looking to fund 2-3 projects in Del Norte. Looking to expand airport. Brings in workforce jobs. Want to expand wildland fire base with single tankers stationed at airport.
- Education
 - Education is important moving forward. Focus has been on “for credit.” There is a lot of opportunity for us to fund the adult learner who needs a few more credits to get a certificate (not financial aide eligible – i.e. a CNA). Shorter certificates that lend self to competency individuals need to get into different biz or industry is not funded. Higher Ed comes in all different forms – what can we be to be innovative.
 - Higher Ed funding to support kids who access state univ and community colleges would be huge in terms of economic growth. Public education – even with dollars dedicated – next year’s seniors will have never had a fully funded public ed system in this state bc of funding inequities. Can we do anything to support public K-12 still leaves us behind what voters have said they want it funded.
 - Summer programming for students who have had a terrible academic year and help catch them up.

- We have 8% of adults over 25 years old in our community who do not have a basic high school education. Getting just that level of education will help prepare them for further certification or 2 or 4 year educations to become better equipped for the workforce
- Recidivism
 - Workforce development for people exiting prison system. Programming/transitional services. Reducing recidivism.
 - Make second change pale easier to navigate, less bureaucracy
- Workforce Support
 - **Childcare and daycare** slots for working families – make it more convenient and less expensive
 - Elevate, support, fund workforce for care providers, long term care facilities. It is an important job that needs a living wage.
- **Support for small downtown businesses.** Incentivize for more online presence.

If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- State and nation is saying “Why is Pueblo so far ahead!?!?! – not let the past get in our way, acknowledge our history but not let it hold us back
- Frontline rail north and south from Trinidad to Fort Collins to reduce traffic on I-25, and also I-70 rail. A Data Center in Southern Colorado, housing development and more jobs!
- Secure our water future. Infrastructure, educating our public.
- Less separation between communities in Colorado – a more statewide approach
- More equitable funding across the state in general. No matter where you sit on diversity scale, you have a living wage and access to health care.
- Everything covered in art
- Infrastructure is a key we need for growth in Colorado – protecting water ways and securing water sheds, mitigating from forest fires. Implement funding towards these programs which would also create jobs.
- Elimination of food deserts
- State provide real, profound mental health services for adults and children.
- Food supply chains – state offsetting expenditures during food shortages and distribution.

Chat comments:

- Greatly improved broadband but saw it is an excluded item.
- It is important to realize that there can be a big difference between how Fed student aid is available for CTE programs. There may be a need to provide more funding for some CTE programs that receive less Fed funding if CO considers those programs especially important.
- infrastructure-broadband, utilities, roads for long term sustainability
- Broadband; Business Planning; Housing (issues)
- Colorado is know for its outdoor recreation assets. The continued development and promotion of
- Jobs and affordable housing for all.

Meeting: Western Slope

Date of Meeting: 3/28/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- Transportation
 - Handicapped when I70 shuts down at Glenwood Canyon. Need discussion on alternative routes - Cottonwood Pass and other alternatives are not great options, especially for trucking.
 - Weekend traffic jam in general from West Slope to Denver and vice versa.
 - Transportation issues across west slope. Need more multi-modal options.
 - Transportation – HWY 40 funding.
 - Address closures to I-70 at Glenwood Canyon, Vail Pass, Eisenhower Tunnel and how it affects major routes
- Workforce
 - Workforce in resort towns. Lost all J1 workers and literally can't fill the jobs.
 - Displaced workers from transition from coal. Training for green jobs and to retrain workforce. Need to expand community college funding. Offer new green jobs curriculum.
 - Improve Broadband for location neutral workforce (Zoom Towns)
 - Need more focus and support for frontline workers – ranch, ag, especially undocumented workers. Income is very low. Need to support more families living in mobile parks and low-income housing that is not designed to meet family needs.
 - I mentioned farm and ranch workers, and just to complement my comment, they were called “essentials” in the beginning of the pandemic, but until now they are not receiving any kind of support. Besides that, their wages are very low that no one is willing to work in these rural industries and immigrants who are more integrated in the society are moving to better pay industries or businesses...Important to support this workforce if we want to preserve rural industries in western CO.
- Housing/Affordable Housing
 - Housing is a major issue in resort towns. More people coming back to second homes because of Zoom towns. Service workers really need housing and are being squeezed. Out.
 - Really hard to pull housing resources from front range... Need to focus more on working poor or entrepreneurs with tight budgets who want to be in these communities and can provide more for tourism/workforce community.
 - Affordable housing projects need seed funding.
 - Affordable housing is different on west slope/resort areas. It is a high-cost area. Need money and state to look at rules. Front Range affordable housing rules don't work on western slope
 - Affordable housing in resort communities brings a big housing equity discussion. Rely on low-wage service industry but don't provide year-round housing opportunities for them.
- Mental Health
 - Mental health service deficit. How can we provide more adequate mental health?
- Broadband
 - Broadband for location neutral workers.
- Water

- Water quality funding
 - Seeing a lot of issues around water infrastructure and Calls on the Colorado River. Need to show efficiency. Tougher to get grants and loans for potable water projects.
 - Water storage project to help with cost of permitting. Need to look for one time cost.
- Education
 - Covid impact on first generation college students. Stimulus money to get kids back into higher ed who left during the pandemic.
- Forest health – detecting and putting out fires – restoration from fires. Remediation.
 - Need additional support and funding to local forest management who many times have to assist on federal land as well.
- Fund Childcare infrastructure/facilities to support universal preschool would be good use of onetime funds to build capacity.
- Block Grants for local decision making and initiatives
 - Help to Just Transition communities
- Workforce
 - Upscaling and training for jobs of tomorrow – low and medium wage earners
- Education
 - Training for teachers on use of technology
- Infrastructure
 - Water and sewer – smaller communities have not been able to keep up with the needed upgrades
- Capacity building
 - We cannot take this money and use it when communities (mental health, human services, etc.) are exhausted. Capacity building in nonprofits, agencies, organizations is key!
- Parody on the west slope, equal funding
- Housing
 - Access to affordable housing – we are in a crisis situation in many of our communities
 - Ensure infrastructure to support new housing
 - Cannot recruit or retain employees if there is not housing attainable housing available
 - No eviction without representation
- Transportation
 - Smaller state hwys (hwy 50 as an example)
- Mental Health
 - Adolescent mental health
 - Expand workforce – there is a growing need.
 - Incentives for staying in the field (after the strain of the pandemic)
 - Telemedicine/telehealth – can help deliver mental health opportunities/access
- Broadband
 - fill in the gap. 10 by 1 is not enough! Greater speeds if we are going to serve communities.
- Agriculture
 - Support legacy farms/families
 - Support farm to table initiatives
 - Colorado proud agriculture is at the table!
- Funding for the nonprofit sector that stepped up to support our communities and provided basic needs of our citizens during a frightening time
- Funding workforce
 - Education – infrastructure – get us up to scale. Transportation and education. Basic infrastructure.

- Small business support
 - Funding to help buy down debt
Food producers, needs to be some look at what we can do to support legacy farmers, we need all kinds of farmers to help support
 - work with communities to use coal for other products
 - Airline/pilot shortage. This will hit our regional airports.
 - Investments in pilot school programs
- Funds should have maximum flexibility and be used for locally driven projects/ priorities
- We need renewed commitments for partnerships and collaboration between governments and nonprofits – work on not duplicating efforts
- We have become a playground for the front range
 - help visitors understand how western Colorado is contributing to Colorado’s economy
- Invest in public services. Working through this pandemic has put tremendous strain on state employees and agencies + combined with understaffing. Create jobs at the state level + spur economy through those new jobs.
- The PPP program has been huge for our local businesses but a lot of smaller businesses still don’t know about it. A big gap is in disseminating information. A good source/resource is chambers but they’ve suffered themselves as they’re reliant on membership dues. We should provide support to those chambers. Block grant system to provide 25-50k to each chamber to support their local businesses.
- To facilitate all the ideas: A strong investment in CO Conservation Corps to get out there and work on the infrastructure, parks, open spaces, connect with them with a sense of place in CO.
- Housing: If county could buy land, build condos/houses that are affordable – housing is a real block to recruiting talent
- How do we invest in community health centers to make sure displaced and un/under-employed have clear access + provide pathway for youth into medical & health professions. Would also help to address mental health
- Ensure we have equitable vaccine access
- Given change in economy, this is time to invest in comprehensive job training/re-training for those out of work due to pandemic or economic shifts to train them (esp those not headed/in college) via apprenticeships in high tech and other fields – make sure you include rurals
- CO Workforce Centers in the Southwest are seeing people come in – we have 300 listings – but a lot of the incentives to go back to work aren’t as powerful as the incentives to stay at home. Maybe there are some ways to match skills with employment needs.

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado’s (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Workforce, broadband, small businesses
- Broadband (to support telehealth), expand workforce (behavioral health)
- Broadband, Upskilling/Education, Housing
- Small business support, transportation infrastructure, broadband
- Looking at cascading enterprises – how regenerative ag can use products from corn or hemp and feed into another business. Make sure somebody is connecting these pieces. Regenerative energy & ag.
- Housing & investment to support businesses who are installing clean energy
- Forest service has identified big problem of human waste on trails in our high country
- Housing, affordable day care/childcare

- Investing in public services. Invest in healthcare esp on west slope. State negotiated several plans including Kaiser which isn't even available on west slope. More attention to the struggle of ag workers and are working tirelessly, at risk and long hours
- Daycare. A lot of people who would like to work are struggling to find affordable daycare. Given cost of land in some resort towns, it's a struggle to justify the cost of building/operating – if \$\$ could go to acquiring land and constructing the facilities. Some preschool has been expanded but still needs more funding and daycare is a huge shortage.
- Access to quality broadband at an affordable rate to allow people to work from home and allow all people to access those remote jobs.
- Healthcare, Public services, investment and support for agricultural workers (along the lines of SB 21-087)
- Fund a door to door campaign for vaccines for homebound, those without internet or ELL. Utilizing remote alert system to reach people. Make sure our uninsured or undocumented know where to get treatment if they have adverse reaction to vaccine.
- Authentic community engagement about health including vaccines and the distrust that exists in some communities

If we maximize our use of federal and state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- Well skilled workforce meeting the needs of small business and providing new jobs
- Every single person has access to the services they need (telehealth, education)
- Pathway to economic diversity
- People would be living successfully, and housing would be affordable – will have addressed the immigration issues
- Be on a pathway to equity
- West slope would begin to have parity for equal funding for transportation, childcare, mental health
- Thriving business economy in western Colorado – career and technical support
- Work together to unite as a whole state vs a rural urban divide
- Kids scores move in a positive direction on the healthy kids survey
- Find ways to bridge the urban rural divide
- Much less political divide
- Lowered number of people living with housing burdens
- Tourism will continue to play a large role in Colorado's future
- CO will lead the way in public service and the appeal of working in public service. The state shows it values all communities.
- If we invest in childcare now, it will mean so many more mothers would be able to work and pursue their careers
- All Coloradans will have the opportunity to upgrade skills, participate in the evolving economy by accessing job skill training – adult basic ed, technical skills,
-
- I think this is the most important part – that we look at how all of these pieces fit together.
- All of these issues are about reducing financial stress – too many people spend too much on housing, childcare, utilities b/c of inefficient buildings & systems

Comments from chat:

- Funds should have maximum flexibility and be used for locally driven projects/ priorities
- Broadband is my number one infrastructure need and it needs to be affordable. Will the \$1 billion directed to housing provide a significant safety net for housing? Is it prudent to spend the onetime state funds in addition to that amount? Workforce training would be a second priority as well as making sure our rural hospitals are able to stay in business as our communities need health care facilities and providers to remain viable.
- I would like to see us NOT be in the middle of another Great Recession. And, if it happens, we have had the wisdom and foresight to build our basic needs nonprofits to be ready to roll.

Meeting: Northern Colorado

Date of Meeting: 3/30/2021

Small group questions

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- broadband infrastructure – expanded access and new access to services. Investments in technological infrastructure
- building and expansion, capital expansion and investments
- infrastructure for food banks
- Enrollment at Colorado higher education institutions has gone down 12% (many low income and first generation students) - provide those students with financial support to continue their education this year or next – funding for tuition, books and living expenses – investing in students to get them into the workforce, grown your own
- Protect our mountains – public lands are facing threats including impacts from congestion, forest health management
- Look for investments at the ground level/ground floor in industries like Hemp
- Increase confidence for people to get out, be comfortable at events, confidence in venues, vaccinating.
- Education and childcare -dual impact on children and the workforce. Vacant buildings around Larimer that could be used for out of school time and child care supports. Much needed capitol and decoupling food insecurity and K-12
- Impacts on higher ed enrollment – 11% decrease in enrollment at UNC. Largest impact on low-income and underrepresented minority students. Worried about longterm generational effect on group of students not attending UNC and other local community colleges. Concern for lost generation. Need to find opportunities for opportunity grants for students to go to college. Many students working multiple jobs to keep families afloat.
- Productive infrastructure. Weld Co lacks infrastructure supporting startups, incubators, etc. Invest for future with infrastructure that gears us to be competitive, entrepreneurial skills.
- Workforce development, recruitment, retention and supporting existing staff for behavioral health. Providing bonus above normal pay.
- Monetize schools. Work with early childhood kids – buildings.
- Aging community – retired folks need locations and infrastructure.
- Broadband build out
- Investment in roads
- Coordinate all the different pots of money that are coming – be efficient with money and think of it in a coordinated way.
- Budget stabilization or negative factor – buy down the negative factor. Fully funded classrooms are important. Social and emotional learning
- Disproportionately high student loan debt – can you get a buy down on student loan debt in essential industries in Colorado?
- Price reduction on health care. Have highest pharma and medical prices in
- Prime the pump with funds that lead to corporate match dollars. Programs to connect public education system with private sector. Focus on skills that are changing quickly. Need future oriented plans that have other funds
- Communities of color have been hardest hit by pandemic and need to rebuild systems that have failed. How can we invest in infrastructure capitol? Broadband to mobile home parks, child care

centers in low income areas, keep infrastructure focus. Need to listen to BIPOC and apply lessons

- Water infrastructure investments. Snowpack is getting smaller shorter. Capture passive water.
 - Modernizing pipes and systems to be used efficiently. Partnering with gas and utilities.
- Sustainability and environmental sustainability – use this lens to assess infrastructure needs and ensure infrastructure is sustainable/resilient
- If we don't invest in people, these efforts won't come to fruition
- Inadequate infrastructure for mental health in rural areas of state. Could combine opioid funding with these stimulus dollars to make bigger impact.
- Consistent messaging on workforce programs. It's fragmented and the way it is talked about from Hs to college to real world.

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Housing
- Foodbanks, housing and jobs
- Small businesses – example: Latino owned business have challenges navigating the space – who to go to to get license, needed paperwork, questions arise about the differences between notary and lawyer.
- Housing assistance, infrastructure, transportation and transit
- Infrastructure, transportation
- Directly help businesses by replenishment of the unemployment fund
- Use state funds to facilitate investments in communities – example: energy impact fund allows for state to invest in projects at the state level. A way to quickly get funding out to the local level
- Build upon enormous cooperation that is taking place by investing in economic development offices that can get funding out quickly to these collaborative groups
- Public lands, transportation, ensuring that broadband is available statewide
- Transportation and transit
- Transportation, jobs, food, housing – industry and small businesses
- Essential constructions projects
- Building affordable and attainable housing throughout Colorado – also creates jobs

If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- Public lands and mountains are vibrant and not overrun
- These issues are all interrelated – strong economy, getting more money into the local governments
- Support for existing small business and incubation of new businesses
- New businesses will be community's lifeblood – but help support the businesses that cannot operate because of restrictions (event centers, etc) to help bridge the gap
- Direct payments to citizens to spend at local small businesses
- Local communities have significant needs in terms of water and sewer – help communities grow by supporting infrastructure – ensuring this will help us grow and meet the needs of our growing population
- Colorado is positioned to succeed in future

- Economic prosperity through higher education

Comments from Chat:

- Small business support - to recover and expand. Also very intrigued with the infrastructure investment: buildings, broadband, etc.
- Affordable housing, investment in infrastructure for nonprofits (brings jobs and supports the highest
- Investment in core needs (housing, education, healthcare) = self-reliant citizens able to support their families and contribute to the health of our community. As individuals thrive, so do businesses.
- I agree wholeheartedly - help each community member stimulate the economy!

Meeting: Denver Metro North

Date of Meeting: 4/1/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- Public transit that could get you all across front range (and state) that is clean, efficient would make a huge improvement.
- Transportation: If we are going to meet our clean energy, green goals, we need to make it more broadly available
- Focus on setting goals for construction projects across the state to spur small business
- Investing in the community, high quality service
- Local dollars go to the local municipalities. State dollars I'd put out there that there is a big, last chance opportunity to deal with rural municipalities who have been dependent on fossil fuels – just transitions. Largely by putting a big chunk into energy impact assistance
- State employees feel that we are underfunded in many ways. We're behind private sector. We need to have our budgets restored and we need to be competitive
- 2 ideas for transformative change: We need better entry points for farmers. Our average farmer is 60. So difficult for younger people to break in. We think w/\$32mm, we could do a lot (Joel McClurg). #2 would be improving infrastructure of our charitable food system and ecosystem. Too many places, folks have to travel hundred miles to food banks to pick up
- Funding for higher ed – especially equitable funding (which I know is on the way). We also need to expand childcare assistance program – expand to include low & moderate so people can get back to work.
- Regional energy projects – will put people to work & move us toward green
- Post 12 grade training so we keep talent in CO. We could lead the country in local food production if we invest in the supply chain
- Something critical to functioning state is mental health services. We need to be better at understanding how homeless became so
- We are ranked very low in K12 funding. If we want to talk about the future, we have to invest in our kids. Too many parents are expected to fundraise to support the basics
- We need pandemic pay and training for home healthcare workers

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Education
 - College enrollment has gone down about 12% - invest financial aid to low income, underrepresented, first generation to get them back on track. Our workforce needs the educated populous. Infusion of flexible funds to incentivize them to continue to their education in higher education – young folks and adults.
 - Training for jobs of the future – innovation
 - Close the gap between who is graduation and the skills needed in our workforce – what are the jobs of the future and how do we train our population for those jobs as well as recruit companies here to Colorado with good paying jobs
 - Take learnings from remote education during covid to better customize our education to meet the needs for all students

- Charter, district and innovation – build upon the schools that are serving underserving populations, allow these schools to participate in a competitive grant program to serve more students especially those that serve traditionally underserved student.
- Close the gap between who is graduation and the skills needed in our workforce – what are the jobs of the future and how do we train our population for those jobs as well as recruit companies here to Colorado with good paying jobs
- Environment
 - Climate energy and equity – without clean air and water nothing else matters.
 - Climate change mitigation.
 - When building affordable housing take the environment into account – air quality and open space
- Addressing food deserts. Incentives to attract grocery stores. Food deserts have huge impacts – health impacts, economic opportunity impacts, fundamental piece for our communities.
- Transportation –
 - Revisit vehicle miles traveled
 - Increase charging stations
 - Address urban state highways
 - Increase equitable access to transit
 - Investing in safe sidewalks
 - Bus rapid transit
 - Investments in rural Colorado
 - Safer bike routes to work
- Affordable and attainable housing
 - Impacts on homelessness
 - Address homelessness and access to housing for arts community
- Mental health/behavior health
 - Increasing access to services
 - Addressing workforce issues – attract and hire clinicians
 - Facility issues – these facilities are very expensive to operate
- Access to broadband
 - To allow live and working outside of metro areas
- Healthcare
 - Training, increased pay and health benefits for home healthcare workers
- Education – how do we close the gap to who we graduate and the kinds of jobs we
 - Loretta (not Kelly) – alarmed at the need for behavior health, workforce and facility issues, cost of operation is high, nurses – shortages, being marketable salary
 - Affordable housing
- Small business support
 - Access to/create viable spaces for businesses – redeveloping, change of use
 - Access to small business loans
- Investments in rural Colorado to support the needs of the front range
- We'll never see this again. We have a huge transportation shortfall, we have a massive affordable housing problem and all around housing crisis. Just Transitions. Ag needs our help too. In 2008 –
- 13, leg backfilled budget w/\$400mm.
- Workforce development. Are there ways we can support people in upskilling, changing career paths, being ready for the evolving business climate. Early childhood. There are not enough people with ECE credentials. Apprenticeships, pathways for people in our community into ECE

- For counties: broadband, high speed is a huge issue and was underscored during COVID – for business, for education – it became not wish list or luxury but critical infrastructure. We need much more than the \$50-70mm that the leg can come up with.
- Food supply chain, broadband for all – need to be a utility and public good. We need public support for undocumented Coloradans who too often fall between cracks or aren't eligible. We need to make sure they are not left behind.
- We need technology in our state offices. Our state staff are paid so little they can't afford tech themselves. Drug prevention and addiction programs will see a spike when we come back. We need to fully fund paying living wages to state staff.
- Increasing transportation options between cities. Busing expanding is great but it's not enough. To right wrongs, we are still tearing down homes in Denver for highways and displacing people who can't afford it at all. Look at how we can get people into small business – entrepreneurs etc. – make it so people can open a biz at home (including zoning)
- In education, this kind of money could be incredibly leveraged on things like where we're spending money on testing.
- More micro-business support. Less red tape, more support for start ups, small biz
- Let's make CO the best place to be an engaged citizen.
- ECE – people & facilities

If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- Community engagement within politics within our civic responsibilities. If we get this right, we will have a generation who are truly engaged locally and nationally. People who are able to pursue their passions – whether that's public transit to work a job or the resources to start their own biz instead of leaving for CA or elsewhere. We won't funnel them into a degree that is becoming obsolete. With advancement of tech, our gov't & utilities are so archaic in their use of tech, automation, A/I, disaster prevention
- Kids have opportunities within their own community to work, live, and play post graduation; they can get livable wages and affordable housing, and jobs in line with passions
- CO will be on the leading edge of health, economic sufficiency and real equity in these and in issue like food insecurity. Only 1% of farms are owned by black people. Health outcomes for our Native & Indigenous populations whose life expectancy are already shorter.
- There is a competition on this continent for best place to live. It's real and we can compete. We can make this the best place to live FOR ALL people. Crushing it in education. Our children will grow to be powerful. Business will come here. We have the nat resources for ag, food security.
- If we get it right with education, that will be the key to everything. Our kids will be able to compete, to lead and we will attract national and global biz here.
- If we do it right, we will be compliant with fed spending guidelines. Success means there is no question we have used every penny for the benefit of Colorado – and maybe pushing the envelope
- As we focus on education, we have to place value & attention on the trades – apprenticeships, skilled pathways.
- Hire Colorado first
- More progress
- When community members raise their hand and ask for help that we have the resources and workforce to support them in that moment

- Clean, safe being free of gun violence and regardless of race and economics, having equal seat at the table
- Expanded education opportunities in Colorado
- More workforce diversity
- Pursue happiness through public education system
- I will not be the only person of color on this call!
- Infrastructure to support safe transportation – transit friendly
- Equitable opportunities for education, employment and entrepreneurial
- Less of a divide between urban and rural – one state!
- Support for behavioral health initiatives
- K-12 education and higher ed investment
 - **Funding assistance** to ensure all schools can open full-time – materials, supplies, PPE, etc. (ensures kids can go to school and families can go to work).
 - Increase staffing at schools with interventionists to keep kids on track.
 - Broadband and **laptops for families with kids** to do out-home schooling.
- Get people feeling safe and secure
- Infrastructure
 - **Infrastructure at the local level.** This creates jobs and is an economic driver. Focus on building venues (outdoor amphitheatres, museums, etc).
 - Now is not time to ID new infrastructure projects and throw funds at it. Most appropriate to figure out how to **leverage funding so it matches money** out of federal government. **Broadband and transportation.**
 - **Mass transit** needs to be a focus. Need to make it easier for people to get where they want to be. High priority for quality of life and the environment.
- Workforce development
 - **Build systems** that help plan or **align educational development with labor market** requirements. If we just put money into the system but aren't planning for longer term jobs or projecting for them, might be developing for the wrong things. FL is building systems that combine labor market projections and connect in digital systems that look at educational outcomes. Mapping ed outcomes and aligning with current jobs employers need and projected needs over time. This could drive policy, resource development, etc.
 - Workforce realignment investment. In a unique situation where many industries are very strong in state (aerospace, biotech, etc.) but they are competing for workforce, driving up labor costs, but it is not helping industries thrive. We have a higher unemployment rate than in past. These are good jobs and **need resources invested in retraining programs** for these jobs.
 - Support for non-software developer jobs. There are a lot of jobs that students aren't aware of. Need clear path for employers to assist with educational opportunities. Integrate programs into employer friendly solutions.
 - Create **incentives for employers to re-engage with workforce programs.**
- Community Investments
 - **Restock food banks**
 - **Benefits to essential workers** who have been impacted by pandemic
- Housing affordability
- Homelessness challenges – have allowed region to address homelessness in a balkanized way. A few cities in urban areas have the greatest challenge. The state could play a significant role by

investing in more regional solutions to this challenge, create a more shared approach. Seed partnerships across regions.

Comments *(as entered into the chat):*

- Statewide broadband internet
- Transportation investments
- Education/Workforce Development
- 1) Mass transit- build out the metro bus rapid transit network rather than expanding highways. This would address regional equity, air pollution and climate change. 2) Affordable housing and homelessness 3) Invest in Main Street infrastructure and businesses.
- affordable housing, equitable mobility, food deserts,
- Let's get our populous educated! Funds can be directed in a very focused manner with one-time payments for underrepresented groups, those with the most financial need, and first-generation learners in a very flexible manner that can be used for tuition, fees, books, housing or transportation needs.
- I also think there are some real opportunities to help support opportunities for small businesses, both in direct support for those businesses and in support for initiatives to create spaces for those businesses. There are many old streetcar nodes, but the revitalization of those properties is often just not financially viable.
- There are over 70,000 children across Colorado attending public schools and districts in the state's lowest performance categories. At the same time, approximately 80 percent of children identified as low-income, special needs, English language learners and/or students of color are not meeting grade-level goals on state assessments. In a state of approximately 900,000 students, that means that at least 1 in every 3 children is not receiving the public education they deserve. COVID has only made these dynamics more challenging. But there are schools across our state that are helping students beat the odds every day. We want to help these schools expand or replicate to serve more children. With recent federal stimulus dollars, we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to grow what works, help thousands more children in Colorado access high-quality public schools, and reinvest in our public education infrastructure.
- There have been many pilot programs in education that are segmented, uncoordinated and unable to scale up to significant numbers. Investment in education needs to address 80% of the student population, not just the 10% on each end of the spectrum.
- Specific transportation projects focused on equity and mobility that could be funded-
<https://www.rtd-denver.com/projects/regional-bus-rapid-transit-feasibility-study>
<https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/transportation-infrastructure/programs-services/projects/2017-archive/speer-leetsdale.html>
<https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/transportation-infrastructure/programs-services/projects/colfax-corridor.html>
<https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/broadway-mobility.html> (south segment)
- Inverse relationship between Behavioral health care and workforce availability.
- Actually nursing and other staff i.e. therapists, etc, relative to behavioral health for high cost services
- There is a LOT of information we already have. We do not need to start a lot of new initiatives, but need to solve problems with solutions we've already identified but never could afford.

Meeting: South Denver Metro

Date of Meeting: 4/3/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- Broadband
 - Expand
- Housing
 - Land and housing trusts and co-ops
 - Incentivize development and construction for affordable housing
- Education
 - Invest in higher education increasing access, get students back into school
 - Re-entry and second career supports
- Childcare – to allow parents to get back in the workforce
 - Training programs for childcare providers
- Support for small business
 - Pool together what we learned for CARES Act Round 1, other surveys to understand what we have learned
 - Provide creative support to small businesses – marketing, efficient use of our talent pool
 - Space is expensive – rent support is needed
- Mental health
 - Youth say they need gathering places that are safe (rec centers and libraries) that are open late and where they can access resources without stigma and barriers
- Infrastructure
 - Water
- Workforce
 - Decent paying jobs to enable people to support, housing, families, supporting workforce centers
 - How can we create the right skills sets
- Transportation
 - Investment in clean, affordable transit options – like safe bike routes
 - Free RTD Bus pass
 - Basic access to transportation for people with disabilities
- Think strategically about all the pots of money so they can work together and be combined to maximize effect.
- Funding towards education and anything to help our school
- Climate equity building investments
- Nexus between housing, homelessness and wages. How do we help train and help folks earn a livable wage so they can afford housing? Hopefully we can build housing – lack of housing, lack of affordable wages.
- Accelerate Electric Vehicle transition. Transition public transit to EV.
- Road maintenance. EV charging stations. More equitable if all money/fees from EV goes to road maintenance. This fund should focus on charging stations.
- Living wages
- Expand short-term certificate programs from community colleges.
- Infrastructure maintenance to get caught up on capitol maintenance needs (road maintenance, stormwater).

- Ensure we have workforce we need and incentives to bring people back into workforce. Money back to taxpayers.
- Fund mental health in schools, for families, and for others throughout Colorado.
- Help small business – restaurants, businesses that weren't essential. Let's get things open and get people back working.
- Hotels: We have a number of hotels in Lone Tree looking to convert to apartments
- Support for small businesses + working w/small businesses. We do a lot of work for single moms trying to get back to work. So support those businesses
- Thinking of K shape recovery, I think about women and people of color in low wage jobs. People who are struggling before pandemic. I'd like to see us implement some large grant programs for child care esp where we have childcare deserts.
- Broadband is critical esp in broadband but everywhere. We highlighted that early but there's more. There was a 2005(?) bill that required municipalities to get a vote to allow building broadband infrastructure.
- State comp reports shows that state comp is 16% below market – these employees are critical to all Coloradans. We should look at getting them some critical pay, bonuses.
- Seniors have been left out of the digital divide. Let's make sure

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- We've been underfunding our systems for too long. Our UE system was set up based on the facts of the 90s and was unable to meet our needs. We have oppty to build our gov't to be up to date, efficient at meeting needs of our public. Update our service. Behavioral health. Re- envisioning the future of the state. Infrastructure, clen energy, childcare
- Housing (affordable), attractiveness of teaching profession is the investment in our kids, healthcare
- Small business, restaurants, housing, just transitions – power plants, coal
- Addressing short staffing issues in many departments across the state would be a beneficial public investment. Fixing short staffing will help to make Colorado's public services run more smoothly and efficiently. Many state employees are burnt out and underpaid for providing critical services.
- A lot of women left workforce. How do we help them get back to work. How can we reward our frontline workers. Broadband needs more investment
- Infrastructure is going to be critical. Look at what is happening to local municipalities. People weren't commuting so gas taxes were down which fund road maintenance. People like to see local impact. Also broadband. But be smart knowing its one time funds.
- Local areas are able to see what's needed in their communities so I'd give a lot of deference to them in how we specifically allocate to businesses and the micro-local
- A lot of deferred maintenance like pot holes
- We need to get people ready through apprenticeship programs so that people are getting certified for good paying jobs!
- Job training.
- Affordable housing
- increased support of mental health services as adults and youth including seniors are truly suffering from depression and lack of social contact due to pandemic

- Spending on accessibility for those living with physical disabilities – websites for blind and deaf, etc.
- Education – so much emphasis put on schools to re-open. Schools are struggling with how best to use one-time dollars. Salaries are low. Nutrition plans are suffering.
- Electrification of transportation. Electrify entire economy including buildings and move away from natural gas heating.
- Improved public transit with expanded buses
- Investment in improving and maintaining infrastructure. Place emphasis on sustainable aspects of transportation like multi modal transit.
- Infrastructure – 12 different water districts in Centennial which don't get funding directly. How can we get funding to special districts?
 - Denver Water is replacing lead pipes – this is a huge upgrade that should be prioritized.
- Housing for anybody who needs it. Focusing on homeless problems and substance abuse problems.
- Health care for all
- Funding for skills based training (trades) to make Colorado more competitive.
- Help level out playing field between urban and rural areas. We all enjoy all corners of our state no matter where we live. Don't want to see metro area as primary beneficiary.
- Make sure the way we apply funds does not leave us in a place to go to taxpayers to keep programs/things going. Need to make sure what we do is responsible.
- Homelessness/Affordable housing
 - Figuring out which families are on brink of homelessness and find ways to keep people out of those situations. What services are needed.
 - Housing for justice involved folks in county – hard to make money on an apartment complex when you can't charge rent. Rehab of buildings, building the housing. County can take care of sustainability of the apartment, but need to increase stock of housing.
 - Eviction prevention
- Infrastructure
 - EV charging station infrastructure. Use photovoltaics that are self-sustaining
 - I-25 corridor Belleview and Dry Creek interchanges. Handles a lot of work force and needs to be updated.
 - Allow fueling stations to have EV stations as well.
 - I-70 and Kipling interchange is a shovel ready project that needs to be addressed.
 - Incentives to get EV stations especially in rural areas. Could be part of DOLA's main street program.
- Behavioral health/mental health infrastructure is lagging in rural areas. People who can't get treatment or services they need. Combine state and local gov dollars to build out the needed infrastructure.
- Education
 - Rural communities hit harder than metro areas. BEST helps with capitol needs of schools with regards to buildings. Can we help rural school with matching grants?
 - Incentive pay for teachers and administrators/staff who work over the summer to help get children caught up.

If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- A Colorado where everybody who wants to get to work can get a good job. Pay off the debts we are creating. You're able to get to the mountains, state parks, open spaces locally. Good quality of life
- Fair & equitable: Small businesses, the owners need help but so do those employees. More of that money into hands of people affected, the better you will have done.
- Building back better is dismantling systemic racism which is not just police brutality: it's vaccine equity, education, environmental, access to health,
- A more fair, just, equitable CO where people have good paying jobs, can own a house (which you can pass to your family), education... A CO where people feel they are welcome.
- A CO that truly emulates our belief affordable housing, sustainable energy, climate, healthcare,
- Climate of civility, care and concern for people in our state. I'm grateful that incidents of prejudice have been few for me but I'm very aware that has not always been the case across the state. We now hear whispers of some of that. What is each of our role in utilizing resources in building the future for all Coloradans.
- No empty store fronts, more affordable housing, talent pipeline
- Better recycling infrastructure
- Better, safer, cleaner and more environmentally friendly access to public transit
- Affordable housing, zero emissions!
- Livable wages for all

Meeting: Four Corners

Date of Meeting: 4/3/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- Broadband:
 - Ubiquitous, affordable broadband
- Funding Allocation:
 - Good coordination, collaboration and communication of all funding opportunities. Ability to leverage additional funds to implement big ideas locally.
 - Build out PPPs to leverage money better.
 - Legacy investments in things that help workers and people trying to make it in rural resort communities. Land or buildings for childcare centers. Affordable workforce housing. Transit lines. Things we can use money for operating a couple years, allows people to “make it” in these harder communities.
 - Clearing house that gathers resources information and breaks it out by community size, populations that would benefit, etc. Something to help digest all this information.
 - Match with DOLA funds that are going towards infrastructure
- Focus on education/school districts in a holistic way: Catching up academically, social supports, mental health supports, childcare supports.
- Infrastructure improvements – central sewer system, redundant water system. More money for basic infrastructure.
- Provide technical support for small communities with lack of capacity. Grant writing support
- Behavioral health services
 - Campaigns around destigmatizing mental health services, increase awareness, education etc.
- Public and affordable transportation.
- Invest in public services. Working through this pandemic has put tremendous strain on state employees and agencies + combined with understaffing. Create jobs at the state level + spur economy through those new jobs.
- The PPP program has been huge for our local businesses but a lot of smaller businesses still don't know about it. A big gap is in disseminating information. A good source/resource is chambers but they've suffered themselves as they're reliant on membership dues. We should provide support to those chambers. Block grant system to provide 25-50k to each chamber to support their local businesses.
- To facilitate all the ideas: A strong investment in CO Conservation Corps to get out there and work on the infrastructure, parks, open spaces, connect with them with a sense of place in CO.
- Housing: If county could buy land, build condos/houses that are affordable – housing is a real block to recruiting talent
- How do we invest in community health centers to make sure displaced and un/under-employed have clear access + provide pathway for youth into medical & health professions. Would also help to address mental health
- Ensure we have equitable vaccine access
- Given change in economy, this is time to invest in comprehensive job training/re-training for those out of work due to pandemic or economic shifts to train them (esp those not headed/in college) via apprenticeships in high tech and other fields – make sure you include rurals

- I work with a group that trains CNAs which can lead into other fields. As a small biz owner who depends on medicare reimbursements, I can't compete with unemployment
- CO Workforce Centers in the Southwest are seeing people come in – we have 300 listings – but a lot of the incentives to go back to work aren't as powerful as the incentives to stay at home. Maybe there are some ways to match skills with employment needs.

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Looking at cascading enterprises – how regenerative ag can use products from corn or hemp and feed into another business. Make sure somebody is connecting these pieces. Regenerative energy & ag.
- Housing & investment to support businesses who are installing clean energy
- Forest service has identified big problem of human waste on trails in our high country
- Housing, affordable day care/childcare
- Investing in public services. Invest in healthcare esp on west slope. State negotiated several plans including Kaiser which isn't even available on west slope. More attention to the struggle of ag workers and are working tirelessly, at risk and long hours
- Daycare. A lot of people who would like to work are struggling to find affordable daycare. Given cost of land in some resort towns, it's a struggle to justify the cost of building/operating – if \$\$ could go to acquiring land and constructing the facilities. Some preschool has been expanded but still needs more funding and daycare is a huge shortage.
- Access to quality broadband at an affordable rate to allow people to work from home and allow all people to access those remote jobs.
- Healthcare, Public services, investment and support for agricultural workers (along the lines of SB 21-087)
- Fund a door to door campaign for vaccines for homebound, those without internet or ELL. Utilizing remote alert system to reach people. Make sure our uninsured or undocumented know where to get treatment if they have adverse reaction to vaccine.
- Authentic community engagement about health including vaccines and the distrust that exists in some communities
- Affordable housing
 - Developing resources to build, resources for land use and building code updates.
 - Land banking.
 - If no one can afford to live in the communities, can't hire people to keep businesses going. Facilitate use of existing building to create affordable housing. (\$600K isn't affordable for a 1 or 2 bedroom).
 - Anything strategic around workforce and affordable housing. Buy taps, buy land, make road improvements.
 - Buy market-rate housing or vacant building to turn into affordable housing
- Investments in workforce housing and childcare – how do we do this with operational costs over time? Could we look at buying buildings and creating partnerships to run childcare centers.
- Wildfire mitigation funding, need workforce on the ground
- Public lands staffing – facing another scary fire season
- Broadband to places that aren't getting it anyways
 - Needs to be available, accessible and affordable.
- Broadband. Manage impacts of increased tourism, increased search and rescue, land protection.
- Spending on renewable energy infrastructure

- Investment in long-term, stable job opportunities (not just ag, tourism and extraction).
- Bolster DOLA funds and state revolving fund giving grants for construction costs (in addition to engineering costs).
- Small communities don't have resources to upgrade basic utility infrastructure. Most grants require match, and a lot of small communities do not have extra cash on hand.
 - A lot of grants don't allow for hiring of staff and some small communities need this capacity to really implement the work.
- Convening sessions with goals by county/region and do voting on the priorities. Use COGs and other regional groups to do more collaborative, cohesive planning with these dollars.

Aspirational: If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- CO will lead the way in public service and the appeal of working in public service. The state shows it values all communities.
- If we invest in childcare now, it will mean so many more mothers would be able to work and pursue their careers
- All Coloradans will have the opportunity to upgrade skills, participate in the evolving economy by accessing job skill training – adult basic ed, technical skills,
- I think this is the most important part – that we look at how all of these pieces fit together.
- All of these issues are about reducing financial stress – too many people spend too much on housing, childcare, utilities b/c of inefficient buildings & systems
- *I want to be able to look back at this moment in History and to say that Colorado took care of the people who stepped up. We did what it took to keep all of Colorado safe, healthy, and fed during this crisis. That way we could demonstrate the care and inspire others to step up for the next challenge*
- Education – better teacher pay, building improvements, etc.
- Ridgeway thriving with a diverse economy and workforce, thriving school system with teachers earning livable wages. Public land infrastructure that is thriving bc it is well staffed and supported.
- Densely built affordable housing close to municipalities with childcare centers attached
- be able to provide affordable housing, improved public infrastructure – sewer system, sidewalks. Create a thriving community.
- Affordable and equitable where people can live and stay here, work here, have opportunities, access to affordable health care.
- Community where social determinants of health are met
- Build skills and support workers
- Smiling faces because they are not wearing a mask unless they choose to

Meeting: Colorado Springs

Date of Meeting: 4/6/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- Small business support
 - How can we ensure that depressed areas of the community can recover?
 - Support creation of new business
 - Technical support – teaching individuals marketing, inventory, leasing, acquire supplies
- End market development center – hauling, waste management and diversion
 - Focus on unifying -help the environment and divert waste
 - Creating new businesses and new ideas
- Broadband
 - Access
- One size does not fit all for recovery in every category and community
 - Making sure the recovery is flexible, variety
 - People experience need in different ways
- Support for jobs, particularly in Pikes Peak region & older adults who want to get back into the workforce. Many struggled pre-pandemic and are hurting even more now. I think a focus on clean energy skills would be good for all ages but including older adults
- Investing in new energy infrastructure, sustainable & addresses climate change. I think there's an intersection w/water policy, water infrastructure which also impact forest mitigation
- 1 space we should invest in – maybe in next bill – but infrastructure and transportation which hurts people traveling to find jobs. Light rail on front range. Most cities have an interloop where you can get around but Springs does not
- Looking at projection in next 10-15, Springs is supposed to be the largest metro. Broadband, wildfire mitigation – invest heavily in mitigation efforts and then we could go into maintenance.
- #1 concern is mental health, particularly at high school level – how do we bake that into curriculum
- Medicaid reform. There are so many obstacles right now
- Look back at the New Deal which put so many artists back to work... those matter to our creative class. Key issues like water, infrastructure et all are a great opportunity engage artists
- Road repairs and expansion of I-25 South of CO Springs. If there's a single accident there, we can be stuck for miles. It's an inconvenience, a safety issue

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Housing, gentrification is driving people out of working class neighborhoods and in rural areas. We need to keep investing in it.
- Healthcare. All Coloradans should have access to affordable, quality healthcare.
- Job Creation & Development: entrepreneurship, people of color, justice involved – job training, career pathways for young adults. #2, Education – not just teacher pay gap but the inequities across school districts. There is local control but that can leave some without the quality. #3 Infrastructure – not just roads, sidewalks but also broadband – such a reliance on it that if we can't get everybody broadband – those learning from home and those trying to access jobs from home.

- Let's look at what's already working and what we could invest in to replicate, scale, leverage. Let's don't just invest a lot of new ideas. Food infrastructure & education.
- Housing. Bring some funds to bring developers to the table to build some affordable options. Also access to capital, esp for MWOB & all around support of small, new biz.
- Invest in tourism, entertainment & promotional industries
- Jobs & biz creation. Best way to help somebody move from one point to next in their life is to help them start a biz.. Skills around this generally, in tech and cyberspace
- Housing: To have a job, people need a place to live and in Springs, people just can't afford it. Next is education – not just our traditional but thinking about it totally differently – intro to the tech & skills for jobs of the future.
- So many people are sick of I-25 traffic – let's do front range rail and connect the full region and yes, as part of that is we have to have broadband. Along with this, we must have affordable housing
- Homeless: You want a big idea, once in a generation... let's make sure some of these dollars affect the most vulnerable among us. In Co Springs, we need to make sure we have adequate services, housing. Workforce housing – as we move slowly up the income range – is another critical piece to getting businesses to locate & grow.
- Education
 - Support/replicate program - Code of promise – guarantees students in school district that full tuition is covered for college – tuition support for students with family income threshold
- Small business support
- Broadband
- Education
 - Industries are changing – trainings for skills and trade training
- Economic development incentives
- Transportation
 - Creative solutions for transportation and transit
 - High speed rail
- Infrastructure
- Funds to do upfront work for property
- Community centers and community hubs
 - Capitol support for community centers to create community cohesiveness
- Affordable housing –
 - Collaboration and incentives for development of affordable housing – break down barriers
 - Zoning
 - Community investment trusts
 - Down payment assistance
- Broadband
 - The future of workforce is a mix of virtual and in-person. It is really important to have broadband across the state. If we don't, the Front Range will continue to prosper and leave the rest of the state behind.
 - Broadband is a big need that solves many problems.
- Higher Education
 - Create endowments for universities that provide aide to minority and low-income students.

- Infrastructure investments for PPPs with matching outside funding.
- K-12 Education
 - Look at creative, implementable, sustainable, long-term solution to fixing K-12.
 - Fund after school programs and programs that go towards college readiness.
 - Strengthening educational institutions in Colorado across the board, especially the connection between K-12 and higher ed. Meet needs of low-income, first gen students. Strengthen connection between 2-4 institutions financially.
 - How can we invest in bringing back students from communities of color that have disappeared from education system?
- Senior Citizens
 - Support senior citizens from communities of color that are oftentimes unseen with housing, food, and transportation needs.
 - Need more housing for seniors - provide incentives to those who can provide housing for vulnerable groups.
- Transportation and roads.
 - Specialized transportation assistance to serve those in needs.
 - Lack of paved roads.
 - Public transportation investments in specialized transportation and rural transportation networks.
- Funding to recognize cultural contributions of African Americans in Colorado Springs.
- Funding to create community/gathering spaces for communities of color
- Funding for Equity Diversity and Inclusion training/programming for individuals and businesses.
- Funding for minority owned and small business support.
- Tourism messaging to get back consumer confidence in Colorado, special events, etc. Colorado is losing tourism dollars to states like TX and FL.
- Investments in outdoor public amphitheater type spaces for outdoor performances.

If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- Less underserved
- Increased community investment
- Equity in education, housing and employment
- Less reported need by local nonprofits
- Higher education keeps us in a stronger position as a country and we are lagging behind the rest of the world.
- EDI is very important. It moves people to social mobility change. It's something for us to lay foundation.
- Without education we can't have any of this. It is so important to take a moment and debrief what we learned, that so many systems didn't work and need to reinvent and embrace all opportunities we have to educate. Without education we don't have workforce, engineers to build.
- People have access to healthcare, people have access to the things they need, people can travel around. We can go enjoy outdoors and get into transit that will take us places.
- We will have addressed the root causes – climate change
- We need to think about the systems that are creating the conditions such as homelessness or incarceration...how can we impact those root causes?

Chat comments

- In July 2020, the state legislature passed SB 20-055, Incentivize Development Recycling End Markets. This bill is intended to grow recycling programs by addressing the lack of local end markets for recyclable materials in Colorado.

The bill includes four main components: recycling market development center, producer responsibility literature overview, business personal property tax reimbursements and statewide education campaign on recycling.

<https://cdphe.colorado.gov/incentivize-development-recycling-end-markets>

Recycling Market Development Center

The department will convene stakeholders together to help shape the structure and governing guidance for a Recycling Market Development Center, to support the development and growth of end market businesses in Colorado.

Meeting: Eastern Plains

Date of Meeting: 4/7/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- Challenges with capacity – Rural and small communities do not have the staffing to deal with opportunities available, capacity to be able to handle big projects
- Better connect communities to communities to resources – nonprofit, state, federal resources
 - Hard to navigate all the opportunities
- Expansion of the child tax credit – make it permanent
- Small business support
- Infrastructure
 - Water and wastewater support
 - mandates for waste waters at this end of the Arkansas
 - Streets and sidewalks
- Housing
 - Local governments could use support infrastructure for new developments
 - Funding to rehab existing housing - Interest free or low interest
 - Appraisal rates for houses – doesn't cover the loan you took out to build it – this is a huge challenge
 - Funding for low-income housing
 - Recruit mid-range folks to work in existing jobs – there is unavailable housing for this segment of the population
 - Give DOLA and Colorado Housing Authority – rehab housing
- Broadband
- Tourism and supporting local economy
 - talking about our local food comes from could be the story for us to tell
- Transportation
 - State highway improvements
 - Streets and main streets
- Healthy environment
 - Support small business for clean energy
 - Watershed protection
- Mental health
- Development of community centers
- Broadband
 - Schools, businesses, health care, mental advocacy, agriculture all require heavy broadband presence so that it doesn't make difference where you live.
- Housing
 - Need support to build housing and housing for workers.
 - Lots of housing in hands of seniors in community and nowhere for them to move. They don't need to live in big homes in our market.
 - Need to look at how to free-up houses on the market and buying inventory
 - Upgrading homes by providing weatherization program incentives
- Workforce
 - Train people to be developers and in the trades.
 - Essential worker raises for everyone working the front lines

- Supplementing costs for truckers by helping offset insurance fees for drivers that are now higher than they were before.
- Essential workers are typically lower wage earners, many don't have access to benefits like healthcare (cleaners, cooks, stockers, ag workers, etc. those who never got break during pandemic). How do you show them they are important and needed? Keep existing workforce and excited about their contributions to society – can they be qualified for a higher level of pay? Provide bonus for their work and support?
- Rural hospital funding – anything to help so community members don't have travel 60+ miles for medical care
- Education
 - Align education with jobs for the future. Ensure this is done in an equitable way focusing on populations that have been historically underrepresented with equal playing field and opportunities
 - Provide prior learning assessments through community college systems similar to how veterans link military work experience with college credits. Something community colleges could leverage in areas. Have people with significant work experience but no certs or license. Offer to English language learners as well.
- Childcare
 - Childcare is crucial issue in many eastern plain communities for clients served and workforce.
 - Need qualified staff and to attract and retain staff. Provide more onsite training, creating pipelines. Teach to do work by actually doing it.
 - Fast track and waive licensure fees to expedite and establish daycare facilities. Mostly use in-home providers on eastern plains.
- Support for English language learners
 - Leverage regional centers for ESL training.
 - What can we do to waive licensure fees or certification processes especially for English language learners?
- Infrastructure investments:
 - Fund an End market center or resource hub that ties into innovation, job creation, new market opportunities, sustainability, etc. Incorporate DEI into centers.
 - Transportation infrastructure.
 - Focus on food equity by funding storage/warehouse stations
 - Energy efficiency – solar and other energy efficient infrastructure
 - Investments in rural institutions which are economic development centers for most rural communities
- Proactive covid testing through sewer/water testing – keep up on health crisis issues
- Behavioral health support
 - Affordable housing and supported housing programs for addiction support
 - Behavioral health needs will be a long term, post-pandemic problem. There is tremendous amount of depression and substance abuse issues. Funding to boost resources for workforce, boost CO spirit program. Connect people with resources across food insecurity, health care, behavioral health support, etc. Build resilience.

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Downtown revitalization

- Healthcare – only regional hospital serves the footprint of the state of Maryland
 - We need a new hospital!
 - More, better, closer healthcare for our communities
 - Especially for agricultural workers. Create extensions of our healthcare systems to get healthcare to these workers
 - Creating extensions of our healthcare systems to get health care to agriculture workers
- Locally produced clean energy production
- Sewage treatment to put back into the system
- Give DOLA and Colorado Housing Authority – rehab housing
- Healthcare
 - Telehealth – mobile units for dental and eyecare
 - Expansion of healthcare/mental health
- Infrastructure includes all methods
- Housing
- Push money down locally instead of someone above telling us how to spend or where it needs to go.
- Work as an eco-system on the eastern plains, identify our problems, grow our own solutions and people to solve to our problems.

If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado’s assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- Starting to recover
- Downtown revitalization is happening/building
- Tourism economy that is beginning to thrive
- Healthy, happy, see our communities thrive
- Businesses open and new ones coming and streets busy with residents, tourists, deliveries, kids riding bikes and people walking along the streets. Highways without potholes! Grocery store shelves full!
- Broadband access for all
- No masks covering our smiles – communities recovered from covid!
- Economic develop in southeast Colorado is difficult
- Not be on the top 5 any risk list
- Families be whole,
- Regional trails – outdoor recreation opportunities
- More equitable scenario where families all have decent housing, knew where their next meal was coming from, can afford childcare, can afford to be educated, earn a living wage and climb out of poverty.
- Our community is currently called “aging out” and we don’t have young people in line to take positions (child care, utilities, etc.). Being on the eastern plains, to be able to make it where our families and kids stay here and not feel like they need to go to the city to make a decent living.
- State would be inclusive and collaborative. Tear down walls and supposed divisions.
- Erasing equity gaps in education, housing, health care and among different diverse populations and regions of Colorado.

Comments (as entered in chat):

- My ideas include addressing broadband, housing, upskilling/reskilling for adults, transportation, all infrastructures plus food banks, schools, water, renewable energy and mental health. I have mentioned these in previous BBS calls so I'll let others speak.

- Healthcare and hospitals are in need of support.
- small business and nonprofit support, rural healthcare (promoting socio-economic and geographic equity as we shouldn't be traveling up to 2.5 hours for specialized services like radiation) - infrastructure for rural communities to support longer term sustainably and enhance viability for location neutral jobs. Without those elements we cannot compete with the "future of work" planning elements.
- Water and wastewater distribution and the transmission pipes under our streets. our pipes are failing under our failing roadways.
- Vision should be shared with the rural areas in terms of shifting business and manufacturing, distribution, from metro to rural with significant tax breaks.

Meeting: Events, Dining and Tourism

March 31, 2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- Retrofit buildings for a more energy efficient future. Aligned with sustainability goals/values.
- Help support the social and emotional learning and impacts of isolation across the state.
- Supports/motivation/supplement to help individuals return to the office, reestablish working environments, consistency.
- Invest in ebikes – for household impact, transportation and local business delivery.
- Capitol investments for existing event/venue spaces including developing new outdoor spaces – make venues safer – touchless technologies
- Mitigate and manage impacts of consequences of increase of public lands use.
- Solar lighting infrastructure – create more safe streets, environments
- Broadband connectivity/access.
- Broaden scope of service industry workers – some funding has missed hard hit folks in the industry because the definition is too narrow (concern, housekeeping, security) their NAS or classification code is not included. Also include private event, wedding, venue spaces and workers.
- Consumer confidence campaigns to retain currently booked business and bring in new business-groups, conferences, visitor reservations already booked.
- Urban exodus has contributed to high housing costs – we cannot grow our business because of challenging housing needs.
- Enhanced management and sustainability of public lands
- Meetings and events – there are going into hybrids. Helping facilities adjust to the new normal, how to do this, access this hybrid model.
- Childcare support
- Technology – access to events in the future. Pandemic has created opportunity for hybrid events, greater access through technology – how can this continue, create greater access in the future.
- Sales tax relief for the restaurant industry focused June-August (when sales are the highest)
- Funding to help get vaccines to restaurant workers.
- Gap funding for restaurants who are hurting from limited capacity.
- Premium pay for hospitality workers (how does this work?)
- Gap in mid-sized towns – creative districts have venues that are municipally owned and fall into a gap for funding because they are operated where parent company (the municipality) that has too many employees or funds to be eligible for relief funding.
 - Advocate for privately owned event venues that don't fall into CDCA funds.
 - Don't forget museums especially for their impact on economy.
- Events and meeting market are different and have different funding mechanisms. Can suck a lot of money out of year-round spots....State funds could go towards meeting industry. Federal funds go towards larger events that go towards branding of Colorado. How long can we spread out these one-time funds?

- Ensure funds are distributed evenly amongst counties... As we look at distribution look at lodging tax and which municipalities have lost out the most.
- Funding for seasonal businesses to operate and recover funds. Need to look at the seasons they operate and how long they operated at lower capacity, and could not operate at full capacity.
 - Fear workforce will find other things to do instead.
 - Camp industry lost about \$50M. If camps go out of business, the property will probably be sold to developers.
- Need people to feel comfortable going to events. Anything that advances vaccination is a priority.
- Live music industry is losing a lot of career professionals. Replenish CO Arts Relief Fund. Massive demand for the \$7.5M that went very quickly.
- Think about seasonal disruptions and how it affects employees/auxiliary biz that loses income
- Use funding to bolster Just Transition, emergency rental assistance, vaccine distribution
- The devastation in downtown areas where people working f/home has hurt other businesses
- Conferences, events
- A lot of resort towns have very limited activities. If we could provide them funds to incentivize tourism e.g. supplementing ski passes but if we really want to drive tourism + get Coloradans to support our tourism businesses, esp small businesses
- For airlines: How do we incentivize people back into office which starts to create sense of normalcy... programs to get back to normal
- Wedding Planner: In special events, one of biggest thing we need is to convince our vendors, hosts to do events here instead of moving to CO. e.g. incentivize them to stay here and keep contracts + get new contracts
- A lot of hospitality folks have dropped out of workforce so restaurant workers having hard time finding staff... some finding other work, some just afraid of the uncertainty.
- Those places expecting tourism surge are worried about having staff. We need \$\$ to recruit people into the field & train
- For events, reduced capacity doesn't work well so how can we subsidize those events
- Recognizing these are 1 time funds, we'd like to see the funds go to local gov't so they can decide how to spend. A challenge w/Recovery Act is that \$\$ is allocated based on population
- We have a housing shortage esp for hospitality staff. If \$\$ could help support housing authorities
- Develop a business resource pool that could be used: 1) to help businesses do things like pay bonuses or signing bonus to get staff back (we hear 25% OF seasonal employees have left town) 2) Skills mis-matched so need re-training, 3) pay certain companies to do things like marketing, social media, online promo, navigate financial issues – use state funds to provide access to these 3rd parties – you help the biz & the vendors.

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Anything to advance vaccination and get people comfortable to going back to events.
- Replenish CO Arts Relief Fund
- Unified messaging to attract people to Colorado
- Industries left out of initial relief funding:

- EVENT PROMOTERS - Expo Owners, Event Promoters.
(Car Show, Color Run, SLC Marathon, Off Road Expo, Classic Car Show, Youth Sports, Motorsport)
 - EVENT PROVIDERS - Equipment, Service, Spaces (Locations),
(Audio Equipment, Video Equipment, Event Locations, Furniture, IT, Tent, Facility, Stage, Set, Convention Equipment, Electrical, Lighting & Catering, Security, Crowd Control, Sanitation Signage Providers)
 - EVENT PRODUCERS - Planners, Producers, Show Managers,
(Event & Wedding Planners, Designers & Audio, Video, Lighting Production Staff, Catering Managers, Convention Service Providers)
 - EVENT PROFESSIONALS - Freelance and Sole Proprietors that the service the Industry
(From Stage Hands to Keynote Speakers the almost 100,000 Utah workers that earn their income across a large number of clients)
- Glenwood Springs: 4 childcare, healthcare, transportation, housing. We need help expanding childcare which directly impacts our workforce. Infrastructure.
 - Develop a green card for vaccinated folks so you don't have confrontation. Where there is outdoor dining, provide some funds to help local entities w/facilities, lighting etc. About to have a huge crunch on labor which is largely driven by housing
 - Workforce, Housing, Technology to empower helping businesses
 - For live events & large hotels down to the mom n pop, invest in a way that gets as much impact down to the small biz who are the heart of our economy. Invest time and money in consumer confidence marketing to get people to come here.
 - Really support the Tourism Office to pool funds w/other destination entities and leverage to boost all promo campaigns. Tax rebate for businesses
 - Workforce housing, continued investment in broadband esp for rural areas, investments & restoration of public lands that are basis for tourism and have been heavily impacted

If we maximize out use of federal and state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradoans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- The state will is a leaders in using technology – digital leaders for the future.
- Exceeding pre-pandemic numbers – build back quickly, but that is sustainable for our communities and a net positive.
- High level of market share that we have ever had!
- The most inclusive state – staffing, visitation, DEI efforts. This should be an important framework as we think about our recovery and position ourselves for the future.
- Sustainable efforts to be more diverse and more connected – diversity, ebikes available, managing our public lands and forests better. Create sustainable use and visits. We can then better manage increased use as well a prepare for what the future brings (next pandemic, etc.)
- Rebuild out creative economy – support arts community – work/art housing, address homeless and housing issues. Uplifting out arts culture to be included in conversations in our communities
- Attainable housing, workforce housing, without this businesses cannot grow
 - Incentivize long time leasing

- Bike boom is the new normal – change in our transportation systems. In some cases our culture is crushing our communities (transportation, etc.)
 - Take advantage of rail to trail and legacy projects.
- We know that return on investment for marketing is huge. It's one of our biggest exports. If we can do that, people will know we're open, people will want to come here and those revs contribute to infrastructure, workforce dev etc.
- Economic diversification – 1 industry towns whether ag, mining or tourism – we can help develop new industries, grow our own workforce
- There's a reinvention time. We can position ourselves as the destination. With pandemic, businesses are rethinking where their workforce wants to be and we are well positioned to seize on that. We should double down on that
- Continuation of protection of our outdoor spaces via sustainable tourism. We also need action on climate to keep our resources attractive
- Career paths that are ancillary for our tourism workforce to reduce dependence on subsidies
- Diversifying beyond tourism in our tourism areas: Light mfg, sustainable ag, IT, remote opportunities w/aerospace, aviation, cybersecurity – we have people who want to get into those. Other option is to get remote workers f/front range and bring them up
- Diversify via healthcare & wellness, green + responsible tourism – e.g. how to grow baseline services for resp tourism

Comments from chat:

- For Rural Colorado building out rural broadband will facilitate business grow and education.
- Direct payments to small businesses based on revenue lost. This would go towards staffing and building improvements that was not able to happen in 2020.
- Incentives for corporations to bring their business meetings/conventions to Denver/Colorado!
- Looking at helping the companies that provide the services to venues. Union workers, security, staff, concierge, maintenance, janitorial. They companies have been overlooked because they are not a venue, restaurant or hotel.
- Major focus on DEI in all build back better programs - new businesses, inviting a broader group of guests back, inviting more diverse student body. Makes for better, stronger economic and societal health for the long term
- To better encapsulate my rambling — I vote for help with capital improvements that are likely to help propel us into the next generation — e.g., incentives and aid to businesses for installing ev chargers, solar panels, upgrading insulation & HVAC to be more efficient, replacing lighting, etc. (I also love the support for the health of public lands comment — that drives so much of the tourism to our state and also improves the quality of life for those living and working here.)
- I'm in the wedding and private events. We need to make sure all from our industry are included.
- Help event venues become prepared to hold hybrid meetings and events.
- Infrastructure, roads, bike able communities, state lands and the back bones of the resident and visitor experiences.
- Also — upgrading broadband access to communities!
- Green infrastructure, too!
- Employee housing support and staffing attention such as foreign (H2b and J1)

- +1 to Bruce's comment, and also for year round local residents
- Getting back to where we were Pre-pandemic and bringing back much of the event business that was lost to other states.
- Workforce/affordable housing solutions are critically needed. When it comes to growing a business, the sky isn't the limit, the workforce is.
- Able to effectively sustain Colorado's precious resources with the expected growth in outdoor recreation through enhanced management, i.e. trailheads, camping, trail management, visitor dispersal, etc.
- Workforce/affordable housing solutions are critically needed. When it comes to growing a business, the sky isn't the limit, the workforce is.
- Able to effectively sustain Colorado's precious resources with the expected growth in outdoor recreation through enhanced management, i.e. trailheads, camping, trail management, visitor dispersal, etc.
- Additional funding for municipal partnered workforce housing projects (especially in mountain communities). Due to the Mountain Migration our hospitality workforce has left our communities. We will not see economic recovery and growth until our businesses can hire back 100% of their workforce.
- Sustainability incentives for visiting guests
- Creative infrastructure that moves the needle on transpo on i70/connectivity alternatives (bike paths for e-bikes, etc..) and affordable housing. If pandemics and remote working being a thing of the future, Colorado is positioned to attract due to the brand. If it is truly a one-time infusion of cash, I would lean to transpo on i70/connectivity alternatives that make the state less reliable on gas tax and play into the future of our sustainability goals as a state. I think that we've all gotten comfortable with this idea that I70 will always be a mess – lets change that.
- when it comes to affordable housing across the state, the market isn't going to self-correct that without government stepping in. Can Colorado invest in high ticket areas and plan on eating the cost in the name of affordable housing?
- Childcare infrastructure is next, but we need a place for people to live to work new centers.

Meeting: African American Community

Date of Meeting: 3/31/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- Healthcare
 - workers – deserve pandemic pay, allocate additional funding for homecare workers
 - additional training for home healthcare workers – certificate/certification programs, career development to provide the best care possible, CNA training
- Many state employees have been on the front lines of this pandemic and have been impacted. Recognize their service and sacrifice and compensate them accordingly.
- Upscaling Colorado workers for new roles
 - Credential/certificate completion
- Direct grants to students who are enrolled in higher education – give them assistance in completing their higher education.
- We have a big issue with home ownership. W/media cost of 400k, you have to make 100k to qualify for most homes. For black prospective homeowners, the rate is ½ of white households. Nothing is changing at this rate of price increase. If we want to close that gap, let's have some targeted programs to get black/brown families into households. First time homeowner program isn't enough if the family can't qualify. There will need to be a huge program with a large subsidy.
- We need to be able to make a living wage. Things like certificate training, certificates – some type of stipend so families don't have to worry as they get that skill training to get a living wage. Helping everybody from our young to our adults. Also affordable housing
- Are there thoughts for PPP for investments in business or housing. Could state play a role convening, partnering, driving. Minority owned businesses often can't afford space to get going.
- Investing in public services could really do wonders – think about FDR who invested in these services & programs – whether PPP, housing assistance. Recruiting people into state jobs which are 16% below private sector make bringing people in to lead/build these programs a challenge.
- From a Doctor whose parents were teachers: Education is a big one. The generational wealth issue is real. We hear “everybody can succeed – just pull yourself up by the boots,” but when schools don't even have the opportunities that their more affluent peers do. Things like internet, iPads for kids, the tech divide is huge. Some of this may require childcare for parents

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Tutoring and educational support to bring children back-up. “high dosage tutoring”
- Outreach with communities of color nonprofits. Equity and organizations reaching out to these groups for their input.
- Broadband for K12 partners, schools and students. Students need access to computers and internet.
- Healthcare
 - Communities of color have been disproportionately impacted due to access. Pandemic really exposed this issue. Access must be addressed.
- State employees
 - Investment in state employees is a direct investment in communities in Colorado
- Higher education
- Women had to leave the workforce – create opportunities for certification and upscaling to really help women, funding to start small business and technical support for women led/owned businesses

- Childcare access and support to allow women to reenter the workforce
- Economy is focused on small businesses, success looks like small businesses
- Resiliency planning – make sure we learn and build into our government practices/planning
 - Medical supply chain
 - Infrastructure – broadband access
- Broadband access – especially for minority communities/neighborhoods
- Support for black owned businesses, nonprofits and faith-based organizations – access to capital
- Look into apprenticeship programs – as a pathway for good paying jobs
- Affordable housing
- One of reasons we're here is b/c of events of last summer... all of the bills that Rep. Herod is putting in place are part of it (police accountability) but other part is economic factors that lead people to have interactions w/LEO. There was a program that got defunded called Justice Reinvestment Crime Prevention (\$4mm) from parole programs put into communities impacted by crime into business & fin'l education. There's a new bill putting \$500k into it. We spend \$1bn into corrections but if black citizens are 4% of population yet 14% of incarcerated, we should put much more money into these communities
- Jobs: They say a rising tide lifts all boats but not if they're broken or sunk so you need targeted action... for black/brown households, maybe incentives who hire in neighborhoods w/high unemployment rates and those affected by economic downturn
- Grants: Black owned business, housing education
- More emphasis on those coming out of justice

If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- Wealth gap will have narrowed
- We would really know and be able to pinpoint where those inequities and name things like systemic racism
- We would start to see thriving communities, we will see community cohesion, less isolation. Overall, our communities would be thriving
- Wealth gap will have been narrowed on its way to elimination. Homeownership gap narrowed. Housing cost burdens will be stabilized esp for renters. Incarceration gap and inequities addressed.
- If we fully fund EDI initiatives, I should see more people who look like me.
 - Childcare assistance – women are back in the workforce
 - Mental health support
 - Black owned businesses are thriving
 - Risk and resiliency planning – government processes – thinking around the medical supply chain, infrastructure as well
 - Broadband access for all
 - Small business galore!
- Blacks in GJ are in precarious position because there are fewer. Educationally based, that retains black students to stay as members of community. Lacking jobs that students train for at CMU and then they move back to front range. Want to get students to stay on western slope. Use funds to attract and retain.
- African American spatial justice. Don't have a community in Larimer County. Looking for spaces like churches and schools. Would love to apply for grant or loan that allows capitol to purchase said projects.

- Space – there is no space, no gathering space, no place to be, no center. The community is very scattered. Would love classes, art, gathering, mentoring support for young, black youth. Alleviate school to prison pipeline.
- Sustainability and homeownership for black community. Owning homes and building equity.
- Job training and partial support while getting training. Needs to be available to felons.
- Focus and support on black mental health (advocates for recovery). Allow people who look like them to train, provide support, and create programming. Sharing power.
- Dollars are leveraged to go long term, not just short term.

Comments from the chat:

- Use stimulus funds to upskill CO workers for new roles.
- Use stimulus funds to train and develop healthcare workers.
- I like direct grants, but would they come with stipulations for completion?
- There should be stipulations for completion to drive the desired outcome of graduating with a college degree.
- Child care assistance to centers and families, pandemic pay for frontlines workers and training for home care, mental health support.
- funding to start small businesses
- black owned businesses
- Black Owned businesses. Nonprofits
- Also allocated a fund to medical supplies to avoid lack of PPE and be more prepared for any other global pandemic.
- Housing issues. This was a problem in Colorado even before the COVID-19 pandemic.
- putting dollars into educating and job training for those coming out of the criminal justice system
- Pandemic pay for frontlines care workers and essential workers.
- Counselors to help with pairing you with the right kind of jobs for you. Free job programs like example Nurses and Mental Health jobs.

Meeting: Workforce

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- Some type of OJT or training grants in partnership w/community colleges to upskill, update skills
- Very concerned about housing. I am concerned about both tenants and landlords but tenants don't have access to the relief that some businesses and landlords do.
- Public ed has been underfunded we also need to support them transitioning to careers + we have big shortages around schools like nurses where we can build a strong pipeline from K12 to careers + teacher shortages
- Make sure we don't leave non-profits, esp smaller ones who are critical to job creation and serving.
- There's a gap between service industries and technology w/need to provide training to unemployed to be prepared to take on those jobs
- Don't exclude older Coloradans – 50 & up – on job upskilling. Quite a few have been impacted. Over half are interested in learning new skills
- We have a lot of people who need the basic skills to earn a living wage
- Engage CO youth w/paid public service while fixing public lands that have been over used during pandemic. CO Youth Conservation Corps pairs youth with adults & veterans
- Invest in industries we want to have in the future and those already creating the most jobs
- Invest in state employees – it is an investment in main street
 - Premium pay
- Workforce
 - Grow workforce support programs
 - Support for older adults
- Education
 - Supports for teachers who have been on the front lines of this pandemic
 - Earn while you learn programs
 - develop those workforce development skills – programs like conservation corps
 - Invest in programs for individuals with disabilities – workplaces that employ and support these individuals
 - Recruit students into educator prep programs
 - Create a more diverse workforce -create and sustain efforts to recruit and retain educators of color
 - Capital investments in health and safety – HVAC, ventilation systems
- Mental health
- childcare – to allow women (and men) to return to the workforce
- Education
- Break down silos of education and workforce – move quicker
- Collaboration is key – how can we work together to build back stronger
- Business support for
 - Outdoor industries
 - Arts and culture
 - Clean energy
- Regenerative agriculture
- Conserve public lands
- Childcare
- Increase social safety net
- Support infrastructure for individuals to return to work – transportation, childcare, job training

- Diversify the healthcare workforce and expand the scope of practice
- Training and education for home health aids
- Investment in the **Outdoor Rec economy** – keystone to rural and underserved communities. This could create more sustainable life to these areas – infrastructure investment, trail building, species support, etc. Want to underscore that conservation corps exist to execute that outdoor recreation infrastructure--more than 1,800 employed annually! We have the capacity to more than double with additional investments through OREC, DNR, and other partners
- **Healthcare coverage** for workforce. Not sure how plays out as one-time investment but something that is important to make.
- Think about strategies to keep workers in resort communities.
- Higher Education
 - One-time investment for higher ed students who didn't go to a 2-4 year institution. Enrollment down 12% on average. Mostly affected first generation or low-income. Want to **attract and retain first gen and low-income students** to graduate from a 2-4 year inst.
 - As a scholarship foundation, we have been approached to financially support adults in learning new skillsets after losing their jobs during the pandemic. We are pushing people to workforce development with the new COSI funding, but would be interested in having more funding in the workforce development funding for **Matching Student Scholarships through COSI** to help
- Workforce Development
 - Invest in systemic solutions – not one-off things. Building mechanisms that incentivize and encourage innovations and connections across K-12, higher ed, training, etc. Create sustainable structure to foster this coordination and alignment. Need to create the structure that lead to real workforce pipelines.
 - One-time **funding for retraining programs to support facilities and programs** that need seed money/investments to get off the ground or continue programming that has been cut.
 - **Investment in Schedule A** to support people with disabilities. Often they have no jobs and become burden to economic community by relying on federal funding. If we have a budget that can add to our workforce, we need to **expand jobs for people with disabilities**. This is something that is overlooked or isolated.
 - Workforce **training (and re-training) in renewable energy and skilled trades**. There is a stigma around skilled trades. Would love support on **destigmatizing the trades**. How can we retrain people from service industry or other low-paying sectors into skilled trades that offer good paying jobs? Pre-apprenticeship and workforce training, retraining into solar industry.
 - Create framework to build something that will create a long-term pipeline that is industry aligned. Create **stackable credential programs** throughout CO. Have strong industry alignment. Start with short-term credentials that can turn into long-term credentials. Need to create career pathways through stackable credentials.
- Marketing and PSAs
 - Labor shortage – employers are scrambling for people and don't have enough people coming back into labor force. Need some type of **campaign to get people back to work and position working as something to be proud of**. This is a challenge across many industries.
 - Higher visibility **marketing of our current Workforce Development services**. I've heard it called the "not really hidden secret" of our government services and it shouldn't be.
- Invest in a **Regenerative recovery** that creates a robust economy. Put funds towards a regenerative future. Invest in workforce of future, not workforce of past. Use state talent pipeline report and put

funding towards regenerative jobs (clean ag, nursing, teaching, etc.) and ID skills gaps to understand where training is needed.

- Local food sources
 - Better pay for teachers and nurses
 - Align 2020 talent pipeline report with regenerative jobs, then when we identify the skills gap create the certificate programs to support the skills transition. The Regenerative Recovery Coalition can help with this!
- **Home healthcare workers** – need more workers. Can't hire or pay enough to cover what residents need. Elderly, blind and disabled are most vulnerable populations and are going without care.
 - Colorado imports more workforce than producing its own. **Grow our own workforce**, bring in more low-income and first gen students with training/education/skills for the jobs we need.
 - State employees - we need to support and retain our workforce and provide competitive pay. We have 6000 vacancies at the state and much of our work supports the rest of the work across Colorado from child care, to health care workers, and beyond.
 - Use some funding to **make plans for the future need for vaccinations** (e.g., will we need this annually like the flu shot) and trying to be prepared enough so we are not as impacted next fall and winter when the flu season returns and people are once again at risk.

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized for workforce and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Funding for just transitions from coal
- Apprenticeships to fill the trades
- Tie workforce needs into other aspirational needs – wildfire mitigation, clean energy jobs, affordable housing, etc.
- Driving jobs are tough to fill. We have no public infrastructure to train people for CDL licenses. We should try to make that a public venture (or PPP) for vehicles, insurance etc. It would cost but address supply chain and other states do it.
- Skill training for IT jobs and upskilling. In as short as 8 wks, there are ways to get folks into IT
- Healthcare – we have programs from 8wks to 6-10 months to get folks into healthcare jobs. Would help interrupt cycle of poverty if we target that spending
- Mental health particularly mental health workers & teachers are overworked, burnout risks loss so we should invest in providing relief to them.
- We should look at how we shift to 1099 and gig economy. We should evaluate our UE policies and lifelong learning.
- Look at all the factors that have led to gender inequity in recovery.
- Support non profits of all sizes. Support social enterprises of all sizes
- Make sure inclusivity and diversity, equity
- There have been more women & women of color impacted. They are often caregivers as well and have taken on critical roles
- Mental health workforce – providers are getting their reimbursements cut back.
- Help w/housing so people can go stand up mental health & healthcare
- How many of state workforce resources are bi-lingual or multi-lingual? Developing curriculum and resources in many languages would be one step towards equity and inclusion.

If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- We will have a robust, talented & locally built talent workforce through training, upskilling
- We would be importing less talent and maximizing our talent
- Every business is thriving, less age battles, sector battles, workforce is strong
- In 5yrs, a successful program will have varied sources of training, we need to make more investments into local communities & orgs that can make sure we reach all demographics, communities.
- We will have a talent pipeline from areas of CO for all Coloradans
- We will have recognized how much the economy & workforce has shifted – instead of talking, we will have made the move to support those industries and that workforce. We're a place people want to come to start a biz and people here have talent
- A more diverse workforce.
- See our food banks not overwhelmed and less adults, children going hungry everyday and have homes/beds to go home to.
- A Colorado for All workforce
- Women back into workforce.
- Focus on childcare and education – families need safe, dependable place for children to get back to work
- Retain healthcare workers
- Hiring people with disabilities and seniors as well.

Meeting: Clean Energy & Conservation

Date of Meeting: 4/2/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- Shovel-ready investments in science-based forest management to address wildfire risk and improve recreation
- Shovel-ready investments in more efficient water infrastructure projects (like the Maybell Irrigation system improvement on the Yampa) that will improve flows, reduce costs for irrigators, and make them more climate resilient
- State parks investments – new and necessary upkeep – to diversify rural economies. The FP/Trinidad example is perfect here.
- Investments in conservation of private lands in areas identified as high priorities to address climate impacts to wildlife populations and rural agriculture economic sustainability.
- Private land conservation – will help with the goals the state has on biodiversity and wildlife habitat also helps infuse funding in local economies
- Water stewardship, river related recreation, investments in the water plan investments (wastewater, storm water)
- Develop approaches to decrease the conflicts between human and animals – reduce attractants for bears, reduce conflicts between ranchers and wildlife, help repair wildlife fences
- Forest health and wildfire mitigation –
 - southwest impact fund – payer- based outcomes-based way to help fund wildfire mitigation
 - ways to add funding to existing funds at DNR
- Recreation infrastructure
 - finding ways to partner to help agencies to find ways for conservation
 - making an investment to local teen programs – example fund a more robust farm corp program
- create and Fund commission to commit to renewable energy 90% by 2035
- transition to regenerative agriculture – create revolving loan fund to make the 2 to 3 year transition – create processing centers in rural communities
- fund EV charging infrastructure – in underserved communities
- Building energy efficiency upgrades
- Distributed localized onsite water infrastructure – water conservation incentives, onsite water reuse tools, watershed restoration – many of these strategies in the Colorado water plan
- Investments in clean energy, electric transportation infrastructure and public transportation
- Regenerative farming practices
- Sustainable water infrastructure that supports climate resilience and funding for conservation and reuse, re-piping, stringent environmental health criteria for storage projects and upgrades
- lens to economic justice – make sure we protect our rural economies, workforce development for clean energy jobs
- support efforts such as next 100 coalition – outdoor access for those communities that are marginalized
- Electric vehicles and infrastructure to support – increase in charging system – epically at state parks
- Need for a much better transit system
- Utilities – storage (pump water storage) these capital investments are big
- Restoration of riparian corridors, purchase water rights in critical streams and river reaches

- Not enough opportunity for people in the metro areas to get out – develop places closer to urban areas for underserved communities to access – land purchase and conservation easements, critical habitat – close to population centers.
- Make a statewide but municipal focused to support solar energy capacity
- Water shed and ANY ecosystem protection
- Wildlife overpass structures
- Regenerative agriculture
- Support for better manage public lands/mountains- additional infrastructure
- Forest Health and Fire Mitigation
 - Meaningful landscape level investment and fire mitigation. Healthy forests. Fire mitigation. Strong economic driver. Creates jobs. Protects larger outdoor rec economy. Generational benefits of healthy forests.
 - Gilpin is dependent on tourism dollars for revenue and was hard hit by fires and pandemic. Offer funds to homeowners to help mitigate properties. Use wood for families to help heat homes.
 - River restoration and river health – invasive species removal, fires in riparian areas. Invest in monitoring and maintenance. Make sure we invest in climate change research.
- Wildlife Management
 - Education and support for co-existing with wildlife (mtn lions, bears, etc.)
 - Work towards reducing human-bear conflict. Funds for collaborative project that create a comprehensive solution to reducing human bear conflicts.
 - Grassland health – grassroots for grasslands. Conservation efforts and economics to prevent conflict and create better exchanges of conflicts between wildlife and landowners.
- Local Government and Small business
 - Funding to help or incentivize small biz to comply with plastic bag bans
 - Funding infrastructure to support composting programs for local communities
- Public Land investment
 - Commitment towards acquiring new state parks and wildlife areas.
 - Investment in park infrastructure improvements.
 - Outdoor recreation infrastructure. Campground restoration, maintaining and building trails, fence to eliminate land conflicts.
- Transportation/wildlife crossings:
 - Wildlife crossings (like HWY 9), Look at summit co passages plan as a shovel ready plan. Builds economic tourism; keeps people safe on roadways; connects wildlife landscapes – good for tourism, hunters, roads, etc.
- Put more money into existing pots that have been depleted – fire mitigation, forest health, water quality
- Investments in weatherization for low-income households. One time barrier cost to making improvements. Also invest in renewable energy, efficiency, etc that will reduce energy costs over time.
- End market development center (SB55) - Recycling. This is a unifier that brings lots of groups together and would be highly collaborative. Highlights innovation, education and partnerships with schools and creates jobs.
- Move to 100% renewable energy by 2030 for all sectors and reduce O&G sector emissions.
- Provide funding to Just Transition office for training for workforce to remediate, plug wells, etc.
- Regenerative agriculture – need to understand where farms are located so they can continue to thrive and aren't threatened

- Fund the build-out of EV charging stations
- Look at GOCO projects that couldn't be funded as a place to start
- Plug orphaned and abandoned wells
- Investment in clean economy. Energy efficiency upgrades for low-income housing. More solar and renewable energy to multi-family and low-income housing. Investing in clean economy brings more jobs than fossil jobs.
- For recovery & environmental health, we should emphasize clear air, solar, wind power... move people who are in O&G, coal etc. retrain them for clean energy jobs
- Goal of protecting 30% of our state land & water by 2030. Origins of that call came by scientists call for preserving our ecosystems. I think the best place to create an advance this could be in our rural areas who have been very hard hit via expansion of public & private nature preserves and 30/30 +
- In Kiss the Ground w/Woody Harrelson, for years I've thought we couldn't recover but I think these funds can be used to make big advances in regenerative ag... draw down the Co2
- Architect, building green bldgs.... As we add more buildings on grid w/EV charging, we're pushing limits of the infrastructure. Building efficiency is #1 but after that, distributed generation & smart grid with demand response. E.g. in 1 building I'm building that could have 100 EV stations, we don't have the backbone. We need a smart grid that has intelligence to control demand. Current systems are 1 way communication sending power.
- State parks infrastructure issues – need to put people to work by improving + improve those parks. Oppty to retrain displaced workers f/O&G + coal. Grid upgrades & infrastructure...
- Ecological restoration w/goal of climate mitigation – also creates jobs and complements some of the fed programs. Investment in our capacity to sustain long-term restoration.
- Provide access to recycling and composting – that means curbside collections in front range & in rural
- We know there is competition among land owners. We think we can deliver 500k acres to conservation w/investment. We have research that for every \$1 invested in conservation easements, ROI is \$6+ including in job creation, particularly in rural areas
- ECO is vulnerable to climate change. Re. fire & flood, rebuilding is costly. Pre-mitigation investment is better value. In addition to funding, work s/b holistic in its planning and collaboration w/stakeholders.
- Water conservation & transportation infrastructure
- Funding comes at an auspicious time. Looking at western slope, our outdoor worlds are under pressure and we can invest in ways to mitigate the impact we have on wildlife. Let's invest in western slope ranchers.

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Clean Energy so we have clean air. Build energy backbone of the future. I saw some \$3mm is targeted to weatherization and prep – that needs to be 10x. The \$3-\$5mm for energy pathways I love – make it bigger. I've seen entry level people who get training go from sweeping floors to new industry construction, they get a 25%+ pay increase, a sense of pride –
- Roads & Rivers! When people were polled about whether they were recreating, they said no but reality is they weren't calling it outdoor rec, they were calling it Tuesday 😊 Our outdoors have taken a lot of beating. We don't only need to take care of them we need a lot more
- We need balance. We need to not just deal with roads/infrastructure of today but also the future systems we want to have. There are companies who want to come here but they need the systems to be in place. We have to stop deforestation. We need to put \$\$ into helping

- State should interact more w/counties & cities. The highway to nowhere f/Golden to Hwy 36. Amazon wants to build a distro facility near Ralston Valley creek & path and would take down 200 trees
- We have a program for mine mitigation but only have \$3mm while there are many mines that have never been cleaned up
- CPW & CDOT have a great western slope plan for wildlife crossings but they have shovel ready projects we should put some \$\$ into it
- We could invest in human bear interaction
- Invest in climate, just transition & recycling + helping municipalities w/their climate/green goals

If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- Regenerative economy on local production of food, renewable energy, and shared prosperity on a healthy planet
- Thriving and sustainable
- Wildlife friendly
- Fulfilling the goals of Colorado climate plan
- Biodiversity – statewide recreation and conservation plan and statewide water plan
- People centered not capitol centered
- Healthy lands, air and water; thriving people and resilient communities.
- increased climate resiliency with healthy rivers and wildfire mitigation
- Climate resilience - protecting our natural ecosystems and creating healthy, vibrant communities.
- Working with institutions to become carbon neutral by 2030
- State agencies need to align with non-consumptive users. Moving forward policy should replace this.
- Higher regard and respect for public lands.
- Family farms have mechanism to distribute food to everyone in state.
- Everyone is using electric buses and cars.
- Colorado taking forward stance to respect wildlife and infrastructure is setup so animals aren't killed from avoidable things.
- If we do this right, we are the state that did wildlife intro right
- We will be a national leader in climate protection & 30 by 2030
- We will see more water on the western slope... less of the drastic climate swings
- We'll have cleaner air, a prosperous economy, leadership in the world on new energy economy
- Our grandkids will believe the planet will be there. We will look back and be excited about taking

Comments in Group Chat:

- Here is the study we put out last year (pre-pandemic numbers) on river related recreation which contributes \$19 billion in economic output to Colorado's Economy <https://businessforwater.org/co-rivers-key-to-economy>. And we know that the Water Plan will cost \$100 million a year to fully fund so investing in our rivers and waterways through natural infrastructure with some of this stimulus money would greatly get us to our goals to fund the Water Plan and also create jobs.

- I am with the Colorado Regenerative Recovery Coalition We represent 274 members across the state, generating more than 21,000 jobs and \$2.8 billion in annual revenue. we organized a series of workshops over the last year asking Coloradans what kind of future they want. The results can be seen at <https://www.thealliancecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Colorados-Regenerative-Recovery-Report-1.pdf>
- I've summarized here the proposals I shared through the CSU Center for Human-Carnivore Coexistence to benefit both wildlife and people here in Colorado, focused on shovel-ready projects that will create jobs in the state and help Colorado build back stronger. Our proposals:
 - Minimize conflict between humans and bears by focusing on reducing attractants to bears in cities, such as unsecured trash.
 - Minimize conflict between ranchers and carnivores, focused on proactive non-lethal approaches to prevent livestock losses to predators and improve rancher sustainability.
 - Increase opportunities for more diverse publics to engage with and pay for wildlife management and conservation through non-consumptive wildlife viewing opportunities.
 - Build and repair wildlife friendly fences in Colorado.
- Regenerative agriculture has the potential to soak up enormous amounts of carbon, potentially even making the state carbon neutral. We know how to do this, doing it will increase profitability in the farming and ranching sector. But to achieve this we need to end the subsidies to industrial agriculture, which is shrinking in Colorado, year on year, and support local regenerative farmers and ranchers
- funding for transit is critical, and it will be important to factor in that autonomous electric vehicles, which would mean that we would need 1/6th the number of cars on the road. so last mile solutions become critical. Anyone who wants a glimpse of the energy future check out <https://www.rethinkx.com/energy>
- Investments in clean energy, electric transportation infrastructure, & public transportation conducive to IPCC carbon neutral guidance (50% reduction by 2030, carbon neutral by 2050)
- Review & adjustment of agricultural subsidies with a lens toward current economic, climate, water scarcity challenges in rural communities, additional funding specifically for transitions to regenerative farming practices
- Sustainable water infrastructure that supports climate resilience (funding for conservation, water reuse, dual piping, environmental health criteria for all storage projects, etc.)
- Secure private & public lands for critical carbon sequestration, outdoor recreation, & rural economic vitality in alignment with the scientific needs outlined in the 30x30 commitment
- Workforce development for urban communities in renewable energy (e.g., GRID Alternatives)
- Supporting foundational efforts of the Next100 Coalition efforts to increase access to outdoors among marginalized/urban communities
- Colorado's outdoor industries provide 6 times the number of jobs that oil and gas does. Clean energy provides twice the jobs of oil and gas
- solar installations create 10 times the jobs of investing in central station plants
- I would like to see more money set aside to educate and involve Colorado youth with EV education through existing secondary STEM curricula.
- We are in a planetary crisis of climate change, loss of biodiversity and structural inequality. Solving for all of these has to be at the heart of how this money is spent
- One ecosystem that is especially threatened is our grasslands - how about a Great Plains State Park centered around places like John Martin Reservoir, Tamarac State Wildlife Area, or greater prairie chicken habitat.

Meeting: Local Government

Date of Meeting: 4/5/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- Mental and behavior health
 - The second wave of this pandemic is a mental and behavioral health crisis
 - Access to beds, detox, hospitals
 - Need a strong launch for 988 system – ensure capacity on other ends of those calls and direct people to care
 - Special attention to on children and impact of pandemic on their mental health
- Infrastructure
 - Water – help our water providers so that we can help people to get off ground water and use those return flows
 - Can help with concerns about pollution into Chatfield
 - Sewer, road and bridge improvements
- Homelessness
 - move away from brick and mortar shelters
 - safe outdoor spaces and tiny home villages
- Childcare
 - Organization and financial support for centers and families
 - Paygap between childcare/preschool workers and k-12 education
 - Incentives to retain teachers
 - Tuition forgiveness or support for families
- Broadband
 - access
- Education
 - Close pay gap between early childcare educators and K-12 – subsidies to retain teachers
 - Tuition forgiveness
- Road and bridge infrastructure – not having gas tax increase
- Workforce
 - Scholarships to low income or first-generation students for continuing education and trade school/training
 -
- Transportation
 - Front range passenger rail – partnership with Amtrak
- Carbon reduction emissions
 - EV adoption
- When we look at funding, it needs to not just be population based.
- Youth corps to train young folks in all aspects of recovery. Create investment in Colorado and provide youth with areas of interest that they may be unaware of.
- Gap fill lost revenues that are covid related.
- Investing in students and CO residents who will be thriving past the pandemic.
- Fully fund Pre-K
- Broadband
 - Broadband in rural areas. Infrastructure so students are able to thrive and connect.

- Get the middle mile and last mile in place. Good for school and economy (work from home). Should be a necessity, not luxury. Speed for broadband is important as well.
- Influx in rural areas from metro area – need broadband to do that. Have students learning from home. People working from home.
- Middle mile broadband networks need funding before we can get to last mile projects. Funding should include middle-mile buildout.
- Public Lands
 - Forest mitigation funding – need to prepare for wildfires
 - Outdoor recreation funding – parks, bike trails, river walks, etc. Get people outside where there is less transmission. Pandemic money should be going towards outdoor recreation activities.
- Spend money in ways that invests in future = social programs, infrastructure, health care, workforce, impacts of climate change.
- There is more need for rental assistance than small business loan assistance.
- Ensure money is looked at carefully and used in a way that is really leveraged for our benefit
- Put funds into interest bearing account to have more in the long-term
- Money should be used for areas not normally funded. This is one time money. Put funding towards things that are for the greater good.
- Broadening the infrastructure category and what it can be used for beyond water, sewer & broadband. Largely roads, bridge, transportation
- Funding for capital projects in counties, mitigation in mountains – eco, forests. Things like conservation corps
- Double down on transportation. Education funding – esp K-12. We don't pay our teachers enough – really investing in becoming leaders
- Infrastructure & Education – including Higher Ed. If we pay people in higher ed to train people in lower income or those whose jobs are being affected by climate
- Our residents have been consistent – Affordable Housing. If we can make state more functional, that's great but the single biggest complaint is affordable housing, esp for our lowest income who have been hit hard by pandemic.
- It's more of an approach to decision making – include an equity practice. These ideas are all good for recovery but who is at the table matters as much. There's a lot of dollars coming in & we're hearing about the arts and they know our equity work that we should replicate via partnerships between state and local gov't
- Paying teachers is not a one time – it's ongoing – right now there are real building and capital asset issues in our schools – some delaying open until later in year b/c they don't have satisfactory HVAC. This has a trickle down impact on families re. childcare etc.
- Given this is one time funding, a lot of municipalities have big backlogs, I'd also like to see investment in innovative pilots that address some of the big issues – set aside for 3-4yrs in a grant program. I see particular need in mental health – we should be investing in local assets where people can more easily access.
- Educational opportunities that help build skills for fields like manufacturing – a lot of the fields that provide living income but may not require a 4yr degree. This also affects eco dev
- Continued collaboration of local gov't regionally, statewide and w/state.

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Outdoor economy – preserving public and outdoor space for future generations

- Two state parks in park county – had record number of state park visitors
 - Roads into state parks need infrastructure improvements.
- Fund public services funded and having the people to help provide supports/programming to those who need to access the supports/services
- Smaller communities don't have \$ to manage these funds – coordinating
- Education, healthcare and broadband
 - Increase state funding per pupil
 - Getting training nurses and nurses programs
- Would like to see department of labor work with employers expanding jobs that can be done remotely
 - Retrain workforce to work from home/remote/be successful in
 - And tech support
 - Helping businesses (small) on how to be successful in a remote environment
 - Cost savings for remote work – helping smaller businesses in having a remote workforce
 - Don't have the knowledge base to be able to be remote workers
 - Funding for adult education to develop skills to have a remote workforce
- Impacts of parks and open spaces
 - Grants to help us put those amenities back
 - Public restrooms (vandal proof)
 - Important to protect those spaces
- Law enforcement and mental health partnerships/training
 - So many of their calls involve individuals with mental illness - Make sure that the training gets done and continues
 - More funding for this kind of training
- Make sure that the available resources are really easy for small towns (without staff) to access. Perhaps even a specific person who is a liaison with small local governments.
- Fund systems/things to get families back to work: Access to vaccines, funding to non-profits that help families (rent assistance, food assistance, etc.).
- Funding to translate information for non-English speakers
- Mental health funding
- Infrastructure funding to help manage roads, bridges, transportation pieces that everyone uses every day. Funding has not changed over years but needs and costs to maintain/improve have increased significantly.
- Affordable housing – finding housing for folks in rural communities.
- Capacity and technical assistance for small communities
- Infrastructure needs – ensure money is leveraged with other funds, pots of money, etc. To ensure the money goes as far as possible to address infrastructure needs. Work together on shared priorities and make sure impacts go as far as possible.
- Energy workforce and transitions from coal and natural gas to other industries. Needs to be assistance in supporting that transition into livable wages and those communities losing tax dollars.
- Quality childcare - Look at infrastructure needed for facilities, constructing or renovating buildings to become childcare centers. Incentives or training programs to get more workers into childcare as a career.
- Upgrading the electrical grids
- Updating water, sewer infrastructure that do not meet current regulations.

- Specifying 3 things is easiest by saying Pandemic EDI. Biggest issue for me is climate – everything we do now should be w/climate in mind. On ed, teaching how to deal, encourage. On infrastructure, how will it encourage multi-modal. With economy, what kind of biz do we want to encourage.
- So many important things but if we can have more people graduate from HS and get some form of post K-12
- I agree with electric vehicles. There is also a real divide between small and large counties. Many times smaller county gov can't manage grants, or gain access to the economies of scale.
- Infrastructure of all types – water, multi-modal, broadband, housing, education

If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- Following up on earlier comments: We won't have people in jail b/c of substance abuse or behavioral health. Children won't be in school so frustrated they become violent b/c they will be getting the treatment they need. It's infrastructure – but it's mental health infrastructure – so we are not criminalizing and keeping people held back or limited.
- Pandemic put a spotlight about a lot of the inequities – we saw it on broadband where too many kids couldn't access school, families couldn't access programs (PPE), couldn't register for vaccines. Suddenly teachers saw the reality of our student. If we can help our families w/affordable housing, we will start to close that equity gap
- Too many of our companies are coming here and hiring an out of state workforce because we haven't helped our own citizens equitably have access to building those skills. We need to stabilize families via infrastructure, housing & education to make it all fair
- We will have reduced barriers so all Coloradans can truly access their basic needs.
- No matter how money is spent, we need to make sure our laws are not barriers to what we want to accomplish or make it too difficult to work through
- Upskilling, reskilling and next-skilling. It needs to be for a lifetime. Needs to not require people to stop earning while learning.
- Broadband no matter where you live, what your income
- Connected
- Equitable
- Clean air
- Diverse
- Financial security
- Making progress
- Forward looking rather than reactive
- Decrease in urban vs. rural divide – look for common ground
- Housed – people are housed in the community they want to live in
- Progressing and healthy
- Economic security for all
 - Economic Security looks different for each individual, it's not a blanket state of being.
- A space was created for our youngest generation to thrive in. Students aren't homeless, have access to food, technology, broadband. Equal access to the outdoors. A state that is welcoming to all people and embraces diversity.

Meeting: Quality of Life

Date of Meeting: 4/6/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- Make a one time investment via buying hotels to create long-term housing for the homeless.
- Given K shaped recovery where people who weren't doing well are worst hit – we should focus on them. We were last state to put \$\$ into adult education & we are low in K-12 ed for adults e.g. GED, ELL. SO much of what's in the plan is focused on people who are already above that line.
- The land & real estate. We buy land for schools, non profits, affordable housing. Putting land in a land bank would protect it for long-term uses that can evolve over time.
- There is great opportunity to really invest in affordable housing for the working poor and the lower middle income. If we inject housing stock, it can help stem the spike in house prices
- Invest in infrastructure improvements will provide jobs, expand biz oppty
- Digital equity & literacy. Investment in broadband is critical – make sure it's statewide, including rural, equitable access + includes training for those who don't have as much comfort including families of those doing remote learning.
- Taking a community driven, space based approach to include infrastructure, housing, land, adult skills
- Take a number of community concerns and look for ways to package into a project – e.g. realization that post COVID we don't know what office market will look like which leaves downtowns with a lot of buildings that could be transitioned into housing across price points and economic appeal, providing homes to those working in those areas.
- Acquire land, if we have downward trending real estate in urban sectors, acquire commercial or affordable housing to transform, make available. Create a shallow rent subsidy.
- Purchase land to set up childcare centers will allow us to expand the number of centers.
- Give money to the people. Looking at 2008, it took too long to get to recovery b/c gov't doesn't always know what every person needs. \$\$ in pockets will also give some relief financially and mental health
- Affordable housing & childcare. We should map where our childcare deserts are and our affordable housing shortages are and target the funding to convert facilities into
- Affordable housing
 - use this time to secure land, bank land for permanently affordable residential and offices for nonprofits
 - 99 year land leases – creates long term affordable
 - Low-income housing tax credits
- Education – increase resources, closing equity gap,
 - Grants/financial assistance to low income, first generation students to get them back into higher education
 - Youth apprenticeship programs – encourage companies to be a part of apprenticeships programs – fund companies to bring youth on board so they can gain experience
 - Technology upgrades
 - Connectivity between institutions
 - Pay down debt which would free up money to provide more supportive services
- Small business
 - Pay off loans for unemployment insurance so that it does not end up on the backs of small business in increased premiums

- Start up fund to bring back staff to relaunch
 - Extension of support programs/ resources for small businesses
- Essential needs that are not being met for families – diapering needs. Diapering banks are seeing a 300% increase in need
- Mental health
 - Substance abuse
 - Victim services programs – funding has decreased because court appearances/cases/fines has all gone down. Grant funding through VALE VOCA grants – these grants have been hit hard.
 - Coverage support/available and accessible – make service MORE available
 - Helping to alleviate stigma
- Transportation
 - Safe transit options to help decrease drunk driving (fatalities and drunk driving
 - Shoulders on our Highways
 - Rural road improvement
 - Commuter gap
- Broadband
- Infrastructure
 - Water
 - Road and bridges – especially for rural parts of Colorado
- Investments into Agriculture. The average age of farmers nationally is 60 years old. There is a lack of diversity in agriculture. Need investments like technical assistance programs and internships. Assistance to migrant farmworkers and others from under resourced communities. Lead in sustainable ag, climate-friendly ag, etc. Investments into food production in sustainable way.
- Affordable Housing
 - Set aside funds to acquire existing properties and restrict to affordable housing. Huge gap in need for AH and what is accessible. City of Denver has right of first refusal policy but hasn't acted on acquisition because there isn't enough funding to acquire.
 - Investment in land now will have immediate and future impacts.
 - Resort and rural communities struggle with affordable housing. Land acquisition is the biggest thing for many rural communities that are land poor. Fund more technical support for small towns.
 - Evictions are happening and owners are turning long term rentals into short term rentals.
 - As we house people and build equity into response, there are ways to complement “bonus developer fee” when we serve people with highest needs (homes and PWD) – can we complement that bonus fee by doubling?
 - Combination of transportation and housing. Create incentive programs for transportation efficient land use. Call for projects paired with affordable housing or TODs. Lower levels of local match requirements. Look for ways to incentivize funding.
 - Possibility of funds for a shallow rent subsidy for tenants and those who exist on the margins.
 - Rural counties need more affordable housing, More Deeded properties and restrictions on rental properties or increased fees that goes back to affordable housing.
- Transportation

- Pay for deferred infrastructure investments. Special consideration given to uncompleted Fastracks corridors. Down payments on Front Range passenger rail.
- Look at how communities across Colorado are connected with each other and where people need to go. Look at regional corridors. Create multi-modal corridors. Use one-time money to support infrastructure. Need emphasis on projects that link communities together.
- Ensure investments achieve multiple outcomes.
- Workforce development
 - Employment for people with disabilities needs to be a cornerstone of any workforce development or workforce initiative. Support employers who hire PWD and provide individual supports for PWD. Grants to make more workplaces more accessible. Unemployment for people with disabilities is at a 7 year high. This community can be first to let go and last to be rehired.
 - State PSA on hiring people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, providing toolkits for biz, a tax credit (similar to existing federal credits), grants to make existing biz infrastructure ADA accessible, etc.
 - More funding into Workforce development and on the job training.
- Racial equity and inclusion should be considered as funds are distributed. How do we ensure we are building structure to reduce structural biases?
- Survey Coloradans with a well-being index to better understand where the needs are.

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Buying the land and having control + affordable housing.
- Health clinics in every county/community. Emphasis on workforce housing esp using underutilized buildings. Education to learn new skills
- Use the money in a way that supports every day citizens. There are so many needs in housing. There is a gap between the home ownership assistance vs. actual cost of home ownership – think about building equity which can break cycles of poverty.
- We need to focus on those Coloradans hardest hit; Strategies toward Racial Equity; Economic Mobility w/so many who have been unemployed or underemployed
- Act quickly, not perfectly. Focus on being effective.
- Housing, Childcare, Putting people back to work – a hire CO program where we incentivize employers to hire people
- Fed funds – housing funds should go to direct relief. We should also think about how we got here which was via housing instability – people spending too much of income on housing which left them no cushion. These relief funds need to be paired with partnerships with programs that provide more stability. Invest in permanent supportive housing – transitioning people from shelters to supported housing. This has demonstrated success. Big investment in affordable multi-family housing.
- Affordable housing – rental and owned, early childhood, workforce upskilling & trained into workforce all of which require a way to fast track this so they get to work.
- For all of these we should be targeting communities that have been underserved. Aging has been a key area and older workers have a particularly
- Transit – get to all parts of the state
- Broadband
- Agriculture – important

- Transportation
- Mental health needs – helping rural/small towns with emergency counseling.
- Emergency funds for utilities, internet, and other basic needs to get people to work.
- Broadband across rural and resort communities
- Prepare for next pandemic by making investments in public health infrastructure.
- Look at shovel ready projects. TOD. Community design.

If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- We will look back and see that we combined our efforts to lift all people up and it was not a zero sum game
- We would see an absence of the pain and suffering we see today, the giant lines at food banks
- We would see real movement of the needle on the key measures on things like affordable housing
- When urban and rural Colorado all feel relevant, tended to
- Young people are not leaving rural areas for cities for more opportunities.
- The housing funding talks about targeting downtown and urban areas. We should look at opportunities beyond those and not just perpetuate the legacy of redlining. If we do this right, not just more housing, we'll have it in the right places.
- Diverse
- Inclusive
- Accessible
- Resilient
- Thriving for all
- Close equity gap at all levels
- Vibrant
- Healthier – mental and physical health
- Travel safely throughout the state
- Collaboration
- Sense of place – accessible
- Equitable recovery, being mindful of how pandemic has hit certain communities harder than others. Avoid contributing to the K-shaped recovery where some will do better and some will do worse.
- Look at both economic and health care outcomes for all Coloradans. Improved economic status and self sufficiency for all Coloradans. Mindful of marginalized groups that have been hurt extra hard by the pandemic. Not only do all Coloradans have quality in life and there is equity in parity in those numbers.
- Every Coloradan has a place to call home
- Increased transportation portfolio – more multi and inter-modal. Ability for connection between modes.

Comments from chat:

- Funding to towns with population less than 5000 for potable water infrastructure improvements. Water treatment plants, tanks, diversion points, water efficiency, etc. This should include funding for infrastructure that helps address infill redevelopment.

- Increase EV charging station availability (at NO COST to small towns). Even the “free” grants are quite expensive.
- Access to behavioral and mental health facilities on the western slope.
- Access to small towns for broadband infrastructure on the western slope.
- Forest health mitigation – this would cost far less than dealing with forest fires.
- Multi-modal transit options
- Create an entrepreneurial ecosystem making Colorado a hub for new business growth. Colorado is becoming more and more expensive to live and to open a business, how do we break down those barriers? A lot of great ideas come out of challenging times like a pandemic, how do we foster those here in Colorado?
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- Create an entrepreneurial ecosystem making Colorado a hub for new business growth. Colorado is becoming more and more expensive to live and to open a business, how do we break down those barriers? A lot of great ideas come out of challenging times like a pandemic, how do we foster those here in Colorado?
- When we talk about “affordable” housing, I think we should really explore some of the live/work spaces that have been so successful here in Colorado. The Loveland space comes to mind.
- We need Tax Credit programs through CHFA. We've seen them used at Volunteers of America(VOA) with success in bringing Affordable Housing to the State.
 - Broadband, Transportation, Forest Health Mitigation
 - Small business relief for businesses that don't qualify for other aid options. Businesses with fewer than five employees. Low hanging fruit in towns and cities could include closing sidewalk gaps - improving bike/ped access. Adding bike/ped along 34 corridor where businesses and transit stops would become more accessible.
- The tax credit program is very successful and a great tool. However, the federal tax credits are a limited resource and the amount of housing they can support is a drop in the bucket compared to the need. The potential supply of affordable housing is much greater - CHFA is only able to fund 1 out of 3 applications in a given year. The state can provide greater subsidy to make more of these shovel-ready projects happen.
- Need creative transportation solutions to get cars off the road, especially the congested I70 corridor

Meeting: Latino Community

Date of Meeting: 4/6/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- Current gaps for Spanish speaking entrepreneurs
 - Access for information and resources
 - Not enough small business support/resource centers serving these communities
- Mental health
 - Support organizations that are currently impacting communities/getting resources to communities
- Education
 - More scholarships to students who identify as Latinx, first generation, and/or undocumented
 - Grants to offices or programs that provide support services to these student populations
- Physical space/infrastructure for programs/organizations – these organizations are not able to afford the rent in many places, they then must operate from spaces that do not serve the community in the best way
 - Housing – organizations cannot serve the community when their staff cannot live in the area because of the cost of living/home prices/rent/availability
 - Multicultural centers where shared resources (accounting, space, etc)
- Lack of information in Spanish – that is culturally attuned
 - Investment in small businesses that can support this marketing/information
- Acknowledgement of the work/investment of nonprofits and volunteers that help lift up communities in this pandemic
- High cost of childcare is prohibitive
- Capitol investment for a space/place/nonprofit for the Latino community (Mesa County) can feel safe, counseling, job skills, language justice department, legal information, food
- Office of Economic Empowerment at the state level – funding and access
- Educating community about what the Latinx community brings to Colorado!
 - Share our common agenda, contributions
- Making money accessible more quickly. Too often it gets stuck in bureaucracy or big orgs and does not get down quickly enough to the people or orgs that need it who can really put it to use
- Don't just make loans to small biz, converting them to grants and/or tie them to grants for technical assistance and other support for small biz
- Make sure these funds are made available and go to recognize those who have been working through the pandemic – essential workers, ag workers, support for those who have taken on that risk and been disproportionately impacted by pandemic
- Housing, childcare and mental health,
- We could make a big investment in housing, particularly for those who lost homes or rentals,
- Make a one time investment in childcare startups where barriers and red tape have prevented people. We also need to do something in mental health. Tech support to improve access
- Can we use some stimulus to create endowments that are long-term supports for non-profits who rebuild to support communities (non profits have been particularly hurt – esp smaller ones)
- We are at risk of losing a generation of young people – can we pay them to do community service and help them develop skills, sense of pride & some income
- Technology – so many resources that are available depend on having ability to get online. From broadband to devices to the know how

- A natural opportunity to talk about how we do things – process like accessibility, grants vs loans and then there are the concrete substance. Investment in rural higher ed. Rural infrastructure. Invest in energy efficiency – all state buildings and more which generate savings, jobs, new skills. Sewer testing and water infrastructure which not all communities have ability to do.
- Gaps in tech are horrific and exacerbated during pandemic
- Internet access – a definite problem for those accessing resources and those trying to operate a small business, reach customers.
- Be very intentional about historically underserved communities and business owners who have been left out of too many programs.
- Access to internet, devices, hot spots. Library districts are a great place to put that investment – they have the infrastructure to set up, loan, manage those devices, software, provide tech support etc.
- Invest to eliminate equity gap – start w/our ed system. Rethink how we approach ed. Eradicate the equity gap. IN pandemic, LatinX student population drop out. Money could create opportunities to ensure our communities have skills to succeed, to advance to college and to go on to become leaders, scientists. We need to create intentional programs that really target those groups who are struggling with that attainment.
- In higher ed, those students that compete FAFSA are more likely to go to college – let’s invest in a program that sends people out to schools to help students complete FAFSA
- Tuition free college for the next 3 years for those who can’t afford and those who have been impacted. Technical school, 2yr or 4yr
- We need to invest in helping families navigate the “new normal” where tech is different and necessary, where jobs look different.
- The financial barriers to higher ed for the Latino community are real and they’ve increased as a result of pandemic. Invest in a specific program focused on behavioral health, mental health

If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado’s assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- A community where Latinx thrive and are valued
- forward together.
- validate our needs
- More Latinx students in higher ed, with degrees, with less debt, with basic access to education and to broadband services in rural areas, and them leaving higher ed feeling hopeful and successful
- Hopeful
- Center our contributions.
- An equitable and healthy community where we are all accepted
- A Colorado of solidarity and justice
- Review and research our state's policies.

Comments from the Chat:

- funding needed for a new resource center in Adams county 10 M building and 3 mil annual for staff and programs.
- we continue to rely on two main organizations La Rasa and Mi casa. WE need to have more of the same organizations in other counties to serve those communities.
- Easy access to BIPOC services, programs, and spaces that are led by BIPOC community members

Meeting: Rural and Agriculture

Date of Meeting: 4/7/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- We need mental health support for caretakers
- Water problems in rural areas. We have to drive hours to see a doctor. We have to live here because it's the only place we can afford
- We need to get well paying jobs in rural areas. We need to bring more biz here. Rural/Ag grants cover feed but not capital costs. We can get VC but that takes the revenue out of rural areas
- We know of hundreds of projects that with \$50mm in allocated funds, we could be going now on shovel ready projects that would put Coloradans to work and would help support long term biz. We need programs that meet biz wherever they are – may be shovel ready or may be at other stages and we should include all
- We need to look at the full cycle of ag and processing. We need to move capital to where the full cycle can be managed
- Leverage the scale of purchasing for non profits and smaller players in the food cycle. We need a big investment in the infrastructure. Our bottleneck is at the entry level – trucks, freezers, transport – all can get healthy food to people in need
- Investments in Farmers Markets – year round – statewide – would help our local farmers, encourage healthy eating/nutrition.
- Bridging ag & tourism – bridging producers products w/restaurants to make it easier to serve locally grown. Match producers w/restaurants. Currently it has to be 1 restaurant direct to farmer who probably doesn't have the time to manage this process.
- For transformative investment, sustainability – best investment is education. Look at CSU extension offices, they can help with rural education so more support for them & with ag education to keep youth interested, educated on future tech.
- State should invest in seed research for geothermal energy. There is some work to transition nat-gas assets into geothermal sites.
- Ag infrastructure. Think about equitable opportunities. Remove barriers to entrepreneurship. Improve equity around compensation. We have a once in a lifetime oppty – let's offer forgivable grants & supplemental funding for ag tech and innovative biz.
- Increase support for CSU's community development & support resources for projects in ag and on the land.
- Apprenticeships to get young people and subsidize employers for bringing them in
- Infrastructure – from meat processing to canning, freezing etc. to extend season of revenues for farmers. Help young farmers get in or stay in business. Concerned about barriers to young farmers.
- Broadband – last mile
- There are so many projects on hold due to pandemic – let's get funds to local gov as partners
- Invest in our farmers and farmworker
 - Technical assistance grant programs focused on farms and food system infrastructure
 - Farm and ranch internship
 - Develop a meat processing apprenticeship program grant processing
 - Direct relief for Colorado farmers and processors
 - Better pipeline for younger folks to get engaged in farming
- Workforce development
- Infrastructure

- Colorado water plan
- Drought relief
- Renewable energy – taking advantage of our resources, we can do more!
 - Demonstration project –look for opportunities for community scale solar
- Focused assistance for economic development in rural communities
- Transfer farms and ranches to the next generation
 - Help those transition in and out
 - Insurance options, retirement plan, assets
- Small processing plants – reinvest in, set up a program for younger generation to get involved in
- Ag friendly investments – multi generational transfer concept
- National Western Stock Show – reinvest in.
 - Bulls and Heifer sales – reinvigorate
- Ag and Western tourism – preserve our heritage
- Green energy investments – program to provide tech support for wind and solar power capacity
- Nebraska back out! Oklahoma back up!
- Access to healthcare in rural communities especially mental health
 - Infrastructure is not developed in rural communities
- Making sure dollars/investments get to the people that really need it!
- Help ease transition, help foster transition conversations.
- CSU is the entity to help with this work! Great resource!
- Research and development, put money into the hands of research institutions
- Dollars to producers – as directly as possible. Ask producers what they want!
- Do no harm!
- Revolving loan fund – continue to use these funds over time. We have great funds/programs in the state- use funds to build those programs up and use over time
- Strategic infrastructure investments – water, sewer
- Revitalization/regentrification in rural areas of our state
- Water infrastructure - keep water in ag!
- Invest in education/training for students to see the promise of a career in ag
- Food Systems/Supply-Chain Supports:
 - Double the Food pantry assistant grant. Most pantries use local producers.
 - Fund infrastructure for emergency food systems (warehouses, refrigeration, transportation needs, etc.)
 - Meat processing facility capital investments – big opportunity on western slope for cattle that needs place to be processed.
 - Custom exempt support for cattle processing, help get products to customers locally. Consider funds not just for smaller ops, but look at larger ops as well that are mostly run by families.
 - School nutrition – create a wholesaling food hub for producers/operators to connect
 - Invest in infrastructure, refrigeration, transportation needs, etc.
 - Need standardized regs across the state for producers to work with schools because regulations are different district to district.
- Maintain current and new market operations with supply chain support
 - Fund technical assistance programs; include funding for meat processors to develop plans and procedures
 - Cooperative warehouse infrastructure. Aggregating in rural areas with central processing closer to markets.

- Develop seed funds for wholesalers – create more access to CO proud products
 - Provide food pantry support
- Broadband
 - Enhance rural broadband infrastructure in whatever form makes the most sense for the area (cable, dish, wires, etc.). This is the best way to achieve economic development for many different needs in rural areas.
- Minimize conflicts between humans and predators (CSU proposal): predator/livestock conflict usually leads to lose-lose situations, proposal to empower and employ ranching families throughout the Western Slope to receive training in and then implement proactive, non-lethal conflict reduction strategies to reduce livestock losses to predators, such as black bears, mountain lions, coyotes, and wolves. By the conclusion of the two-year program, ranch families will be empowered to implement effective conflict reduction strategies to improve ranch sustainability in landscapes with predators. This program could be a collaboration between CSU extension, CDA, USDA, CPW, etc.
- Workforce development
 - CTE training for skilled trades, innovation, aviation, innovative ag programs. Bolster the workforce on West slope with certs and career tech
 - Need for meat processing apprenticeship programs in partnership with junior colleges
 - Provide training for contractors for energy efficiency projects
- Mental Health:
 - Expand mental health services in rural communities by providing wifi or cellular devices for people to connect with telehealth (mental and physical)
 - The biggest barriers are access and overcoming the stigma, especially in a small community. Needs are recruiting therapists that have some knowledge of ag, providing vouchers to eliminate the cost barrier, and making it available via tele-health to maintain privacy. Colorado Corn Growers and Colorado Farm Bureau have partnered on a pilot program that will hopefully overcome these.
- Ag infrastructure
 - Funding for a broad range of water projects, including smaller scale projects like ditch companies
- Rural education and health care
 - Provide devices that can work on wifi and/or cellular data
- Investing in regenerative agriculture: part of climate solution. Investment in climate adaptation. Water variability concerns. Rural communities as part of renewable energy strategies. More EV charging stations.

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Rural technology. A lot of times rural broadband is sub par. It's often a last mile cost issue for providers who don't find it cost effective which disadvantages and burdens our rural businesses from ag to other
- It's critical in prioritizing these funds to emphasize the need to specifically support farmers and rural communities who are Black, Indigenous and People of Color. As we know, there are tremendous barriers for people of color to access land and build businesses and farms. If we do not provide specific support for these communities, we will not have the thriving diversity in both our rural and urban economies that will make Colorado as strong as it can be.
- LIVABLE wag for those we've depended on – ag, food workers

- Solar energy and renewable. The cost of energy in rural areas is a real challenge and much higher than other places
- End market development centers. Through more robust recycling centers, we create jobs, we improve environment
- New market opportunities in supply chain
- Young people would stay in our rural areas more with broadband and support for biz
- Invest in rural workforce through IHE & Community college
- Have State buy land to preserve farmland in perpetuity. Let's also pay them for regenerative practices
- Assistance for temp & perm farm workers
- Rural broadband infrastructure and technology investment in agriculture
- Reinvest in what used to be in the small local processing plant – consolidation happened but we need to reinvest in small plants
- Storage and distribution of commodity products – able to leverage markets to a higher degree
- Can leverage state and local match programs – we could do twice as much for infrastructure
- Road and bridge infrastructure investments
- Sub surface water storage – we need more water storage
- Mental health access support – suicide prevention
- Broadband needed for so many reasons – technical assistance, access and equity, school, health, economic development, etc.
- Using funds to support women-led and minority owned business
- Infrastructure for food storage – supply – emergency food systems
- Career tech and skill development, re-skilling, and looking at skills gap in existing workforce
- Focus on agricultural immigrant workers; leverage the Promotora network already working in rural areas. Ensure these communities have access to needed resources.
- Preserve ag lands for future generations
- Invest in expanded infrastructure for Colorado's emergency food systems in order to support large-scale storage and transportation of food throughout the state during the COVID-19 pandemic's economic fallout, as well as into the future. Recommended: \$15 million.
- Support Colorado families in accessing healthful food via our food banks and food pantries by promoting increased distribution of Colorado produced food in the Food Pantry Assistance Grant program. Recommended: \$10 million
- Ensure Colorado's five food banks can continue to meet increased demand and provide healthy, locally sourced, and culturally appropriate food through the next year. Recommended: \$10 million

Aspirational: If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- Rural economies would be vibrant
- Higher capture of dollars staying in our rural communities & it would be more inclusive and accessible for all Coloradans
- Colorado has to promote an image of an Ag friendly state that has its arms open to our Livestock and Farm Commodity industries. Building capacity and streamlining Farm to Market and Wholesale distribution and retail distribution in every sector of Agriculture.
- Connected community - where people can live and work anywhere!
- Better infrastructure

- Colorado has to promote an image of an Ag friendly state that has its arms open to our Livestock and Farm Commodity industries. Building capacity and streamlining Farm to Market and Wholesale distribution and retail distribution in every sector of Agriculture.

Comments in Chat:

- Ensure the technical support services (CDA, community colleges, higher ed) have sufficient funds for long term support of these impacts.
- Arts and Cultural programming in rural communities can stimulate creative thinking and learning
- We have seen a drastic increase in suicides across CO in rural communities, with Park, Conejos, and Costilla Counties having some of the highest rates. 74% of farmers say that they have been directly impacted by the opioid crisis, pre-COVID, and that has only increased since. I would like to support all efforts to assist farmers and ranchers to in dealing with stress they face effectively, and to ensure they have access to mental health and substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts
- Infrastructure - water, broadband. And revitalization, redevelopment for small towns.
- The Colo Dem Party Rural Initiative is surveying rural residents right now - so far, broadband is one of the major issues, as is education, health care, AND supporting family farmers and ranchers.
- We should leverage all of the Ag based support entities to help this effort. CSU Cooperative Extension iOS a god start.
- Water infrastructure that will keep water in agriculture, not to accelerate water transfer to cities. Education investment in workforce development for ag and rural jobs. For example, training in technology that allows a worker to work on robotic and computerized tech in food warehouses.
- Water in rural Colorado is a huge issue. With one man one vote, rural water resources are always at great risk. We don't want to dry up ag, and we don't want to dry up rural communities.
- CADA loans is a program designed for this investment in young farmers and ranchers.
- Water infrastructure
- 1. Renewable energy projects in rural Colo 2. Preserve water resources for ag and rural communities 3. Rural broadband - need the funding to flow differently so that assistance reaches every rural area.
- agree with broadband
- I assume that everyone on here is already aware, but there is an Emergency Rural Broadband Assistance Initiative that you may want to share with families who are in need of access to computers and internet: <https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>
- Top Three Priorities -1. Investment in research and development via livestock and agriculture sustainability benefiting climate, production,etc - primarily at CSU via livestock sustainability coalition 2. processing infrastructure that benefit local markets for food 3. water infrastructure at the producer level such as water conveyance, diversions. must be actual project work that "turns dirt".
- Rural roads and bridges
- Terry nailed it in these three priorities. I don't know if 'water infrastructure' under these rules includes non-potable/irrigation projects, but this type of infrastructure needs improvement across the state for the benefit of ag and the environment.
- I second that as well, including SUD treatment resources.

Meeting: Health and Human Services

Date of Meeting: 4/8/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- State should invest in infrastructure – become the most age friendly state
 - Lifelong Colorado program – underfunded and understaffed
 - Help communities to make their area more age friendly
 - How to deliver services should be considered
 - Capitol investments as well as human capital
- Broadband
 - migrated to telehealth in a significant way but need to have the infrastructure to
 - Essential for service providers and economic development
- Address affordable housing – particularly in rural areas
 - Develop our own youth build – program that is funded federally (federal youth build)
 - Gives students skills – trade skills, construction
- Mental health
 - Emergency fund for stress mitigation
 - Tools for community health and suicide prevention
 - Mobil clinic approach
 - Outpatient mental health tele supports
 - Devices that can run off of cellular and wifi for areas with connectivity issues
 - Voucher program to access initial telehealth visits
 - Mental health provider training and education
 - Sigma – workplaces and structure of employers don't always make accommodations for this
 - Addressing whole health – mental and physical health
 - Mental health first aid training for everyone in Colorado- schools, higher ed, (San Miguel County has so far educated/trained 75% of residents in this way)
 - Building construction/capital investment for healthcare/mental health centers to increase access care (crisis, residential, etc.)
 - Support for recovery support services to help people to maintain their recover post treatment
 - Greater integration of mental health and substance treatment in physical care settings – there is no wrong door
- Additional assisted living alternatives
 - Look at alternatives like - College or young professionals housing partnerships
- Nonprofits
 - Additional supports – capitol, funding to expand programs
- Workforce recruitment and retention
 - Loan forgiveness/support
- Social determinants of health
 - Develop skills to do jobs coming out of poverty
 - How to further support nonprofits
 - Hard to have physical or mental health if you are hungry and/or homeless – increase safety net programs
- Basic human services
 - Access to food (food insecurity has increased).
- Providers should look like the communities they serve (patients)

- Pipeline programs to engage minority and BIPOC communities to get into the medical field – be more intentional
- State and municipal lands to be turned into open space/public lands for physical and mental health
 - Access to healthy ecosystems around us
- Screenings – reimburse primary care for completing/doing these screenings/assessments. We do not have a robust behavioral health workforce to do these screens. This has happened in other states.
- Homecare in rural Colorado is suffering and it is the most cost-effective way to take care of our most vulnerable and keep them safe.
- Workforce
 - Hard to hire people because there is a big gap between state income and private sector income. Need to bring in more staff that have been out do to Covid. Let state have money for hiring bonuses like in the private sector.
 - Provide bonuses for state employees that are essential workers
 - Behavioral health workforce shortage. Need all the workforce supports to retain providers in rural areas.
- Investment in rural health care infrastructure to make sure health care remains local - primary care, specialty care, telehealth, broadband, work force and technology.
- Food insecurity
 - Focus on folks suffering the most, parents with kids, POC.
 - Support emergency food systems with capital costs – warehousing, refrigeration, transportation, etc.
- Broadband is essential for everything including health care
- Funds should be focused on human services and behavioral health needs because they are economic necessities. People can't get back to work without childcare or if they have unstable mental health. These have been historically underfunded systems and we need to revitalize the economy with investments in this critical area.
- Behavioral health
 - Need to build out infrastructure behavioral health treatment centers. Colorado is bottom on access to mental health treatment and substance abuse centers.
 - Provide funding to counties to fund a diverse range of behavioral health programs. Money is earmarked for MSOs and CMHCs but there are other programs that are also important.
 - Need to consider lost work days due to poor mental health.
 - No wrong door approach to mental health
 - Prevention services and intervention services and how far funding can go towards making differences.
 - Teletherapy for behavioral health. Access to behavioral health means increasing the workforce. Reimbursement for mental health is restricted to PhD, MD and Social Work) - there are licensed mental health workers (LPC and LMFT) who can add to the workforce - we can mobilize them by expanding Medicare coverage.
 - BH consolidation that is occurring needs to be connected with the integrated health care organizations across the state rather than staying separate so that patients are best served. People are getting lost between these organizations
- Childcare
 - Make investments in safe spaces for Childcare centers.

- Community health care centers that are not FQHC were left out of federal government money. Not every community health center were able to get this money. They are full of most vulnerable who are not getting funding they need. Mae sure all communities benefit from one-time dollars.
- Diaper needs. Important resource that are not covered under government subsidies (WIC).
- Grants and funds to staff nonprofits that get funding for food, diapers, etc. but can't pay staff to do work.
- Washington State has put \$35Million in their new COVID-supported budget for serving the uninsured and underinsured because those populations have been growing during the pandemic and people are not signing up for insurance as fast as people thought. Organizations who can access these funds are ALL community health clinics including those that did and did not receive federal funds, mental health clinics and rural clinics. This is to bridge the need.
- 40% of people coming to food pantries in the last year are coming for the first time, and we don't see the need going away. It took 8+ years after the last recession for food insecurity rates to recover. Our food banks will be there as long as it takes, but we could sure use the help so we can keep healthy food moving across the state for families in need.
- Pilot a wellness fund to assess the capacity of local organizations serving the public. See <https://accountablehealth.gwu.edu/sites/accountablehealth.gwu.edu/files/Local%20Wellness%20Funds%20Brief.pdf>
- Focus on equity: I'm in small county and we don't have the big providers. We should help the smaller providers to do things like operating small clinics
- We have to find a way to support the early childhood system – elevate the profession to attract people. Too many facilities can not attract staff – can't charge families more but need to offer the services which is impacting our recovery. It's also impacting the childcare workforce who have to use public assistance
- Support infrastructure to maximize community coalitions at all levels – community leaders, orgs, associations, professionals.
- Address shovel ready projects on opioid addiction.
- We have lost 20bn due to opioid crisis. It's directly impacting our economy. Invest in behavioral health workforce – substance and mental health. We have a shortage of people. Get them trained up. They need the skills & cultural competency – whatever that means everywhere
- Fully fund the Family First Transitions Act grant program. There are 50+ ideas. Fund them all to help counties and communities restructure and serve their communities. We need start up funds to local groups
- Substance use disorder: Options for recovery & support have been limited even more during pandemic. We should prioritize recovery support services across continuum that has led to more isolation.
- Licensed addiction, worked in behavioral health. The 4 pillars of recovery: health, home, community, purpose. All these services get at key issues but if they don't have a safe, stable home, they are at risk In Huerfano where they have highest OD rate, they have no recovery residences nor do neighboring counties. Too many of state funds can't go to capital and building purchases. We should use some fed funds
- I would like to see more Colorado Crisis Services Walk-in Centers to help people experiencing suicide and other mental health Crises.
- We need more trauma informed practices across all services

- – I would love to see early childhood professionals be considered essential workers. I would also like to see unrestricted funding be channeled to the communities so we can work on addressing the lack of access to services for the families of children 0-5 at the local level.

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Will not have recovery unless we take care of basic needs around food and housing.

Aspirational: If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- We will see high quality early childcare that empowers parents, pays ECE teachers as professionals they are. Our children are well cared for
- Our systems will have shifted f/compliance/policing to a healing state & approach
- From mental health perspective, next time we have a crisis, we will be better ready to serve & support all
- We will have fundamental mental health literacy and it will be accepted and understood – people would know they
- We will have a holistic approach to health where Doc collaborates w/therapist & engages nutritionist & the psychiatrist... and insurance should be an enabler, not a roadblock.
- Come back to a system that is better prepared and provides what folks really need when we face an emergency
- Build expansion opportunities across the state that incentivize people that go into areas where we don't have staff needs met – scholarship programs, loan forgiveness programs. Opportunity to build capacity so we can treat people who need it the most.
- Rural communities and people have access to quality of care in rural communities and life expectancy
- More equitable outcomes no matter where you are in Colorado
- Increased access to early childhood services, affordable housing, ample access to healthy food!!

Comments (as entered into the chat):

- Just a reminder that the community health centers that are mentioned by Aaron Ray only a subset of community health centers in Colorado. There are at least 50 clinics that did NOT receive ANY federal funds and need help.
- broadband would help our students and their parents many of whom could work remotely!
- Raise the minimum wage in Colorado
- Providing behavioral health supports for farmers and ranchers.
- Boulder County supports increasing funding in mental health and substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery, especially as the increase of suicides, overdoses, and other mental health needs due to the pandemic. Funding is needed not just within the community block grants, but direct to counties and statewide in a very strategic way to address the huge gaps in the behavioral health workforce- scholarships, increased loan repayment, hiring incentives and more, support for diversion from the criminal justice system for individuals that need treatment or mental health services. Colorado ranks low in the US for its investments in substance abuse treatment services.
 - Trends in suicide attempt among Boulder County residents remain concerning: Cumulative emergency department (ED) visits for suicide attempt by Boulder County residents are 36%

higher in the first 12 weeks of 2021 compared to the same time period in 2020. Visits to the ED for suicide attempt were 70% higher in 2020 compared to 2019.

- More School-Based Health Centers in more districts across Colorado. They provide physical and behavioral health services (including substance abuse assistance.)
- Long term supports and services (LTSS) are an important way to keep disabled people in their homes.
- Suicide, mental health disabilities, and substance use disorders (SUDs) have a significant negative effect on the economy, for example, in lost workdays. Building up culturally competent, flexible, and affordable mental health and SUD treatment options throughout the state, rural, frontier, and urban communities is necessary.
- And provide them the support to navigate the medical field through their career. Great idea Theo!
- To be clear, covering start costs for treatment programs is a one-time cost. Similarly, educational campaigns have one-time costs.
- support individuals living in recovery from SUDs by providing housing and Recovery Community Organizations. I would also support suggestion to integrate MH and SUDs across the funding and reimbursement systems
- support of Recovery Community Organizations.
- I second the mental health first aid, especially for disability diagnosis. For instance ADHD is often undiagnosed in women until they have graduated from college. Just being aware of what these symptoms are in both males and females would help SO much because a number of children who "fall through the cracks" could seek their own diagnoses.
- One time grants to BH/HS/PH workforce, loan repayment, incentives could be a one time investment
- Crisis first aid would also be wonderful, especially for those who sadly were affected by one of the many mass shootings that continue to happen across our country.
- Make Colorado the most Age-Friendly state in the country by expanding Lifelong Colorado to increase assistance to local governments to build livable communities, increase investments in Area Agencies on Aging to build organizational capacity (including capital expenditures) to expand services and supports and to collaborate with the state, local governments and community based organizations to meet the needs in every area of the state (but especially including food assistance, transportation, telehealth, and housing).
- Ditto the capital funds for both nonprofits and for small businesses - especially with more flexible financing approaches!
- Build from SIM work to establish a statewide Colorado Health Cooperative Extension Service as a key infrastructure to help Colorado's Health Professions to adapt and change their practices as we proceed through a dramatic redesign of healthcare--such as integrated behavioral health/primary care. An investment that can keep on giving.
- Yes on capital funds for non-profits, to build/open more Recovery Community Centers
- Fund direct aid through non-profits to meet mental health concerns upstream.
- More designated beds for mental health in hospital systems.
- capital funds for both nonprofits and for small businesses - especially with more flexible financing approaches

Meeting: Asian American & Pacific Islander

April 8, 2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- There are not many from the community on the call - Language barriers, work hours and culturally the Asian community doesn't speak up as much. Wish there was translation on call for non-English language speakers.
- Hate Crimes
 - There have been upticks in violence/incidents against the Asian American community
 - Asian hate crimes have been a big issue. How to report hate crimes – a lot of skepticism around reporting and concern of what will happen if they report. Language barriers are a big issue. Need messaging on when and how to report.
 - Set aside funding for educational campaign
 - Funding for hotline with language support
- AAPI Business Support
 - Need a legal hotline to get small businesses technical assistance – need access to language services for AAPI non-English speakers. Monetary support and expanding training for those who want to become translators/interpreters.
 - Provide community with PPE and educational aspects of small business development.
 - We can do so many programs and offer advantages to Asian businesses but if they can't get through paperwork it doesn't matter. Our community understands how to practice and perform business, but don't understand government paperwork. Tailor programs with minimal, basic paperwork. Or provide technical assistance to help these businesses navigate the paperwork.
- Language Justice/Cultural competence
 - Need a systematic way to center phone calls in different languages. One place to call and be in native tongue. Reading and speaking languages are two different things that needs to be taken into account. Understand that representation is not a successful checkbox – just because someone looks like us doesn't mean they speak the language or understand various cultural contexts.
 - Systems of oppression many of us experience – how can we get information to everyone to protect everyone and protect equal rights? Need to understand the intersections of identify and all the different ways we are diverse. Asians are not a monolith.
- Education and helping first generation and non-traditional students. Not just focus on cost of attending schools. Think about childcare, medical costs, food needs, etc. The amount of students who complete degrees while homeless is very high in this community.
 - Making applications accessible or having technical assistance to help fill them out.

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Think about how we provide resources not just for marginalized communities, but actually combat racism. This should be conversation at all levels of government.
- Benefits for employees and mental health impacts
- Investments to build out infrastructure.
- One-on-one training for technical assistance

- There is not anxiety of not knowing where next paycheck comes from and ensuring everyone feels safe in their communities. Compounded stress from racism and violence that create indirect and direct mental health issues.
- AAPI exempted from grants and funding. Think more about funding for Asian populations and not lump into a whole. It is a very different experience for new immigrants than other south Asians who have been here for a while.

Aspirational: If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

Comments from Chat:

- Thank you for conducting #BuildBackStronger. I really like that you gave focused attention to so many groups, and I have been fortunate to wear a lot of 'hats' (composting and ag., rural, plains, independent nonprofit, recycling and sustainability, etc.). Tonight is extra touching to me that I get a chance to wear my Korean hat. I am so personally moved that you are hosting one for the Asian community - this is so very needed and I appreciate you all!
- I have to leave at 6:30 but just wanted to introduce myself as the Executive Director of Japan America Society of Colorado. I don't know that I have "one big idea" however we do have members in JASC who represent both the restaurant industry and the arts so I hope and expect that the State will offer support for those industries. I am doing my best to forward information to those impacted within our membership. Again I thank you for including me and I'm sorry that I couldn't stay on longer.
- I agree and we need more cultural awareness education funded in teacher education, medical education, and law enforcement education, so that those service workers are working from a cultural aware lens. We also need more funding in higher ed. that encourages universities to higher staff/professors with diverse identities.
- More cultural awareness education

Meeting: Chambers & EDCs

Date of Meeting: 4/9/2021

What is the one big idea you think could contribute the most to the economic recovery?

- For small businesses, affordable housing is the thing. We actually have jobs but we can't get and keep people, particularly in service industry and for the undocumented.
- Investment to support small businesses with the resources & programs out there + helping them to be compliant with all the new regs, the new paid sick day laws – they need support understanding + the funds to help comply when it's outside their own margins.
- Work from home sparked via pandemic has helped with some of the childcare and housing issues but also put strains on those. If more biz want to stay on remote or offer that, we need to make sure that
- Use some funds to build out the employment insurance trust fund – would help take some strain and burden off the employers for a bit
- In rural mountains, not just broadband – affordable broadband for employers and employees
- We had 2 companies in Western CO move out of state due to high cost of freight. We're looking at an analysis locally but it would be helpful to have a statewide analysis of freight infrastructure. These companies are not moving f/western slope to Denver, they're moving to Utah. If we better understood routes, we could start building the solutions
- Job losses have been concentrated in industries. Some continue to experience big labor shortages and skill gaps so let's put resources into those downsized people to get the skills for new jobs
- Many of our minority owned biz have a difficult time accessing programs & chambers need funding to support developing providing these supports and doing so in additional languages.
- Education is top of mind – from K-12 through Higher Ed. This is a huge windfall. We have a huge oppty to train our people to be the workforce of the future
- Housing and childcare. We get consulting help but we don't have help to actually build facilities.
- Labor shortages are a huge problem. A proactive response would be to really support first gen college students and those who could be. Let's build out WBL opportunities. How can we take students f/marginalized communities, help them earn and learn.
- Nonprofits have seen increase in demand for services – use investments to create a program for grants to ensure Coloradans employed – help them remain the safety net in communities.
- Small businesses say additional loans are not helpful, they don't want to take on more debt – make grant programs available to them
 - Our Black-owned small businesses are not in a position (or willing to take on additional debt) to apply for loans. If funding can take another form, it will be more helpful.
- Funding for restaurants to expand into outdoor spaces.
- Need better infrastructure to attract new community members/businesses to community
- Funding to local jurisdictions for funding for chamber membership – help small businesses participate in local chamber for access to education and networking opportunities available – scholarship to help join chamber and participate
- Apprenticeship programs – for youth and adults (and older adults)
- Access to broadband
- Homecare and home healthcare – better compensate workers to keep seniors at home for longer
- Colorado spends money on goods and services – develop a program to further develop the states spending/contracting with minority owned businesses, woman owned businesses
- Small cities and historic mountain towns, small casinos – were not eligible for some of the pervious programs – expand to these communities/businesses.

- Infrastructure - Per capita formulas our direct distribution is not sufficient. Significant projects and endangered spaces are at risk.
- Green energy development
- Additional support for communities in coal transition. Fund just transition effort (double what is in legislature) -need staff on the ground working on these issues. Legislation at the federal level to advanced energy tax credits program. Would like to see something in Colorado like that and combine it with cash incentives. Reshoring key light manufacturing and target it to communities in transition.
- Aligning and creating education opportunities for youth for creating jobs for the future.
- Historic preservation
- Air quality/ventilation systems to get patrons back in businesses.
- Ensure there need for awareness and focus on equitable access for funding.
- Affordable and sustainable housing
- Training and Reskilling
 - Job training and apprenticeships – get programs up and running, sustained with private sector contributions. Provide training in the trades and workforce skills.
 - Incentivize employers to hire entry-level workers who receive training/re-skilling. Incentives to hire from state approved programs or programs to help disadvantaged populations.
 - Take away eligibility requirements under most federal workforce programs
- Backfill the UI account
- Broadband
 - Technology – broadband infrastructure, technology support
 - Technological infrastructure is critical.
 - Support rural broadband combined with job training – focus on just transition communities
- Small business support
 - Supporting small business and entrepreneur programs
 - Financial report training
 - Biz accelerator to help businesses to pivot or adjust approach in post-pandemic world.
 - Grant (not loan) opportunities for small business. Many small businesses just can't take out another loan.
 - Many small business owners are aging out. Need business continuity and succession planning. Make it entrepreneurial.
 - Focus on how we work with small biz along main street – funding and programs for how they can rethink and redesign spaces in light of what was learned from the pandemic.
- Housing needs
 - Creating and preserving housing opportunities.
 - Address housing issues, this is where our “jobs” sleep at night.
- Infrastructure
 - Streamline and combine licensing projects – remove red tape to go from planning, to shovel, to opening even faster.
- Focus on the most vulnerable
 - Solutions for undocumented biz owner and employees. Funds we have received haven't been able to address these needs bc of federal restrictions.
 - How do set up an equity fund that is supported by state with initial injection of funds that can target underinvested communities, BIPOC entrepreneurs, etc.
- Sustainable tourism messaging and infrastructure

- Investment in creative industries. The pandemic disproportionately impacted creative arts sector and theatres.
 - Grants and loans to indivl artists, support to local communities for outdoor event infrastructure, mobile events, capital improvements to venues, etc.
- Support the development of a regional food system

What are the top 3 investments you think should be prioritized and how do you see them leveraging Colorado's (or regional) unique contexts to support economic recovery?

- Need to collaborate to leverage funds and ensure they go further.
- Transportation is longtime challenge in Colorado
- Workforce staffing is an issue in rural communities and a big problem is lack of affordable housing and transportation.
- Vocational training, apprenticeships, career tech ed. These are immediate needs, they will be jobs
- Funds toward shovel ready roads, construction
- Transportation infrastructure
- We're getting half of TX, FL & CA here but we can't keep up with the wear on the roads and parks. Put money (and jobs) into maintenance
- Prioritize mental health and healthcare which allow rural communities to keep aging population with family and friends. This will help mitigate the mental health needs.
- Is this the oppty to really go big and bold on homelessness?
- Funding to the orgs that are promoting the businesses, the industries, the communities. The chambers have been hit hard by the pandemic
- Invest in truly transformative would be investing in a complete overhaul of our ECE and day care infrastructure
- We have 2 great rural incentives: Jump Start & loan but there is no marketing budget so at time so many companies are leaving the coasts, give us the funds to market, promote
- There's a lot of overlap between chambers and EDCs so businesses don't always understand where to go when. Support to help them collaborate in a one time shop
- Support community orgs. While some cities, counties push back to ask community orgs to do more but they frequently don't have the

If we maximize our use of federal + state programs and Colorado's assets, what should the world look like for Coloradans in 2-5 years and beyond?

- Spreading wealth and prosperity out of I-25 corridor and not just to tourism-based economies. Broadband is one avenue we have for small communities.
- Trend towards not just blurring lines but eliminating lines between education and work. Employers need to get more engaged in the education system at all levels and the education system needs to consider themselves as a pipeline. Engagement needs to be made easier for employers to work with HS students. Incentives and better ed across state level to get employers to open-up to these types of programs.
- Colorado will have the most robust and competitive economy in the country. Measured by traditional metrics and from an equity lens that ensures our bottom quartiles are brought along and not left behind.
- Build back beautifully, with a continued emphasis on affordable housing.
- Infusion into education to help close any gaps caused by the pandemic and ensure those students are not left behind.

- Unlike the 08 recession that people say CO did so well, truth is Denver did. 50 other counties languished. If we do this right, all areas esp rural will be right
- Smart Growth
- 1: every biz owner whoever they are, has same access to capital resources etc. 2) We reward and incentivize those who have been good actors and contributors
- Businesses will know what's available and be able to access them
- We will not only brag about our quality of life, we will brag about our business support ecosystem and for our employment conditions
- Resilient communities that have the ability to survive within the local region as well as export to outside areas. Ability to survive future economic hits by being stable locally.
- Big moves that get burdens out of the way – from unemployment insurance costs to job upskilling and reskilling
- Hopefully we create a biz services are easy to navigate
- People will find opportunity and mobility
- Our business climate will value the individual and the workforce as people instead of cogs
- We were thrown into this
- If we do this right... Every entrepreneur and business owner has an equal chance at success regardless of their race, location, or economic upbringing, and we incentivize and reward the companies that are doing right by their employees, the environment and community versus rewarding extractive, exploitive businesses that take more out of our great state than they put in

Addendum C: Submitted Letters & Comments

The following pages contain letters, emails, proposals and reports received in response to the Build Back Stronger listening tour.



Counties across Colorado working to provide a unified, nonpartisan and independent voice at the statehouse. Collectively, CCAT represents all regions of the state and the diversity of issues facing every corner of Colorado.

April 14, 2021

Dear Governor Polis and Treasurer Young and Members of the Build Back Stronger Group,

On behalf of Counties & Commissioners Acting Together ([CCAT](#)), thank you for your commitment and dedication to providing critical relief to Coloradans impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As you work diligently to develop a balanced approach to distributing the federal recovery package coming from the American Rescue Plan, as local leaders across Colorado, we urge you to include robust direct support to current programming.

Such assistance will ensure that the state supports programming that has a proven track record of successfully improving the lives of Coloradans. We believe that prioritizing foundational infrastructure funding ensures the best opportunity to serve our constituents.

Below are examples of critical programming that we would like prioritized;

Affordable Housing & Homelessness Support

- **Affordable housing** is an issue that affects all regions of the state and has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Funds should be directed to existing affordable housing programs and workforce housing solutions at both the state and local level.
 - Funds should look to address a diverse range of incomes and demographics. Specific priority must be given to the “missing middle” or those Coloradans who have higher AMIs and/or Federal Poverty Levels (FPL) that struggle with housing access and affordability.
 - Program and funding needs are best determined at the local level versus the state level. Local housing authorities, nonprofits, and local governments are in the best position to understand and meet the needs of their communities.
- **Hidden Homelessness:** The intersection between housing and public health is well known and the pandemic has left individuals and families on the brink of or now experiencing homelessness. Providing housing for people with disabilities (mental and/or physical) or experiencing homelessness dramatically improves life quality.

Infrastructure

- **Broadband:** COVID-19 exposed existing problems with gaps in broadband access. Few states face the challenges that Colorado does when it comes to communications infrastructure. Whether it’s getting the necessary connectivity for rural schools and medical centers, ensuring that all households can benefit from the connected world, or keeping first responders connected in emergencies, solving these challenges will require significant investment and provide wide reaching benefits.

Accessible Physical & Mental Health Care

- The pandemic has again exposed the need for affordable and accessible health care across Colorado. In order to “Build Back Stronger” we need to rebuild as healthier

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Kris Holstrom, San Miguel
Elisabeth Lawrence, Summit
Josh Blanchard, Summit
* Denotes individual Commissioners

communities with affordable and accessible health care in order to create more positive outcomes for all.

- Counties are committed to expanding our behavioral health and substance use disorder services for our constituents. Direct funding through established community partnerships of local government and service organizations is the best way to ensure that funding gets out to those in need and in ways that work for the consumer.
- The pandemic shifted our existing behavioral health challenges into a more immediate crisis situation and counties and community providers need funds now to reduce long-term impacts and save lives.

Workforce Readiness

- Workforce Readiness: The pandemic has affected Coloradans disproportionately, with those with lower incomes more impacted by loss of employment than those with higher incomes. We have an obligation to support those hardest hit by the pandemic with services to address job displacement, reskilling and upskilling.

Child Care Access

- Child Care: We have an opportunity to rebuild a strong and cohesive early childhood system if we can direct funding towards building a qualified workforce, developing a diversity of appropriate and safe facilities, building successful referral systems, and encouraging culturally and linguistically relevant family engagement opportunities.

CCAT members are eager to work with the State to “Build Back Stronger” existing systems in a more accessible and effective way to improve the quality of life for our constituents, especially those who have been most impacted by the pandemic. While new services and programs may qualify for pandemic related stimulus funding, we are concerned by the “big new idea” premise of the listening sessions. Many of our existing programs are accessible and effective but lack adequate funding to address the increased needs as we recover from the pandemic. In most cases these existing programs will be the most direct way to provide much needed services to our communities.

We will need a strong partnership of local organizations, local governments and state agencies to ensure that the local, state and federal stimulus funds are most effectively managed to help us all recover from the pandemic. We look forward to identifying ways that we can work together to rebuild our communities in a healthier and more resilient way to be more prepared for the challenges of tomorrow.

Thank you for the active promotion and effective management of the “Build Back Stronger” listening sessions and for consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



CCAT Co-Chair
Commissioner Hilary Cooper
San Miguel County

Adams County



CCAT Co-Chair
Commissioner Randy Wheelock
Clear Creek County



CCAT Vice-Chair
Commissioner Emma Pinter



CCAT Vice-Chair

Mission:

The mission of Careers in Construction Colorado (CICC) is to partner with entities that provide educational courses focused on the construction industry to promote the benefits of career opportunities to students, parents, influencers, and educators as well as develop effective job placement platforms to place students in the construction industry.

History:

CICC gives local high school students pathways to success in the residential and commercial building trades using the Home Builders Institute's curriculum. Students are able to earn US Department of Labor-recognized pre-apprenticeship certificates which are stackable, industry-accepted credentials. The curriculum is also recognized by the Colorado Department of Education as a credit-bearing Career Technical Education class. The program accelerated in the ability grow to the current state due to the prior the financial support from the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment.

Organizational Goals and Objectives:

1. To offer instruction to students providing real-life skills and the opportunity to learn a building trade as well as the professional skills needed to obtain employment;
2. To demonstrate to students across the state of Colorado, – as well as their families, educators and community leaders – the depth and the breadth of the construction industry and value of learning a trade for career and educational opportunities;
3. To provide career pathways to employment via internships and apprenticeships leading to permanent employment for students who want careers in the industry;
4. To engage fellow businesses to support this valuable program that addresses the shortage of skilled tradespeople in Colorado, and will enable the construction industry to grow in the long run. Program goals are achieved via offering pre-apprenticeship training, teaching professional skills, developing student relationships and industry connections, and job placement.



Current Industry and Student Need:

- Surveys nationally and locally have shown the labor shortage is the number one issue affecting the construction industry. Over the next decade, it is estimated that the Colorado Construction industry will grow by 15%.
- There are currently 175,000 individuals in the construction workforce in Colorado, and by 2027, the workforce needs to grow to 220,000 workers. Taking retirements into account, the industry needs to add 60,000 employees to the workforce within the next six years.
- Of the students that graduate from college, many come out carrying a debt load. In 2016 on average, a college graduate had \$37,000 in debt. Many students who graduate from college are not equipped with skills required in the economy.
- A National Skills Coalition study stated only 43% of the current labor force are suitable for the 53% of job openings that are “middle skill” and require less than a four-year degree but more than a high school education.

Current and Pending/Interested Schools:

At the start of the 2020-2021 school year, CICC had 1,339 students enrolled at 23 schools throughout the region.

Current

D2-Atlas Prep
 D3-Widefield
 D3-Mesa Ridge
 D3-Discovery HS
 D11-Mitchell
 D11-Coronado
 D14-Manitou Springs
 D20-Liberty
 D38-Lewis Palmer
 D49-Patriot
 D49-PTEC
 D70-Pueblo County
 Custer County-Custer County HS
 Canon City-Canon City HS

Current

27J-Riverdale Ridge High School
 Adams 12-FutureForward at Washington Square
 Adams 14-Adams City High School
 Aurora Public Schools-Vista Peak Preparatory
 Cherry Creek Schools-Cherry Creek Innovation Campus
 Denver Public Schools-CEC Early College
 Jefferson County Schools-Warren Tech
 Thompson R2J-Thompson Career Campus
 Westminster School-Westminster High School

Pending/Interested

Jefferson County Schools-Green Mountain High School
 Johnstown-Milliken/Weld Co-Roosevelt High School
 Vilas HS
 D70-Pueblo Central
 Cripple Creek-Victor RE 1-Cripple Creek HS
 West Grand or Middle Park
 Durango D 9-R-Durango
 Bayfield-Bayfield
 Archuleta D 50-Pagosa Springs
 Ignacio 11Jt-Ignacio
 Weld County D6-Greeley West
 Vail-Vail Christian

*this list is currently still growing

Success to Date:

Since the start of the program, CICC has had **2,331 students take courses, 1,007 Pre-Apprenticeship (PACT) certificates** have been earned, and **504 individuals have been OSHA 10 certified** (only started in 2019). With several years of the program now complete, CICC is seeing students entering the construction industry post-high school. Taking into consideration the program is offered to 9th through 12th-grade students, since 2017, more than 260 juniors and seniors known to us have found employment in the industry. As of 2021, CICC will now be tracking individuals employed outside of the industry. Post student graduation, CICC staff members work to continue relationships with students and to provide career assistance to them as jobseekers. Surveys given to CICC high school students at several schools showed that:

- **Over 57%** of the participants stated they were now interested in seeking a career in the trades,
- **89%** of the students stated they were excited to attend classes,
- **91%** expressed they gained significant knowledge, and
- **78%** felt they were ready to enter employment.

Support Needed Related to Current Funding Availability:

While CICC is proud of the accomplishments of the last several years, to aid in the COVID-19 economic recovery, there is now even more we as an organization would be able to help support in Colorado. As schools work to reconnect with disconnect students, as fewer students are choosing college as a next step, and as the construction industry continues to grow, be essential throughout the pandemic, and in one of the most in-demand professions in the state. We have the structure and relationships that will allow for statewide expansion within the next three years if funding is available. CICC aims to be seen as a statewide organization working daily to educate, train, and contribute to the Colorado workforce.

CICC respectfully requests state support to advance this program as follows:

CICC		2022	2023	2024	3-year total
	# of high schools	30	35	40	
	Schools (average support per school / \$40,000)	1,200,000	1,400,000	1,600,000	
	CICC admin	250,000	262,500	275,625	
	Outreach & Recruitment	350,000	367,500	385,875	
	Total	1,800,000	2,030,000	2,261,500	6,091,500
Students Served Projected		1,500	1,750	2,000	5,250

For more information on this program, please visit www.CICCColorado.org or call Executive Director, Glenn Hard at 719-592-1800 ext. 120.

RAPID FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

PROJECT SUMMARY

March 9, 2021

A rapid assessment of Colorado's regional food system infrastructure was conducted over the last eight months that was funded by a grant from [The Colorado Health Foundation](#) and guided by a Taskforce including representatives from:

National Western Center, Denver Public Market, FEWL Solutions, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Cooperative Development Center, The Acequia Institute, Mad Agriculture, Lewis Family Farm, Colorado Resiliency Office, Conscience Bay Company, Colorado Impact Fund, Biological Capital, Trailhead Capital, and Urban Ventures

The project team screened **166 potential project leads** and identified 97 with the potential to: (a) increase the resiliency of food system operations; (b) create access to new market opportunities for small-to-medium farmers and ranchers; and/or (c) support the health and wellbeing of communities across the state (through local food systems and job creation). Project leads were identified through 7 regional workshops, 22 key informant interviews, word-of-mouth referrals, and a widely disseminated online **Request for Projects (RFP) that resulted in 53 responses from 27 Colorado counties in less than three weeks.**

The project team also worked one-on-one with entrepreneurs and business owners to develop detailed financial models, high level business plans, and preliminary fundraising materials for the top **6 high impact, transformational and investment-ready projects.**

The next step in this project aims to identify potential public and private sources of impact-oriented capital to support these projects. **An estimated \$50-100M is needed over the next 18-36 months** to support these projects.

This project is particularly timely as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to highlight gaps in regional food systems infrastructure in Colorado. Adequate food system infrastructure is critical for developing a robust regional food system, bridging urban-rural divides, supporting the economic viability of rural communities, strengthening small-to-medium farmers and ranchers, and improving the overall health and well-being of communities across the state.

If you are interested in learning more, please feel free to reach out to Blake and Joe directly using their e-mails below.

COLORADO FOOD AND AG INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT PIPELINE SUMMARY

March 1st, 2021

Blake Angelo & Joe Matta

I. BACKGROUND

A rapid assessment of Colorado’s investible, regional food system and agricultural infrastructure projects was conducted over the last eight months that was funded by a grant from [The Colorado Health Foundation](#) and guided by a Taskforce including representatives from:

National Western Center, Denver Public Market, FEWL Solutions, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Cooperative Development Center, The Acequia Institute, Mad Agriculture, Lewis Family Farm, Colorado Resiliency Office, Conscience Bay Company, Colorado Impact Fund, Biological Capital, Trailhead Capital, and Urban Ventures

This project is particularly timely as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to highlight gaps in regional food systems infrastructure in Colorado. Adequate food system infrastructure is critical for developing a robust regional food system, bridging urban-rural divides, supporting the economic viability of rural communities, strengthening small-to-medium farmers and ranchers, and improving the overall health and well-being of communities across the state.

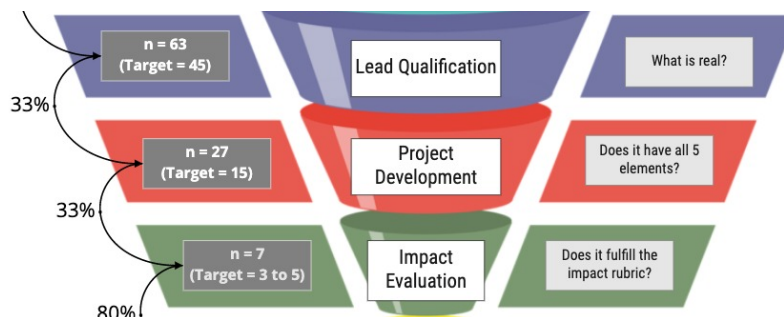
II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The project screened 166 potential project leads and identified 97 with the potential to: (a) increase the resiliency of food system operations; (b) create access to new market opportunities for small-to-medium farmers and ranchers; and/or (c) support the health and wellbeing of communities across the state. Project leads were identified through 7 regional workshops, 22 key informant interviews, word-of-mouth referrals, and a widely disseminated online Request for Projects (RFP) that resulted in 53 responses from 27 Colorado counties in less than three weeks (See Appendix A for more detail).

III. CURRENT PROJECT PIPELINE

We have organized these 97 relevant project opportunities into a staged funnel (shown below):

- 63 are in the Lead Qualification Stage
 - Lead Qualification = confirmation that there is a potential project in place
- 27 are in the Project Development Stage
 - Project Development = working to clarify that all the components of a project are in place (i.e. Site/Location, Operator, Market/Offtake, Financial Model, and Financing)
- 7 are in the Impact Evaluation Stage
 - Impact Evaluation Stage = applies the full impact rubric



IV. PROJECT EXAMPLES

The project team also worked one-on-one with entrepreneurs and business owners to develop detailed financial models, high level business plans, and preliminary fundraising materials for the top 6 high impact, transformational and investment-ready projects. **An estimated \$50M-100M is needed over the next 18-24 months** to support these projects.

(A) SMALL SCALE MEAT PROCESSOR EXPANSION

This existing USDA inspected meat processing operation in Southeast Colorado is located in an unsuitable location for growth. Operator is currently booked out 12+ months and is interested in doubling to tripling capacity by expanding to a new, nearby location as current lease ends December of 2021.

Project includes real estate acquisition (site identified), installation of a prefabricated metal building (builder identified), site work (currently greenfield without improvements), interior construction and finish (including coolers, freezers, and rail system), and FFE. Some equipment has already been purchased and some is moveable from current site.

Business volume expected to double, increasing the number of Colorado ranchers served and the number of staff employed.

Anticipated Capital Need = \$2-3M (for land purchase and facility construction)

(B) WEST SLOPE MEAT PROCESSING

A coalition of ranchers along the Western Slope of Colorado have been aggressively assessing potential meat slaughter and fabrication opportunities over the past 2+ years. Newly identified mobile and modular technologies and a pending transaction at a recently available commercial facility have crystalized several potential scenarios for investment.

The Western Slope Meat Processing project is exploring three scenarios for development:

- Scenario 1: Modular slaughter with integrated modular cut/wrap
- Scenario 2: Modular slaughter with cut/wrap at a centralized facility
- Scenario 3: Mobile slaughter with cut/wrap at a centralized facility

This project seeks to help ranchers improve their business revenues and profitability by addressing the processing bottleneck that pushes most ranchers into traditional commodity markets. In theory, access to these differentiated markets can provide higher margins and enhance profitability along the entire supply chain.

The Western Slope Meat Processing project has identified a novel technology partner who offers a mobile slaughter unit as well as three levels of modular slaughter and processing units. This technology partner's systems are sold as "turnkey" but do require site preparation and access to utilities. The modular system has the most significant site work requirements, including a poured-concrete pad/foundation and fixed utility infrastructure, however, the modular system has also been engineered to support scaled, on-site growth over time.

Project leaders anticipate that financial returns may be reduced due to trucking/transport costs between sites, but overall business opportunities would improve by locating the cut/wrap functions at a central facility

Anticipated Capital Need = \$2-3M (for mobile/modular), \$5-10M (for a central facility)

(C) SHARED KITCHENS IN NORTHEAST COLORADO

A local Economic Development team in Northeast Colorado has been exploring the potential to acquire and refurbish two potential commercial properties located in Fort Morgan and repurpose them into mixed-use shared kitchen facilities. There is no commissary space in Northeast Colorado, and this could be an opportunity to bring that to the region to support multiple diverse food businesses and entrepreneurs.

Shared kitchen facilities are intended to provide access to flexible (e.g. hourly) commercial kitchen space and storage (freezer, cold, and dry). Additional revenue could come from events and popups, caterings, a small-scale retail store, fee-based membership services (e.g., consulting), and the potential lease or management of an on-site bar and taproom (located at only one site).

The first facility is 12,000 sq ft, sits on 2.2 acres, has 1 large kitchen, is more “turnkey”, and listed for \$1.7 million. While the property would likely require some minor upgrades (e.g., HVAC and/or plumbing) it is largely in a ready working condition as a restaurant and event space.

The second facility is 16,000 sq ft, sits on 1.7 acres, and was has 2 kitchens and existing equipment, but likely needs significant renovations and abatement costs (e.g. asbestos). Facility upgrades include similar things such as HVAC and plumbing needs, but more significant upgrades, such as the installation of a freight elevator, would likely be necessary.

Originally, the project partner had been looking at each property as separate opportunities; but there is potential to look at the properties as a combined opportunity that could create complimentary capacity and services to the regional food economy.

Anticipated Capital Need = \$3-4M (aggregate for both facilities)

(D) SMALL SCALE MASA HARINA PRODUCTION IN COSTILLA COUNTY

The original settlers of Southern Colorado brought with them, an ancient and ancestral form of land settlement and irrigation that was based on cooperation and viewed water as a community asset tied to place, rather than an ownable commodity. This type of water system is called an acequia, and it serves as the lifeblood of producers in Costilla county.

These original settlers helped establish the San Luis People’s Ditch, which holds the oldest water rights in the state of Colorado and is currently under nomination for a designation as a National Historic Landmark.

Today, the acequias of southern Colorado support a group of over 300 growers that manage somewhere in the vicinity of 23,000 acres of irrigated lands and 10,000 acres of sub-irrigated wetlands in Costilla County near to San Luis, CO. The land being managed is largely traditional Caputa Ute



territory and many of the farmers represent historically underserved producers, including indigenous growers.

Unfortunately, the community has been facing challenges for many years, but community leaders have been working for many years to develop the necessary soft and hard infrastructure needed to support the producer community while also driving improved health, wellbeing, and economic outcomes for the community.

One of the potential opportunities identified has been to establish a heritage masa harina collaborative / cooperative that would grow heritage grain varieties of corn, run this through a process known as nixtamalization (which releases key nutrients), create a high-quality nutritious masa harina, and connect this masa harina to Tortillerias or other users in Denver and elsewhere along the Front Range. To support the collaborative and its goals, the organization is seeking to develop a small processing facility to produce the masa as well as a retail outlet that can support the sale and distribution of healthy food to the local community.

Recently, an old, historic building in the county has been listed for sale. It is the oldest continuously operated business in the State of Colorado, dating from its establishment in 1857. Local partners are exploring the opportunity to acquire and repurpose this building with the goal of preserving the market's role supporting the local food system and providing the community with healthy food access.

As a part of repurposing the market, the partners envision maintaining a portion of the market as a healthy grocery store, transitioning what is currently a hardware store into a processing area in the back (this is where the nixtamalization and masa harina production would occur), and perhaps transforming part of the front area into a community center that can offer educational support and workforce development to the youth in the area.

Anticipated Capital Need = \$2-3M (for acquisitions, abatement, and upgrades)

(E) REGENERATIVE GRAINS MILLING FACILITY

There is a regenerative no-till grains and legumes farmer managing ~4,000 acres of dryland agriculture in an area located just over the Colorado border in Nebraska. His operation already contract grows for a Front Range based food brand and is seeking to co-manufacture for Colorado grain producers as well.

This farmer operates a diversified farm of grains and legumes that includes White Milo (which he is growing specifically for the front range based snack brand), 5 different kinds of millet, oats, barley, rye, some corn, triticale, flax, peas, chickpeas, and sunflowers. While his farm only averages ~14 inches of moisture a year, he has been integrating new and efficient practices to his farming operation (e.g., no-till) that have allowed him to increase efficiency and soil quality, reduce erosion, and slightly improve his bottom line.

Unfortunately, despite the improvement in efficiency, he still relies on middlemen to buy and process his grains and transform them into a useable form for his customers. If he were able to process on his own he would be able to capture significantly more margin for his product.

He is now looking to build the processing facilities directly on his farm to capture more of that margin. He has some the equipment he needs and he owns the land on which he would like to build this processing operation for himself and others. He also has the vision and additional land available to

expand this operation into a full-blown co-manufacturing / co-packing operation focused on regenerative, non-GMO, and gluten-free grains. He would take these products, process them into usable forms for brands, and sell them as high-quality ingredients to natural and organic food brands on the Front Range and beyond. There is also potential to build a direct-to-consumer brand for his product.

This project would likely be split into three phases. The first is to build a scale-appropriate facility for his initial volumes that can satisfy demand for his existing relationships. Phase 2 would involve the expansion of the facility to allow for different product types, accommodate volume growth, and support new farmers and new customer relationships. Phase 3 would involve the expansion of the product lines ideally into higher value-added products such as oat milks and/or pea proteins.

Anticipated Capital Need = \$4-6M (depending on ultimate phase 1 product decisions)

V. NEXT STEPS

The next step is to implement these projects which will require public and private sources of impact-oriented capital. Without that capital, most of these efforts will not likely come to fruition - hindering rural job and wealth building opportunities across Colorado.

In addition to the capital needs discussed above, these projects and the entrepreneurs and rural businesses leading them also require support from additional professional service providers (e.g., lawyers, accountants, engineers, compliance specialists, etc.). Public and private impact capital should support these professional services at no cost or a significantly discounted cost as the first stage of implementation.

Recoverable grant structures and/or flexible debt options tied to income-based repayment terms represent the most appropriate structures for deploying this capital. Not only do these tools provide for flexible repayment, but they also align incentives with the success of the project and ultimately build wealth and ownership in the hands of the rural communities.

Public funders should consider deploying a third-party fund administrator to conduct due diligence, develop and manage capital terms and collateralization, and ensure a diversity of investments geographically and across food and agricultural industries.

Replicating a model like the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade's (COEDIT) Venture Capital Authority and their partnership with the Greater Colorado Venture Fund (GVCF) is strongly encouraged. This option is particularly attractive if third-party fund administrators can demonstrate a strong understanding of the financing challenges and opportunities for Colorado's regional food system infrastructure and are confident that private funds can be found to match the commitment of public funds.

Public investments in food systems and agricultural infrastructure have the potential to create long-term economic benefits in rural communities while also facilitating a more regional, resilient food system and supporting small-to-medium farmers and ranchers across the state. COVID has clearly demonstrated that the right time to invest in Colorado's food system and agricultural infrastructure is now.

APPENDIX A: "REQUEST FOR PROJECTS" RESULTS

A short, online "Request for Projects" (RFP) was deployed over 3 weeks in early 2021 to supplement the pipeline of 113 projects identified from networking and world-of-mouth referrals. 53 food and ag system infrastructure project applications were received representing **pipeline of \$22 to \$50 million in potential capital need**. Summary results from the RFP are shared below:

Amount Needed

Sum Total	\$51,892,710
Min	\$10,000
Max	\$30,000,000
Average	\$1,104,100
Median	\$135,000
Blank	N=6
Sum Total (w/o min and max)	\$21,882,710

Type of Infrastructure

<i>Food Processing</i>	<i>Food Storage</i>	<i>Food Distribution</i>	<i>Food Manufacturing</i>	<i>Food Retail</i>	<i>Other</i>
n=33	n=27	n=25	n=16	n=25	n=14
62%	51%	47%	30%	47%	26%

Value Chains

Vegetables (except Potatoes and Corn)	38	72%
Fruit (excluding Peaches)	31	58%
Beef	29	55%
Value Added Products	26	49%
Lamb	25	47%
Eggs	25	47%
Peaches	25	47%
Chicken	24	45%
Potatoes	24	45%
Grains (except Wheat)	22	42%
Corn	21	40%
Dairy	20	38%
Wheat	19	36%
Bison	17	32%
Other	14	26%
Fish	11	21%
Pork	6	11%
Wild Game	3	6%
Mushrooms	2	4%

County Breakdown:

Adams	1	2%
Alamosa	2	4%
Archuleta	1	2%
Boulder	9	17%
Chaffee	3	6%
Delta	2	4%
Denver	7	13%
Douglas	2	4%
Eagle	1	2%
El Paso	2	4%
Garfield	2	4%
Gunnison	2	4%
Huerfano	1	2%
Jefferson	2	4%
La Plata	2	4%
Lake	1	2%
Larimer	1	2%
Mesa	2	4%
Montezuma	1	2%
Montrose	2	4%
Park	1	2%
Pueblo	1	2%
Routt	1	2%
Saguache	1	2%
South Park	1	2%
Summit	1	2%
Weld	1	2%

n= 27 53

City Breakdown:

Adams	1	2%
Alamosa	2	4%
Archuleta	1	2%
Boulder	9	17%
Chaffee	3	6%
Delta	2	4%
Denver	7	13%
Douglas	2	4%
Eagle	1	2%
El Paso	2	4%
Garfield	2	4%
Gunnison	2	4%
Huerfano	1	2%
Jefferson	2	4%
La Plata	2	4%
Lake	1	2%
Larimer	1	2%
Mesa	2	4%
Montezuma	1	2%
Montrose	2	4%
Park	1	2%
Pueblo	1	2%
Routt	1	2%
Saguache	1	2%
South Park	1	2%
Summit	1	2%
Weld	1	2%
Adams	1	2%
Alamosa	2	4%
Archuleta	1	2%
Boulder	9	17%
Chaffee	3	6%
Delta	2	4%
Denver	7	13%

n= 34 53

Interest in Future Engagement

Interested in dedicated business and financial planning support	n=30	57%
Only want information shared with coalition	n=22	42%

Financing as Barrier

No, don't have	n=12	23%
Some, need more	n=35	66%
Other	n=6	11%

Land as Barrier

No, don't have land	n=18	34%
Yes, have land	n=35	66%

Operator as Barrier

No, don't have operator	n=5	9%
Yes, have operator	n=48	91%

Written Business Plan as Barrier

No, don't have	n=16	30%
Yes, needs updating	n=18	36%
Yes, have written plan	n=19	34%

APPENDIX B: PRIORITY PROJECT INVENTORY

Opportunity Name	Products	Type of Infrastructure	Status	Priority	Organization	Location (City)
Ft Morgan Commissary Kitchen	Multiple	Mixed Use Infrastructure (Hub Operations)	Impact Evaluation	1-Very high	Morgan County	Ft Morgan
Heritage Grain Masa Collaborative	Vegetables	Value Add Processing Infrastructure	Impact Evaluation	1-Very high	Acequia Institute	San Luis
R&R Grocery	Grains	Aggregation/ Distribution Infrastructure, Cold Storage Infrastructure	Impact Evaluation	1-Very high	Acequia Institute	San Luis
Ranchlands (DTC Grass-Fed Beef & Bison/Co-Op Beef Club)	Beef	"Livestock Slaughter, Primary Processing Infrastructure", Value Add Processing Infrastructure, Cold Storage Infrastructure	Impact Evaluation	1-Very high	Ranchlands	Pueblo
Ricks Processing	Beef	Processing	Impact Evaluation	1-Very high	Rick's Processing	Canyon City
Steven Tucker (CO/NE Border)	Grains	Dry Storage / Elevator	Impact Evaluation	1-Very high	Venango Farmer - Peas and Grains	Julesburg
Western Slope Meat Processing	Beef	"Livestock Slaughter, Primary Processing Infrastructure"	Impact Evaluation	1-Very high	Friesla	Montrose & Mac
Beef Legal Model for Cooperative Direct Sales	Beef	Processing	Project Development	1-Very high	Rocky Mountain Farmers Union	Statewide
Brush Lamb Plant Expansion	Lamb	Processing	Project Development	1-Very high	Brush Meats	Brush
Building for We Dont Waste	Multiple	Aggregation/Distribution Infrastructure, Cold Storage Infrastructure	Project Development	1-Very high	We Don't Waste	Denver
Mrs Condie's	Vegetables	Processing	Project Development	1-Very high	Mrs Condie's Salad Co	Denver
Norwood Food Hub	Multiple	Mixed Use Infrastructure (Hub Operations)	Project Development	1-Very high	Norwood Food Hub	Norwood

Colorado Cold Storage LLC	Multiple	Cold Storage Infrastructure	Project Development	2-High	Colorado Cold Storage LLC	Multiple
Norwood Modular Slaughter	Beef	Processing	Project Development	2-High	West End	Norwood
Denver Public Market	Multiple	Mixed Use Infrastructure (Hub Operations)	Project Development	3-Medium	Denver Public Market	Denver
Project Greenthumb (400k SF Greenhouse)	Vegetables	On Farm Greenhouses / Production Infrastructure	Project Development	3-Medium	Organic Vines	Brighton
Russel Stover	Multiple	Mixed Use Infrastructure (Hub Operations)	Project Development	3-Medium	Multiple	Montrose
Springside Cheese	* Dairy	Value Add Processing Infrastructure	Project Development	3-Medium	Springside Cheese	Pueblo
Sugar Mill/Lagacy	Multiple	Value Add Processing Infrastructure, Aggregation/ Distribution Infrastructure	Project Development	3-Medium	Boulder County Farmers Market	Longmont
Country Market Redevelopment		Mixed Use Infrastructure (Hub Operations)	Qualified Lead	4-Low	TBD	Pueblo
Furrs Cafeteria redevelopment		Mixed Use Infrastructure (Hub Operations)	Qualified Lead	4-Low	TBD	Pueblo
Poultry Processing/Rio Grande Farm Park	Chicken	Processing	Qualified Lead	4-Low	San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition	Alamosa
Bondadosa	Multiple	Food Processing, Food Storage, Food Distribution, Food Manufacturing, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Bondadosa	Denver Metro
BOTX	Prepared Food	Food Distribution	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	BOTX	Denver
Boulder Tool Share	Multiple	Food Processing, Food Storage, Food Distribution, Food Manufacturing	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Flatirons Young Farmers Coalition	Boulder
Brush Meats	Bison	Processing	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Brush Meats	Brush

"Give! Grow! Give!"	Multiple	Food Storage, Food Distribution	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	CALF	Castle Rock
Community Agriculture Alliance	Multiple	Food Storage, Food Distribution	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Community Agriculture Alliance	Routt County
Custom exempt processing with retail meat counter	Multiple	Value Add Processing Infrastructure, Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Gunny Meats	Gunnison
Denver Urban Gardens	Multiple	Education	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Denver Urban Gardens	Denver Metro
DPS greenhouse	Vegetables	Production	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Denver Public Schools	Denver
Dry Storage Mill	Grains (except Wheat), Wheat	Food Processing, Food Storage, Food Distribution, Food Manufacturing, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Dry Storage Mill	Boulder
East Denver Food Hub	Multiple	Value Add Processing Infrastructure, Aggregation/ Distribution Infrastructure, Cold Storage Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	East Denver Food Hub	Adams County
Fighting to Farm	Multiple	Food Distribution, Food Manufacturing, Food Retail, underground greenhouses to extend the growing season for fruits/vegetables	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Fighting to Farm	Denver
Foghorn Station	Multiple	Food Processing, Food Storage, Food Distribution, Food Manufacturing, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Foghorn Station	Park County
Fruit for Good	Fruit, Vegetables, Potatoes, Value Added Products	Food Processing, Food Manufacturing	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Fruit for Good	Durango
Beef Processing	Beef	"Livestock Slaughter, Primary Processing Infrastructure"	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Blue Range Ranch	San Luis Valley

GeoSacred	Multiple	Food Processing, Food Storage, Greenhouse construction & community resilience education	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	GeoSacred	Alamosa County
Highwater Farm	Multiple	Food Processing, Food Storage, Food Distribution, Food Manufacturing, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Highwater Farm	Silt
IQF Facility	Multiple	Value Add Processing Infrastructure, Aggregation/ Distribution Infrastructure, Cold Storage Infrastructure, Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	TBD	Montrose
Kaizen Food Rescue	Vegetables	Food Processing, Food Storage, Food Retail, Urban Farming Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Kaizen Food Rescue	Jefferson County
Magnificent Fungi	Vegetables	Value Add Processing Infrastructure, Aggregation/ Distribution Infrastructure, Cold Storage Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Magnificent Fungi	Garfield County
Nederland Farmers Market	Multiple	Aggregation/Distribution Infrastructure, Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Nederland Farmers Market	Nederland
ReKaivery	Multiple	Food Storage, Food Distribution, Food Retail, Equitable food access for consumers. Equitable sales opportunities for farmers/ ranchers.	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	ReKaivery	Fort Collins Colorado towns within the next few years.
Yellow Barn Farms	Multiple	Value Add Processing Infrastructure, Aggregation/ Distribution Infrastructure, Cold Storage Infrastructure, Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Yellow Barn Farms	Boulder
Manure Composter	Multiple	Process equipment to make a fertilizer for Farms	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	TBD	Greeley

Chaffee County Office of Emergency Management	Multiple	Aggregation/Distribution Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Chaffee County Office of Emergency Management	Buena Vista
Quinoa CPG	Multiple	Value Add Processing Infrastructure, Aggregation/Distribution Infrastructure, Cold Storage Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	TBD	Chaffee County
Mushroom biofertilization	Multiple	Value Add Processing Infrastructure, Aggregation/Distribution Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	TBD	Crestone, Saguache County, Colorado
Food Retail		Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	TBD	Dillon
Restoration of Southwest Colorado's Orchard Culture and Economy	Fruit	Value Add Processing Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Montezuma Orchard Restoration Project	Montezuma
North Fork Valley Farm to Institution	Multiple	Food Distribution, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	TBD	Paonia
USDA Meat Processing	Beef, Lamb, Bison, Chicken, Pork	Food Processing	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	TBD	Como, CO
Bluebird Sky Farmstead	Multiple	Food Processing, Food Storage, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Bluebird Sky Farmstead	Longmont
Food Waste Processing Facility	Multiple	Food Manufacturing	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	TBD	Boulder
St. George's Community Kitchen	Multiple	Food Processing, Food Storage, Food Distribution	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	St. George's Community Kitchen	Leadville, CO
Farm Runners Food Hub Expansion	Multiple	Food Processing, Food Storage, Food Distribution, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Farm Runners	Hotchkiss
Solar Refrigerator	all perishable foods	Food Storage, Food Distribution, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	TBD	Jefferson County
Custom exempt to USDA meat processor	Beef, Lamb, Bison, Wild Game	Food Processing, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Coles Meat	Pagosa Springs, Archuleta

						County
Shared mobile kitchen	Multiple	Food Processing, Food Distribution, Food Manufacturing, Food Retail, Education and Demonstration - baker, butcher, cheesemaker, etc.	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Homestead Hut	Gunnison, CO
Food hub operation	Multiple	Food Processing, Food Storage, Food Distribution, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Boulder County Farmers Market	Longmont, CO
GroFresh 365	Fish, Vegetables (except Potatoes and Corn), Herbs, edible flowers, microgreens	Food Storage, Food Distribution, Wholesale, and managed stock. When we expand we will have food retail.	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Waters Edge 365	Mesa County, Colorado. Grand Junction
Farm to Institution Processing	Multiple	Food Processing	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Boulder Valley School District	Boulder
"Food Space" kitchen complex	Multiple	Food Processing, Food Distribution, Food Manufacturing, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	TBD	Grand Junction
Local food CPG expansion	Peaches, pueblo green chilis, sour cherries, pears, apples, nectarines, grapes	Food Manufacturing, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Red Camper	Denver
Poultry Processing Equipment Purchase	Lamb, Chicken, Swine and Game meats	Food Processing, Food Storage, Food Distribution, Food Manufacturing, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Nola Organics	Chaffee, Fremont or Pueblo county
Pueblo Fuel & Iron	Multiple	Food Distribution, Food Retail, Restaurant Sales	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	TBD	Pueblo (City and County)
West Slope Farm to Food Bank	Multiple	Food Processing, Food Storage, Food Distribution, Food Manufacturing, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Educational and Charitable Foundation	Statewide

Southwest Farm to Food Bank	Multiple	Food Distribution, Technology	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Good Food Collective	SW Colorado and the Greater 4 Corners Region
Rio Grande Farm Park	Vegetables	Food Processing, Growing/Farming	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Rio Grande Farm Park (RGFP)	Alamosa, Colorado
Roots Food Hub Network		Mixed Use Infrastructure (Hub Operations)	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Roots Food Hub Network	Salida
Sheep Creamery	Multiple	Value Add Processing Infrastructure, Aggregation/ Distribution Infrastructure, Cold Storage Infrastructure, Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Sheep Creamery	transferring dairy/food process from Larkspur to Denver Co
Shipping container farms	Vegetables	Value Add Processing Infrastructure, Aggregation/ Distribution Infrastructure, Cold Storage Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Farm Box Foods	Sedilia Colorado
SLV Potato Value-added Processing	Potato	Processing	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Rockey Farms	Alamosa
SLV Quinoa Processing	Grains	Processing	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Rockey Farms	Alamosa
SOCO Virtual Farmers Market	Multiple	Food Distribution, Food Retail	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	SOCO	Colorado Springs
Solar refrigerator in a shipping container	Multiple	Aggregation/Distribution Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	Rox Box Containers	Denver
Walsenburg Meat Processing	Beef, Lamb, Bison	Value Add Processing Infrastructure, Aggregation/ Distribution Infrastructure, Cold Storage Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	1-Very high	TBD	Walsenburg, CO
Blue Grouse Grain Mill	Grains	Value Add Processing Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	2-High	Blue Grouse Grain Mill	Norwood
City of Erie	Multiple	Mixed Use Infrastructure (Hub Operations)	Qualified Lead	2-High	Erie Economic Development	Erie

CO Mushroom Farm	Vegetable	Value Add Processing Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	2-High	CO Mushroom Farm	Alamosa
Dry Bean Processing		Processing	Qualified Lead	2-High	Boulder County (OSCAR)	Boulder
Homestead Meats	Beef	Processing	Qualified Lead	2-High	Homestead Meats	Delta County
Lamb/Elk Processing (Costilla County)	Bison, Lamb	Processing	Qualified Lead	2-High	Acequia Institute	San Luis
Superior Farms	Lamb	Production	Qualified Lead	2-High	Superior Farms	TBD
Trinidad Beef Packing	Beef	Processing	Qualified Lead	2-High	TBD	Trinidad
Twin Peaks Mill	Grains	Processing	Qualified Lead	2-High	TBD	TBD
Valley Roots Expansion		Aggregation/Distribution Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	2-High	Valley Roots	San Luis Valley
Common Market Expansion	Multiple	Aggregation/Distribution Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	3-Medium	Common Market	TBD
Feeding Colorado IQF	Fruit, Vegetables	Value Add Processing Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	3-Medium	Feeding Colorado	Montrose
IQF (West Slope)	Vegetables, Peaches, Fruit	Processing	Qualified Lead	3-Medium	TBD	West Slope
La Montañita Expansion	Multiple	Aggregation/Distribution Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	3-Medium	La Montañita	TBD
Poultry Processing Equipment Franchise	Chicken	Processing	Qualified Lead	3-Medium	Rocky Mountain Farmers Union	Statewide
Anchor Network Food Hub (Aggregation for contract buyers)	Multiple	Aggregation/Distribution Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	4-Low	"Michelle Strum, Anchor Network"	TBD
Rivers Edge 365 Greenhouse	Vegetables	On Farm Greenhouses / Production Infrastructure	Qualified Lead	4-Low	City of Grand Junction	Grand Junction

Panorama Processing	Beef	Processing	Lead		Panorama Processing	W Slope
Telluride Beef Processor	Beef	Processing	Lead		TBD	Telluride



April 12, 2021

Ms. Danielle Oliveto
Deputy Chief of Staff
Office of Governor Jared Polis

Re: Build Back Stronger Colorado - Comments of the Colorado Water Congress

Dear Ms. Oliveto,

The Colorado Water Congress appreciates the opportunity to submit our suggestions regarding funds Colorado is receiving from the 2021 American Rescue Plan. We agree this provides our State with a unique opportunity to invest in Colorado water resources for the benefit of future generations.

The purpose of the Colorado Water Congress is to represent and advocate for the interests of Colorado's water community. We are the only organization that represents the broad spectrum of all types of water use in Colorado – domestic, irrigation, municipal, environmental, recreation, and industrial are all a part of the Water Congress.

We believe the top priorities for the funds should include:

1. **Implementation of the Colorado Water Plan**

Investing in Colorado Water Plan Grants will allow the water community to complete critical agriculture, environment, recreation, storage, and education and innovation projects around the State. In addition to improving water infrastructure and our State's rivers, the projects completed through this program stimulate local economies. The funds spent to repair reservoirs and diversion dams, restore riparian habitat, or build boat ramps supports employment of project managers, engineers, and construction contractors. Therefore, an investment in Colorado's Water Plan Grant program has incredible benefits to our shared water security and communities across the State.

Over the past 11 years, the Colorado Legislature has transferred \$221.85 million from Colorado Water Conservation Board Construction and Severance Tax Perpetual Base Funds in order to balance the State's budget. Allocating that amount to Colorado Water Plan would be an excellent starting point.

2. **Fire Recovery**

The 2020 forest fires were the most serious in the State's history. Colorado is experiencing greater frequency of warm, dry, and windy conditions that threaten the future of our forests. The recently released 2020 Report on the Health of Colorado's Forest prepared by the Colorado State Forest Service clearly present the grim reality that we face. Colorado's forests are now emitting more carbon than they consume. Funding and action wildfire response and mitigation are needed now.

Colorado cannot prosper without Colorado water. The stimulus funds could make a real difference.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

Douglas Kemper
Executive Director

Craig Economic Development Project List

Focus Area	Project Components	Base Estimate	Matching Funds	Requested Funds
Work Force & Housing	Single Family Home Development for 20 homes on East 7th Street	\$428,800	\$0	\$428,800
	Street, Curb, Gutter Extension on West 9th Street for 20 single family homes	\$300,000	\$0	\$300,000
	30-40 Unit Housing Development near Woodbury Park	\$400,000	\$0	\$400,000
	10-12 Senior Living Units Site Prep at Old Hospital	\$150,000	\$0	\$150,000
	Senior Living Options at RV Park with some engineering now available. CDOT costs	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$1,000,000
	TOTAL	\$2,278,800	\$0	\$2,278,800

Focus Area	Project Components	Base Estimate	Matching Funds	Requested Funds
Tourism & Recreation	Whitewater Park, Boat Ramp, Access & Parking, Onshore Amenities	\$2,782,777	\$221,523 In-Kind \$261,000 City/Partners \$1,800,000 EDA Grant	\$500,254
	Multi-modal River Pathway	\$976,185	\$217,000 In-Kind	\$759,185
	Bank Stabilization Project	\$333,257		\$333,257
	TOTAL	\$4,092,219	\$2,499,523	\$1,592,696
	Trail System Connection 4th Street/Ranney to Loudy Simpson Park	\$800,000		\$800,000
	TOTAL	\$800,000		\$800,000
	Tourism Total	\$4,892,219	\$2,499,523	\$2,392,696

Focus Area	Project Components	Base Estimate	Matching Funds	Requested Funds
Agriculture	Organize Local Producers	\$25,000	\$0	\$25,000
	Coordinate with USDA and develop strategy to meet capacity levels	\$1,500,000	\$0	\$1,500,000
	Organize and create retail/wholesale market	\$75,000	\$0	\$75,000
	Branding and Marketing to reach 2000 independent grocers	\$250,000	\$0	\$250,000
	Management staff & BOD	\$250,000	\$0	\$250,000
	TOTAL	\$2,100,000	\$0	\$2,100,000

Focus Area	Project Components	Base Estimate	Matching Funds	Requested Funds
Infrastructure & Government	2MWac Solar Garden	\$3,630,000	\$1,815,000 DOLA Grant \$1,815,000 Other	\$0
	Wastewater Biosolids Treatment	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$2,000,000
	TOTAL	\$5,630,000	\$3,630,000	\$2,000,000

Focus Area	Project Components	Base Estimate	Matching Funds	Requested Funds
Marketing	Craig Opportunity Zone Marketing Strategy	\$40,000	\$0	\$40,000
	TOTAL	\$40,000	\$0	\$40,000

Focus Area	Project Components	Base Estimate	Matching Funds	Requested Funds
Hayden Center	Redevelopment of old Hayden High School		\$0	
	TOTAL	\$0	\$0	\$0

	Base Estimate	Matching Funds	Requested Funds
Work Force & Housing	\$2,278,800	\$0	\$2,278,800
Tourism & Recreation	\$4,892,219	\$2,499,523	\$2,392,696
Agriculture	\$2,100,000	\$0	\$2,100,000
Infrastructure & Government	\$5,630,000	\$3,630,000	\$2,000,000
Marketing	\$40,000	\$0	\$40,000
Hayden Center	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$14,941,019	\$6,129,523	\$8,811,496

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Peter Brixius**

Date: Tue, Mar 30, 2021 at 4:39 PM

Subject: FW: BUILD BACK STRONGER: Northern CO Regional Meeting Confirmation

I'm not certain what to expect from tonight's meeting? Craig Colorado is a Coal Town in Transition that is working to overcome the future loss of all of our major employers and dealing with the aftermath of the pandemic. I've attached a list of projects that are at the top of our hit list, in terms of needed infrastructure that will support our local businesses, provide amenities necessary to retain and attract new families, remote workers and businesses looking to relocate to Craig.

We have about \$125,000 in this years budget for business retention and marketing efforts. We currently have 2 new opportunities to assist in the expansion of a mill that processes Beetle kill trees and has several different products that would benefit CDOT and private industry. With an additional \$100,000, we can assist in the mill expansion, double the workforce and add great stability to their business, product line and marketing efforts.

- Another great opportunity that would recover a nearly abandoned indoor mall and provide eco-tourism and education benefits is the Yampa Adventure Center. A Local businessman is ready to invest a couple of million, but would first like to complete his concept for the space as he goes about recruiting tenants that will help to bring that experience to Craig. This extensive vision is one of 7 projects in the state currently awarded support from OEDIT's accelerator program. The initial concept completion for this 100,000 square foot Adventure Center will require \$185,000 to complete and prepare for marketing. In many ways the project is shovel ready to present with few exceptions.

Our thoughts go strictly to recovery from the Pandemic and future planning to add diversity to our economy as our primary employers start downsizing.

*Peter Brixius
City of Craig
City Manager*

(970) 826-2023 Work
(970) 589-5547 Cell
pbrixius@ci.craig.co.us



Experience Colorado's Great Northwest



April 15, 2021

Board Members

Mez Charney
MC Evolution

Danielle Oliveto
Deputy Chief of Staff
Office of Governor Jared Polis

**Katharine
Knarreborg**
Merlin Instrument
Company

RE: Input for Building Back Stronger Listening Tour

Yoav Lurie
Uplight

Dear Danielle:

My colleague, Debra Brown, attended the Build Back Stronger Listening Tour for Chambers of Commerce last week. I noticed the input portal is closed, but wanted to offer the input I collected from our staff (attached). I hope it will still be of use.

Blake Manion
Soul Salve

**Sarah
Marcogliese**
Native Earth
Landscaping

For every dollar we spend on helping the business sector build back stronger we should ask the following two questions:

1. Will this funding help ensure every entrepreneur and business owner has an equal chance at success regardless of their race, location, economic upbringing, or other characteristics that have historically put some entrepreneurs at a disadvantage or will it exasperate the existing inequities?
2. Will this funding incentivize and reward the companies that are doing right by their employees, the environment and community or will it reward extractive, exploitive businesses that take more out of our great state than they put in?

Pete Turner
Illegal Pete's

Edwin Zoe
Zoe Ma Ma

Take steps to ensure that relief funds are equitably distributed to rural businesses and BIPOC owned businesses.

Utilize stimulus money not only to reward the businesses that have the resources to do the "right thing" but also to give businesses that don't have the resources to "do the right thing" access to the capital and TA resources and other supports that would enable them to do so. While we fully support incentivising and rewarding good business practices, we know that oftentimes, the barrier to such behavior is lack of means versus lack of will. For example, access to free legal and accounting support to ensure compliance with new labor laws such as the equal pay for equal work and an emergency

fund businesses can draw from if they have employees whose paid sick days utilization exceeds the businesses' resources to pay out the sick employee and their replacement help.

Conduct an analysis of existing workforce training, energy career pathways, and SNAP employment training needs to inform changes that should be made in light of Colorado's ghg emission reduction goals and our changing climate. We need to take a step back and review our priorities.

Create an FTE to develop a knowledge sharing and assistance program with a website for small to medium size businesses across Colorado. This person would help businesses identify the best first steps when either establishing and building out a business focused on mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adding to a thriving community. There are numerous initiatives focused on the following: building and creating stronger businesses, increasing renewable energy and energy efficiency measures. Bolstering projects such as RENEW, REDI and Weatherization Assistance programs, as well as developing new projects such as the proposed Economic Gardening are excellent steps. However, the initiative of supporting small businesses is separate from mitigating Climate Change.

These efforts need to happen in tandem. We need to develop and support businesses in Colorado that reduce our greenhouse emissions while building resilient, creative and thriving communities. The best time to incorporate sustainable practices is during the development of a business or a company's specific initiative or program. Through integrating small, local business support with Climate Change mitigation efforts, Colorado will dramatically increase co-benefits of these funds, more readily attain our state goals and incorporate a whole systems approach better capturing ROI.

Will there be incentives for business customers to engage in sustainable and equity initiatives? Will there be incentives for businesses to adopt said initiatives?

Coordinate Advanced Industry Grant program efforts to ensure entities aren't 'reinventing the wheel'. There are numerous examples in which Academia, Industry and Government partner to develop strategies and technologies to mitigate greenhouse emissions and water consumption. For example, Sweden started Smart Industry which is a collaboration between 5 universities to develop a graduate program focused on Smart Industry. Sweden and the EU have created partnerships to attain fossil free steel production. HYBRIT is another example of how collaboration can achieve better and quicker results.

Shift investment from auto-oriented to multi-modal transportation.

Shovel-Ready projects most always mean asphalt – Why is \$170 million dedicated to projects which support and sustain our status quo that is focused on car travel? We need to invest now in public transit and alternate modes of transit... far more than only 30 million dollars!

Utilize funds to incentivise SMEs to voluntarily participate in programs larger businesses are required to participate in. For example, a SMALL to MEDIUM SIZE BUSINESS – Employee Trip Reduction Plan.

Colorado has close to 218,000 registered companies with only 3,686 of these companies employing over a hundred employees. Therefore, developing an incentive, voluntary based employee commuter program for all businesses with less than 100 employees has the potential to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from VMT, as well as encourage Coloradans to address climate change through changes in their daily actions. A statewide employee commuter program needs to recognize the differences between rural and urban distances, infrastructure and public transit.

The first step is to create a registration system for businesses to voluntarily sign up or pledge to join this process. Next a simple online tool is needed to help businesses easily calculate the emissions associated with employee commuting and business travel. This can be as simple as an excel sheet downloadable from CDPHE's Green Business Network website. Once businesses have a baseline, they can set a reduction pledge and develop a plan with their employees. This website would also contain links to register for various statewide incentives such as: transit passes, vanpool/carpool start-up/operating costs, weekly incentives for biking or walking to work, community challenges, work performance ratings linked with number of 'work from home' days. Perhaps, a statewide commuter challenge could also be developed with awards to further incentive change.

The incentive programs should also be individually tailored by counties to augment their current needs and goals for reducing greenhouse gas emission. The following areas offer a good foundation from which to begin:

Increase in broadband internet access

Public transit passes & increased transit options

Vanpool & Carpool options

Remote work days

Biking to work days on a weekly basis

Bike share programs designed to solve last mile difficulties

Community challenges with annual awards

Benefits which incentivize living close to work - thriving communities/neighborhoods

Establish a Climate Resiliency Office within CDA that looks at how to integrate Climate Change mitigation efforts and support regional food systems.

Colorado can lead the way in developing a science based ghg inventory for the Agricultural sector that incentivizes Sustainable Operations and Regenerative Agriculture practices while supporting our local ranches and farms. An inventory that quantifies the transportation emissions of international food products, large energy footprint of synthetic fertilizers, and captures the importance of building soil health. The role of water scarcity, drought, and conservation measures must be included in these discussions.

How will Investments in the Agriculture supply chain be managed? How can we ensure these investments are used for the good of all Colorado producers and consumers? Will there be an overarching strategy to determine synergies between applicants and their projects?

Many constantly changing regulations affect our food system businesses. Is there a framework in place that will be used to assess and prioritize how we address the changed behaviors and systems that resulted from the pandemic? We feel that some components are beneficial moving forward while others need to be reduced or eliminated. For example, business models that incorporate outdoor dining, to-go alcohol and outdoor common drinking areas will be largely impacted by shifting regulations. Support restaurants by limiting the rights of 3rd party delivery apps to over-charge.

Best Regards,

Debra Brown, Executive Director, Good Business Colorado

Angelique Espinoza, Policy Director, Good Business Colorado

Jordan Pryczynski, Membership Director

Margaret McRoberts, Sustainability Policy Consultant, Good Business Colorado

Stimulus Funding – Investing in Conservation Concept Paper

We need to increase the pace of conservation across Colorado. That need has become even more evident in the last year as we face ongoing impacts from the pandemic, the climate crisis, and inequitable access to the outdoors. Communities across Colorado are facing devastating economic effects at the same time they are seeing record numbers of people relying on local food systems, seeking opportunities to engage in the outdoors and purchasing property in rural areas. In addition to these pressures, we are faced with the most critical time to fight climate change and protect biodiversity. As the need for natural climate solutions grows, there is an urgency to increase conservation efforts. The time is now to be bold and ambitious by stimulating and supporting new conservation across the state. To accomplish the bold goals necessary to combat climate change we need new tools and strategies.

As Colorado embarks on the path to recovery from the pandemic, strategic investments of stimulus funding have the capacity to ensure a more resilient future. Colorado has a unique opportunity to significantly bolster ongoing conservation efforts that will boost local economies and help combat the climate crisis. In Colorado, 60% of the land is privately held. These lands will necessarily play a key role in carbon sequestration, protecting biodiversity and providing connected landscapes and corridors across the state. They also support local food systems and local economies built around the outdoors and local food production.

The Investment: \$60 million to permanently protect 300,000 acres.

Based on information and data provided by the land conservation community, we estimate that with an investment of \$60 million, an additional 300,000 acres¹ could be conserved over the next 1-2 years. These focused conservation efforts could have vast public benefits for our fight against climate change and to create a more resilient future, including:

- **Protecting critical wildlife habitat and biodiversity** – Helping the State achieve objectives related to 30x30, preserve critical wildlife corridors and flyways, and maintain a “wild” nature that means so much to Colorado’s cultural and economic identity.
- **Creating more connected natural landscapes and wildlife corridors** - Ensuring more resilient landscapes by directing conservation to those areas identified (Colorado Statewide Action Plan, Resilient and Connected Network) as most important for Colorado’s wildlife to move and adapt in the face of climate change.
- **Protecting rivers, streams, watersheds and the lands around them** – Increasing protections for healthy ecosystems and clean water.
- **Conserving natural and open spaces that capture carbon** – Making progress on the implementation of Colorado’s Climate Plan to Reduce Pollution as laid out in the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Roadmap.
- **Supporting local economies, local food systems, and Colorado’s outdoor culture and economy** – Protecting local working lands that provide healthy food and jobs in rural communities while

¹ A \$60M investment to permanently conserve 300,000 acres breaks down to \$200/acre. According to the 2019 Land Values Survey conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture, the average price per acre of land in the United States was \$3,160.



providing critical wildlife habitat, maintaining the “wild” character that supports local outdoor recreation and tourism economies.

Colorado Supports Conservation

Increasing the pace of conservation across the state has never been more critical for our natural habitat and wildlife, for our healthy rivers and streams, and for our people and our communities. The time is now and Coloradan’s support increased conservation efforts and investments in the work.

- **94% Support Investments in Conservation** - A 2021 poll conducted by Colorado College ([link](#)) found that 94% of people believe that even with the state’s budget challenges, additional funding should be invested in protecting the state’s lands, waters and wildlife.
- **81% Support 30x30** - The same poll found that 81% of people support the goal of protecting 30 percent of our lands and water by 2030.
- **65% Support Bold Action** – The poll also found that 65% of people are worried about the future of nature and are ready for bold action to protect it.

The Economic Return

Investing in conservation is not only good for the environment, but also an economic driver, especially in rural communities. A recent CSU Study ([link](#)) found that for **every \$1 invested in conservation, the public receives up to \$12 in benefit**. In 2018, a study conducted by the Trust for Public Land ([link](#)) found that visitors to Colorado’s iconic outdoor spaces spend an estimated \$1.2 billion annually in the state, generating tens of millions of dollars in state and local tax revenue as well. Another 2020 CSU study ([link](#)) on farm and ranch lands found that an investment in Colorado’s currently pending working lands **conservation projects could generate \$195 million in new economic activity in the state, including creating over 1,200 new jobs**.

Partnerships Make This Work

Keep It Colorado is a nonprofit coalition of over 50 land trusts, local public agencies and conservation champions who work on land and water conservation. These are the organizations and people with boots on the ground ready to protect our state’s critical habitat and outdoor spaces. They range in size from small, local organizations to the Trust for Public Lands and The Nature Conservancy and they work on both public and private lands. We have a strong partnership with Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), which provides critical funding for this conservation work through grant programs to our member organizations and beyond. In collaboration with GOCO, Keep It Colorado has helped to administer certain grant programs, increasing efficiency and responsiveness to the conservation community’s funding needs. This relationship and current program structure are prime to implement an efficient and effective funding program that can get stimulus dollars put to work on the ground.

There are unique and urgent risks facing the conservation space that impact not only the sustainability of the sector but also the quality of life in Colorado. The permanent loss of critical lands and waters to growing economic and development pressures means devastating impacts to the climate crisis fight. We are currently facing irreversible loss of habitat and working lands. We know landowners are seeking solutions now. We know land trusts and their partners are well equipped to help. And we know conservation is a key resource for a sustainable future. A streamlined approach through existing partnerships that can increase the pace of conservation is just the stimulus we need.



Chartered by United Food & Commercial Workers International Union
UFCW Building, 7760 West 38th Avenue, Suite 400
Wheat Ridge, Colorado 80033-9982

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KIM C. CORDOVA
President

KEVIN R. SCHNEIDER
Secretary-Treasurer

March 16, 2021

Governor Jared Polis
State Capitol Bldg.
200 E. Colfax Ave., Rm 136
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Governor Polis:

On behalf of the 25,000 members of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local Union No. 7, I ask that you work with us to direct some of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) COVID-19 state funds to premium pay for essential frontline workers who have been sacrificing their financial and physical safety during this pandemic.

UFCW members in grocery stores, healthcare facilities, meat packing and food processing plants have been on the frontline of this pandemic. These workers have been risking their health and safety to ensure that our nation's food supply is safe, grocery store shelves are stocked, patients receive care, and pharmacies are distributing medication. Frontline essential workers deserve not only our gratitude, but adequate protection and provision for their health, safety, and financial security.

To date, at least 398 UFCW members have died of COVID-19, and over 79,900 members have been exposed or gotten sick with the virus. With our members and their sacrifice in mind, we call on you to ensure that our members receive the hazard pay they deserve. Our members did not sign-up to risk their lives, but they have been coming to work throughout the pandemic and they deserve to be compensated for the extreme risk that they and their families face every day.

The American Rescue Plan specifically outlines premium pay for up to \$13.00/hour to essential workers as one use of the \$3.95 billion in aid eligible for our state. As funds become available to our state over the coming months, we want to work with you to ensure these dollars are spent on hazard pay for grocery store workers, healthcare workers, meat packing workers and food processing workers.

I cordially request a meeting with you and your key staff handling COVID-19 state programs to discuss hazard pay for essential workers. Protecting our country's food workers is essential to keeping our communities safe and we look forward to working with you on this matter.

Sincerely,

Kim C. Cordova
UFCW Local 7 Union President
UFCW International Union Vice President

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Tracy Huggins**

Date: Tue, Apr 6, 2021 at 1:34 PM

Subject: Questions for Consideration

Post-COVID it is unclear how the office market is going to recover, particularly with a likely continuation of remote working. Many of our downtowns have outdated/outmoded office buildings that could potentially be redeveloped into affordable housing. While they may have environmental issues, the redevelopment could be more cost effective than new construction. Would the State be supportive of using any of these federal funds to support the repurposing of these buildings?

Thank you. Tracy



Tracy Huggins
Executive Director



April 2, 2021

The Honorable Jared Polis
Governor, State of Colorado
200 East Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

RE: State Use of Federal Stimulus Funding

Dear Governor Polis:

Thank you for your continued leadership through the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent vaccine rollout. On behalf of the thousands of restaurants we represent as an association, we want to express our sincere thanks to you and your administration for your willingness to hear our feedback on how federal stimulus funding can be used to best help the restaurant industry, which has been devastated by COVID-19.

We recently surveyed Colorado restaurants and researched economic support programs in other states to determine how federal stimulus funding could be best used to help the restaurant industry survive and ultimately recover faster from this pandemic. Following is what we learned will be most helpful for restaurants.

Direct grants from the state or local governments earmarked for restaurants, has been the most effective form of relief for Colorado's struggling restaurants. Consistently throughout the pandemic, we have heard from our membership that financial support and increased capacities are the two things restaurants need in order to survive long term. The restaurant industry in Colorado has lost more than \$3 billion in revenue due to the impacts of COVID-19, just in 2020. With the new federal stimulus money, one of the most impactful things that can be done to help restaurants is to provide for another direct grant program. That money will be used by restaurants to keep staff on payroll, make up lease payments they were not able to make when restaurants were shut down, purchase new tables and equipment to expand patios as Colorado's weather gets warmer, and much more. A number of states have implemented grant programs, with significant funding, that have specifically been targeted towards restaurants and other industries that have been the hardest hit over the last year.

Backfill the Colorado Unemployment Trust fund. Colorado's restaurants had to lay off thousands of workers in March of 2020 through no fault of their own, and many of those employees were laid off again when we saw indoor dining closures in November and December. While the state has taken action to ensure that COVID-19 related layoffs will not impact a business's employer rating, because of mass unemployment in 2020 the unemployment trust fund went completely insolvent. We ask that you backfill the unemployment trust fund so that Colorado businesses do not have to shoulder the heavy financial responsibility of funding the state unemployment trust. We are already hearing from restaurants who have seen their premium rates increase by \$4,000 a month or more. This is a significant cost to these local, family owned, businesses who have been devastated by COVID-19. Using federal stimulus funds to backfill the unemployment trust fund will reduce this burden on the restaurant

industry and allow restaurants to focus their funds on keeping people employed and recovering from the pandemic.

Further Sales Tax Remittance Relief for Restaurants. Allowing restaurants to keep a portion of the sales taxes they collected during the winter months was helpful for many restaurants in Colorado, however, because of reduced capacities and the loss of outdoor dining due to weather, many restaurants were not able to utilize this allowance to its full capacity. An additional round of this sales tax remittance relief for restaurants during the summer months will allow more restaurants to participate at an even greater level. We are thankful for the support of leadership in both chambers on this issue as it will provide a better opportunity for restaurants to participate in this relief program.

Thank you for your leadership, consideration, and for your continued support of the restaurant industry. We welcome dialogue and are happy to be a resource for your office. You can reach me via cell at 720-937-3992 or email at sriggs@corerestaurant.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sonia Riggs". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Sonia Riggs, President & CEO



Rocky Mountain Farmers Union

Mental Health Funding Asks for Ag and Rural Communities

- About 60 percent of deaths from gun violence in America have been by suicide. “More Americans died from guns in recent years than have died in car accidents.” (“Fighting America’s Gun Plague” by Ian Frazier, *The New Yorker*, March 29, 2021)
- Farmers are among the most likely to die by suicide compared to other occupations. (*CDC 2020 study*)
- In Colorado, middle-aged white men ages 45-54 had the highest rate of suicide in 2020. (*Explore Suicide in Colorado 2020 Annual Report*)
- Colorado producers are predominately white males between 35 and 65 years old experiencing significant financial stress due to climate change issues, labor shortages, debt loads, low commodity prices & succession issues. (*RMFU*)
- Ninety-one percent of farm workers think financial problems are impacting farmers’ mental health. (*April 2019 American Farm Bureau Federation survey*)
- Funding is being requested to address factors that cause stress in order to:
 - ❖ Provide an emergency fund for stressor mitigation to help farmers with economic support for unexpected financial challenges related to market disruptions from Covid-19, loss of off-farm jobs as well as erratic weather, drought, wildfire, flood and other climate change impacts, physical illness, death/injury/illness of spouse or co-producer, injury that results in inability to work or other major impediments.
 - ❖ Build up and promote the [Colorado Agriculture Mediation Program \(CAMP\)](#) and train more mediators to serve as producer case managers to oversee emergency fund utilization, provide technical assistance and connect producers with other relevant resources.
 - ❖ Bring mental health, substance abuse and medical treatment to producers and their families and workers by implementing a mobile clinic approach in Colorado. Funding will cover the purchase of one or more vehicles, supplies and staff.
 - ❖ Implement climate resilience, drought, wildfire and erratic weather planning under the direction of the Drought Impact Task Force.

- ❖ Support the implementation of a comprehensive statewide survey of farmers and ranchers' access to financial management tools, farm transition plans, estate planning, etc. Provide financial and other relevant training opportunities based on survey results.
- ❖ Support a Colorado Farm Transition Network to offer producers statewide support.
- ❖ Provide outpatient mental telehealth support for producers statewide by expanding broadband, providing producers with devices that use cell data until broadband's expanded in their areas and expanding the Rocky Mountain Crisis Line's resources in coordination with the CO Dept of Ag and CO Office of Suicide Prevention.
- ❖ Identify the needs of farm families including spouses and young adults as well as the needs of farm workers and other underrepresented populations in rural communities and develop programs targeted to meet their needs.
- ❖ Provide training for mental health providers about issues that are impacting farmers and ranchers, their families and their workers. Provide additional training for local community leaders including primary care physicians, veterinarians, clergy, teachers, extension agents, brand inspectors, bankers, police, firefighters etc. to help them act as conduits in connecting farmers and ranchers and their families and workers with mental health and substance abuse resources and emergency support referrals when needed.

Citations:

- https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6903a1.htm?s_cid=mm6903a1_e&deliveryName=USCDC_921-DM17737
- [Explore Suicide in Colorado | 2020 Annual Report | AHR \(americashealthrankings.org\)](#)
- [2012 Census of Agriculture - Farm Demographics Highlights | USDA - National Agricultural Statistics Service](#)
- [Why Suicide Rates Are Rising For Middle Aged Men | Men's Health](#)

For more information, please reach out to RMFU Director of External Affairs Dan Waldvogle:
Daniel.waldvogle@RMFU.org



Rocky Mountain Farmers Union

RMFU sees an opportunity to use funds from the American Rescue Plan in a number of ways that will benefit both agriculture and rural communities. These funds could complement some of the stimulus bills that are currently working their way through the Legislature from surplus in the CO budget as well as bring forward much needed resources to respond to the disruption of COVID19 and build a stronger and resilient farm and food system. We see 4 buckets that would accomplish this:

1. Maintaining current and building new market opportunities including supply chain support
2. Ag infrastructure investment
3. Rural and ag worker education and healthcare
4. Rural workforce development

RMFU Stimulus Proposals

- **Maintain current and build new market opportunities including supply chain support**
 - Provide an emergency fund for direct relief to Colorado farmers, ranchers, processors and farmers markets
 - Create a technical assistance grant program focused on developing markets, branding, processing and adding value to Colorado agricultural products
 - Cooperative warehouse infrastructure in Denver with affiliated remote aggregation sites in rural areas (coolers, freezers, dry-storage shelving)
 - Seed funding to CDA to start an institutional purchasing portal and directory
 - Renew funding for the Food Pantry Assistance Grant and have a strong preference/incentive for locally produced products
- **Ag infrastructure investment**
 - Further support CWCB funding
 - Water infrastructure projects
 - Focus on a broad range of projects, not just large reservoir projects; Make sure we work on smaller ditch companies and other projects.
 - Technical Assistance Program through CWCB (directly helps water users including ditch companies)
 - Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) for water projects that were identified in 2020
- **Rural and ag worker education and healthcare**
 - Mental health

- Provide funding to expand mental health care resources to be available in rural areas and increase connectivity. Please see attached handout regarding our mental health proposals
 - Support for continuing education for teachers for remote instruction strategies and resources for rural districts
- **Rural Workforce Development**
 - Invest in a mobile workforce cooperative that serves farms, ranches, and food processing businesses throughout Colorado, including supporting 1 year of salary for five crew leaders and preparation of farm and food safety training videos.
 - Funding for technical assistance for HACCP and SSOP compliance for meat processors
 - Bolster farm and ranch internships and develop a meat processing apprenticeship grant program
 - Training and certificate programs for contractors to fulfill energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades

For more information, please reach out to RMFU Director of External Affairs, Dan Waldvogle:
Daniel.waldvogle@RMFU.org

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Amy Swiatek**

Date: Wed, Apr 7, 2021 at 2:16 PM

Subject: IDEAS - Fw: BUILD BACK STRONGER: Rural & Agriculture Confirmation

I'm not sure of the correct address to send this to, so if you can forward that would be great. I was just in the Rural & Ag focus group call.

One idea that was typing in as the Rural & Ag ended was on rural housing projects. To help provide funding for those projects already in the works and need the capital to move it forward. One example that I saw in Cortez during the pandemic was that a foundation was able to help with the purchase of land. It was one of the final pieces they needed to make this permanent supportive housing project move forward. I'm sure there are many other examples out there like it. A service organization prioritized this use of funds over anything else.

Also, there is a pilot underway in SW Colorado for new affordable homes in small rural communities. I'm sure they could use these funds to help move it forward and/or scale it up to other communities. Just another example. This is also helping these communities to provide housing for teachers, which is a persistent problem in rural areas in recruitment and retention.

Another idea -- rural K-12 schools and higher education and projects -- I know of a couple of communities that were preparing applications for the BEST program and while there may not be funds to use for such a large scale project, they could use them in other ways too to improve their infrastructure - and serve wider community needs. (e.g. health clinics, commercial kitchen space for entrepreneurs, etc.). AND/OR toward other spaces for youth in the community. Again, Cortez org brought up the need for better space for youth - indoor and outdoor - in their community.

Rural Community and Junior Colleges have infrastructure needs -- and often have a difficult time competing for dollars with other higher education institutions. Trinidad Junior College in Trinidad is one example I know of that has expressed this need.

Thanks for forwarding on these ideas.

-Amy

Amy Swiatek (she/her/hers)

Director of Rural and Statewide Networks



Learn more at philanthropycolorado.org

Build Back Stronger Colorado -

For the past several years, we have been discussing the possibility of moving CDOT's Dowd Junction maintenance facility from its current location on the Highway 6 Eagle-Vail commercial corridor to a site the State Land Board owns about two miles away, just north of Minturn and south of I-70. If successful, this would provide several benefits to CDOT, the Vail Valley, and the State Land Board.

CDOT's current facility is on a Land Board-owned parcel. It is more than fifty years old and is functionally obsolete. A new facility would allow CDOT's modern, larger plows and maintenance vehicles to be parked and serviced indoors, and would provide a number of other site and building energy efficiencies. This new location would also reduce response times to service both Vail and Tennessee Passes.

When CDOT vacates the existing site, it will also free up approximately nine acres of developable land along I-70 and Highway 6 along the Eagle River that the Land Board would make sure gets redeveloped into affordable housing to benefit the entire Vail Valley, including CDOT, who is woefully short of housing in this region. As we've spoken with other interested parties in the area, there has been enormous interest in seeing this site developed into housing for Town of Vail and Eagle County's essential workers, including local teachers, a clear nexus with our mission to support schools. But the path to get there starts with getting CDOT to agree to relocate.

To be clear, over the past couple of years, the regional folks at CDOT have willingly engaged in discussions to move this forward, to the point where we've acquired and site-planned the proposed new site and collaboratively developed a preliminary budget of approximately \$24 million to complete the relocation to a new facility. This is an incredible opportunity to achieve at scale one of the Governor's goals for affordable housing, in a part of the state that desperately needs it.

Sincerely, Colorado State Land Board Commissioners

From: **John Bristol**

Date: Fri, Apr 9, 2021 at 3:15 PM

Subject: Follow up re: BBB - Routt County

Treasurer Young,

Good afternoon and thanks for the note.

First, I'm keen on the attached federal legislation titled the American Jobs in Energy Manufacturing Act of 2021 which updates the 48C tax credit program. Sens. Bennet and Hickenlooper should have been primary sponsors but maybe they'll get on it down the road. [Here's Third Ways' overview](#). Following this model we could do something similar here in Colorado and then have a more robust incentive stack with our current [Job Growth Incentive Tax Credit \(JGITC\)](#) program (which isn't cutting it for transition communities), as well as develop a second and more targeted [Strategic Fund Incentive](#) program that (1) targets critical supply chains for reshoring light manufacturing that align with Colorado's current strategic [industries](#) (advanced manufacturing, aerospace, bioscience, IT, etc.) and (2) incentivizes their location in coal-transition counties. This mix for a stronger incentive stack would be attractive to primary jobs/business looking to locate in these communities (OEDIT & JT can do the business attraction) and ultimately drive new capital inflows towards them, while also aligning with our national security and shifting international trade interests to bolster domestic supply chains and decrease reliance on China, etc.

Second, the ~\$200K earmarked in the recovery legislation for the Just Transition Office is asinine. That will get maybe 3.5 FTE at most. We need to throw everything we can at JT Office and build a wrap-around team dedicated to the work operating both in Denver, DC, and on the ground in the communities across the state. Give Wade \$1M, or whatever he wants, to get the ball rolling and staff up operations. And along with that, fund county-level economic fiscal impact analysis so that each county has the data on the exact and true costs of transition both economically and fiscally.

Again, thanks for the note and I hope this helps spur some more brainstorming to tightly focus on attracting primary jobs that build the tax base which then funds all the other public goods/services we need.

Cheers,

John

John Bristol, MPA, CEcD
Economic Development Director

Routt County | City of Steamboat Springs | Steamboat Springs Chamber
ChooseSteamboat.com

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **PM Fanning**

Date: Sun, Mar 28, 2021 at 3:43 PM

Subject: Re: Build Back Better question

The example with which I'm personally most familiar, as I sit on the Water Education Colorado (WECO) board, was the loss of the State's \$150,000 annual funding of WECO. While that may seem insignificant in the much larger scope of Colorado's budget, it represented 17% of WECO's annual budget. As WECO has always achieved amazing results with very limited resources, this loss was devastating. Yes, the PPP program was very helpful in keeping the organization afloat, but the critical function of water education as defined in the legislation that created WECO and that is a key element of Colorado's Water Plan is being severely hampered by the loss of those funds.

Again, I know countless entities have shared the pain of those budget cuts, but the cost/benefit ratio of WECO funding is outstanding.

In a similar vein, the funding available from CWCB for the Public Education, Participation and Outreach (PEPO) function of the Basin Roundtables seems very sparse as we work to engage the public in effective water planning. I am currently a member of the Arkansas Basin Roundtable, serving as its PEPO liaison. We do have very dedicated volunteers working on water issues in both these organizations, but financial resources are obviously necessary, as well.

Thank you for listening!



Investing in Conservation

As Colorado emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic and turns its attention to economic recovery, the state should strive to invest stimulus dollars in a manner that creates jobs, drives economic recovery, and aligns with our values as a state. Investing in conservation, habitat restoration, and outdoor recreation infrastructure would achieve all three of these goals while delivering long-term health and quality-of-life benefits for current and future generations.

On-the-ground conservation spending creates a significant return for our natural resources and the public. Every \$1 invested in parks through the Land and Water Conservation Fund returns \$4 in economic value. According to a study by Colorado State University, every \$1 invested in conservation easements returns \$4 to \$12 in public benefits. And every \$1 million invested in habitat and watershed restoration generates approximately 40 jobs, exceeding job-creating investments in the energy sector.

Many conservation programs also leverage local, federal, and private dollars. For example, state investments in Great Outdoors Colorado programs have leveraged nearly \$800 million in local and federal matching dollars and from lands donated by landowners.

Investments in the outdoors also help build our outstanding outdoor recreation economy. Recreation contributes \$62 billion to our state's economy and supports 500,000 jobs, representing 10 percent of our state GDP.

Finally, nature-based conservation is one of the most cost-effective measures to combat climate change. Scientists have determined that protecting 30 percent of the country by 2030 is critical to stopping mass extinction and mitigating climate effects. According to the Campaign for Nature, the economic benefits of protecting 30 percent of our lands and waters exceed the costs by at least 5:1.

To drive Colorado's economic recovery, build resilience, and support public health and quality of life for all Coloradans in the short term, Western Resource Advocates and Conservation Colorado recommend making the following investments.

\$382 million to complete Fishers Peak and create 10 additional new state parks. Of that investment, \$6 million is needed to ensure the newly acquired Fishers Peak State Park can be enjoyed by all. We also believe that Colorado needs tens of millions of dollars to acquire land, bring new parks online, address the existing maintenance backlog, and resources for upgrades and planning. A commitment of significant dollars, to be spent over several years, would enable the state to devote funds to immediate projects as well as confidently move forward with acquisitions and other investments that will take more time. Funds in this category should also be used to support the implementation of the Governor's September 2020 executive order directing the creation of regional outdoor partnerships to enhance local land, water, and wildlife conservation and recreation planning.

\$100 million for additional maintenance and upgrades at existing parks. SB 21-112 invests \$20 million in maintenance projects at 12 state parks. Based on this figure, we estimate the total additional need across all parks for maintenance alone to be \$70 million; an additional investment of \$30 million would support upgrades and planning. A substantial up-front investment spread over several years would both spur immediate economic recovery and sustain long-term economic growth.



Conservation Colorado

\$343 million to protect wildlife migration corridors and prevent wildlife-vehicle collisions. Colorado sees an average of 3,300 wildlife-vehicle collisions each year. As climate change and habitat fragmentation disrupt wildlife migration corridors, we can protect people and wildlife by creating wildlife crossings on the heavily traveled I-70 corridor and other highways. Summit County's Safe Passages Plan contains specific recommendations for crossings and other improvements along I-70, US-6, SH-9 and SH-91; implementing this plan would be a solid start towards improving wildlife connectivity and traffic safety in the state. This investment has the added benefit of creating construction jobs and stimulating demand for materials.

\$500 million for forest and watershed management, nature water storage, and wildfire mitigation: Colorado's forests and watersheds collect snowpack and protect and filter our water supplies. But policies of fire suppression have disrupted natural wildfire cycles, leaving Colorado's forests overgrown and vulnerable to catastrophic wildfires that threaten communities and impact our water supply. Science-based forest management can mitigate these problems, including thinning and prescribed fire. Strategic, large-scale forest restoration is needed to protect the long-term health of our water supplies, reduce community risk from future wildfire, and protect our forests. Investments – including increased funding for the NRCS Watershed and Flood Prevention program, the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program, and the Colorado State Forest Service Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation Grant Program – should be made to increase the pace and scale of treatment and management of Colorado's forests.

\$125 million to fill the Great Outdoors Colorado funding gap. This investment would help meet the unmet demands for parks, trails, rivers, wildlife, and open spaces across the state. Because the funding leverages a 1:1 match, on average, of funding from local communities, nonprofits, and other matching resources, this federal infusion of resources would expand access to the outdoors for Coloradans from all walks of life.

\$16 million for Restoration and Stewardship of Outdoor Resources and Environment Colorado Program managed by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. This program which focuses on the restoration and enhancement of wildlife habitat throughout the state launched in 2020 and received more applications than could be funded. We recommend a significant investment that would more than double capacity for future granting cycles. Grants are awarded to support river corridors, Eastern Colorado grasslands, the sagebrush ecosystem, big game range and migration routes, and forestland projects. This investment would help meet the unmet demand for projects across the state.

\$20 million for the Colorado Youth Corps Association. The conservation corps enhance and maintain Colorado's natural beauty while boosting employment opportunities for youth. Investing in the youth corps helps ensure there is a ready workforce to execute other trail priorities across the state.

\$5 million to double the capacity of the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission's Orphaned Well Program. The COGCC has identified nearly 500 orphaned oil and gas wells in need of clean-up to reclaim those lands for other uses, including wildlife habitat. Insufficient well-bonding measures often leave taxpayers on the hook for oil and gas well clean-up costs. A recent study by Carbon Tracker Initiative determined that Colorado has collected only \$185 million in bonds from the industry. The state estimates that anywhere from \$25 million to \$66 million is needed to address this problem.

A GUIDE TO A REGENERATIVE RECOVERY FOR COLORADO

COLORADO EMERGENCE SERIES
FINAL REPORT (1.0)



**THE ALLIANCE
CENTER**



**COLORADO'S
REGENERATIVE
RECOVERY**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Alliance Center (AC) faced the challenges revealed by the COVID-19 pandemic and turned them into action. In April of 2020, AC created the *Colorado Emergence Series*: six facilitated virtual meetings inviting diverse individuals from across Colorado to share their vision of a recovery and deliver change for the better. In six meetings, participants contributed to a vision for a *regenerative* future, addressing our obligation to create a thriving world based on an economy that benefits all.

“Never let a good crisis go to waste.”

- Winston Churchill

At the completion of the Series, the recommendations were collated, and key patterns and affinities were identified as the following Regenerative Recovery Fundamentals:

- Transition rapidly to renewable, distributed, reliable energy
- Strengthen and increase Colorado’s regenerative food systems
- Provide equitable access and opportunities for all
- Build the industries and workforce of the future
- Invest in natural and built infrastructure
- Build Colorado’s circular economy
- Preserve and strengthen democratic institutions
- Leverage diverse partnerships to demonstrate regeneration in action

Achieving this will require three major steps:

- Stop the harm
- Create the conditions, locally for healing and prosperity
- Learn along the way

Our current economy deepens our country’s divides, including inequality, and does not adequately care for the environment. This must be stopped. Crafting the future we want will require restoring what has been damaged and implementing new systems that allow all citizens to thrive. We stand at a crossroads. We can continue the status quo and avoid addressing these pressing issues, or come together to create the finer future we want and need.

The work of the Colorado Emergence Series and this report is an action plan to move this vision from concept to the impact here in Colorado. The sessions covered climate change, economy, food systems, water, infrastructure, natural resource management, workforce development and democracy.



Participants identified what needs to be done now, in six months and in a year and beyond. Hundreds of solutions were put forth. Those presented below were prioritized based on impact and practicality, with the full list available in the appendix.

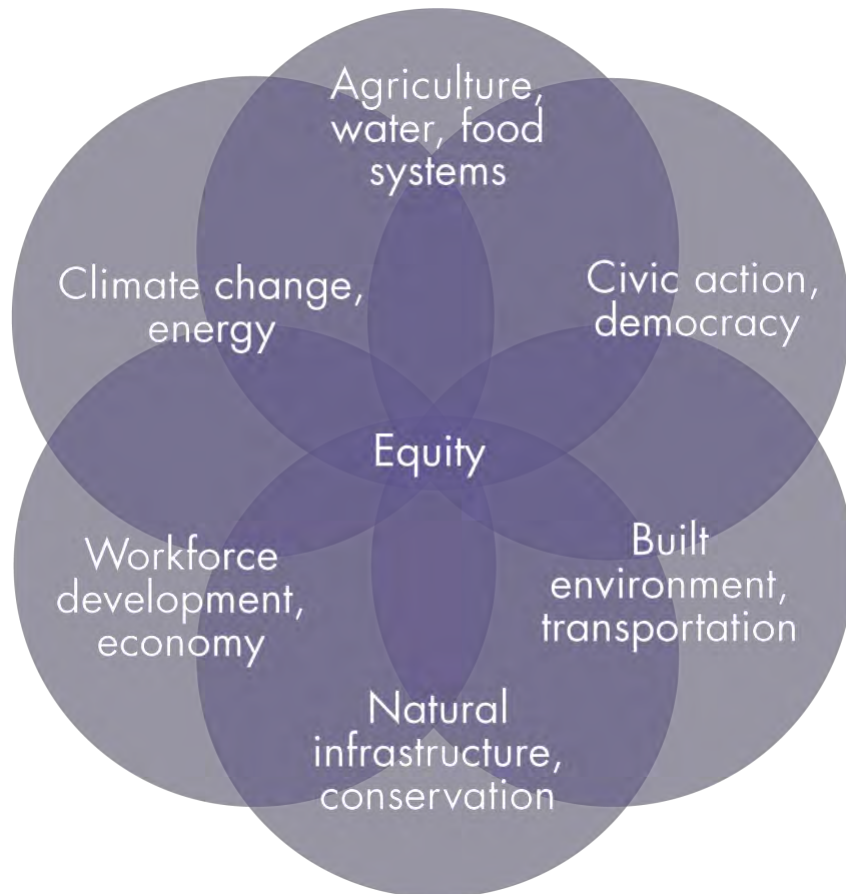
The first outcome was the formation of the Regenerative Recovery Coalition. The goal of the Coalition is to convene all the relevant stakeholders to implement the strategies listed below.



INTRODUCTION: A NARRATIVE OF COLORADO'S REGENERATIVE RECOVERY

The Alliance Center, with the engagement of the governor's office and many state agencies,¹ convened the Colorado Emergence Series (the Series) to craft a regenerative and equitable future for the state. The Series engaged several hundred Coloradans: change agents from diverse sectors, geographic regions, cultures, communities and generations. Participants included representatives from local food banks, farmers, community groups, climate experts, youth leaders, financiers, industry and workforce development groups, large corporations, small businesses and cultural institutions. These sector experts, government agency heads and staff, scientists, activists, citizens and the governor helped shape the strategies and solutions presented here.

May 14	Climate and Energy
May 26	Food Systems/ Agriculture and Water
June 10	Democracy
June 23	Economy and Workforce Development
July 9	Natural and Human Infrastructure and Transportation
July 21	Transformational Change



In the facilitated discussions, participants identified solutions to address challenges and opportunities in the energy and climate, agriculture and water, enhancement of democratic institutions, workforce development and the economy, infrastructure and transportation and financial viability sectors. Two systems not explicitly discussed were education and healthcare. Though both are crucial to the recovery from the pandemic, these systems are outside the core expertise of The Alliance and were not central to the Series, however, participants did include recommendations that impacted the education and healthcare systems.

Participants agreed that there are important lessons to be learned from the COVID-19 crisis:

- Solutions must address equity if we are to create a regenerative recovery: COVID-19, like the climate crisis, the siting of polluting facilities and the recession impact the poor and people of color disproportionately.
- People and governments can mobilize and change despite our initial reluctance: what people are willing to do, how we work, travel and live all changed far faster than experts believed possible.
- Early intervention is critical and proper planning can prevent worse outcomes.
- Broadband and computer access is critical to ensuring equitable outcomes in many areas beyond public health including education, housing, employment and more.
- Workers in fossil-based energy deserve a just transition as we convert to renewable systems; the approaches of the past that reinforce inequalities based on race, gender and ability must be fixed.

The Series' conversations led to the creation of the Regenerative Recovery Coalition. Now involving more than 150 organizations representing almost \$2.5 billion in state revenue and over 19,000 jobs, the Coalition will work with the state and interested Coloradans to refine and implement the ideas and strategies generated by the Series to deliver a regenerative recovery for Colorado.



A second initiative, the creation of a Colorado Conservation Corps (CCC) similar to the 1933 Civilian Conservation Corps public works relief program was subsequently introduced into Congress by Representative Joe Neguse.² We envision that the work of the Corps will be in service of all the objectives of a regenerative recovery.

When COVID-19 hit, the world of “business as usual” moved to the rearview mirror. We realized that while our old economy worked well for some, it did not provide the same opportunities to many Coloradans. A renewed and renewable Colorado must achieve an economy that works for everyone.

Colorado is a state of diversity: geography, professions, people, industries and cultures. From the ranches of the north to the plains of the east, from the high mountain valleys of the south and the western slope to the urban I-25 corridor and the ski towns of the mountains, we share a desire to build an economy for Colorado that works for all.

We are also a state in transition. Founded on extractive industries, our economy now flourishes because of sectors like the outdoor industry, arts and culture and technology. The burgeoning natural foods industry, leading a rapidly growing national movement, outpaced industrial agriculture, which is declining in Colorado, year over year. The state is becoming more regenerative almost without our awareness.³

In nature, sustainable outcomes are the result of regenerative systems. Fertile soil, clean air and water, and abundance come from diverse ecosystems that renew themselves. Regeneration is the way life works. Living systems rebound from collapse, as mushrooms flourish in decaying logs, and forests regrow after fires. Regenerative systems learn from chaos, finding better outcomes that become ever more resilient. Many native communities relied on this wisdom, creating enduring systems that met their needs while respecting nature.

Regenerative=
Regrow | Renew | Restore

Regenerative design restores and renews the systems it serves. Energy and food systems built on natural flows deliver greater abundance at lower cost, as they create more jobs and equitable prosperity in our communities. Regenerative principles like circular flows of nutrients and materials, systems that encourage diverse participation, policies that respect the integrity of place and community, applied to our economy can deliver prosperity and inclusion.⁴ Recent large corporate commitments to “become regenerative” demonstrate the rapidly growing transition away from older models.⁵



Times of regrowth are opportunities to revisit the practices that got us into this mess, keeping what works as we change what no longer serves us. For instance, we can measure prosperity based on the health of all children, not only growth in the value of distant stock markets. Recovery measures can prioritize the most vulnerable while building into our infrastructure, and governing systems the ability to adapt to change. Efforts to preserve old privileges in times of disruption are recipes for irrelevance.⁶ Reaching our aspirations will require us to embrace the current collective disruption and leverage the many opportunities a rapidly changing world presents us. Doing so will enable us to create the inclusive effort needed to improve our economic outcomes and address critical environmental issues. Recovery will require ending the harm we are doing to people and our environment and a move to systems that serve all life.

We have never done this work before with the urgency we now face. To achieve success, we will have to break down old boundaries, collaborate and learn from each other.

The pandemic is breaking many of society's systems, but it is only one of many crises facing our economy. From climate change to systemic racism and inequality, to loss of biodiversity, our economy faces many headwinds. Built during times of unequal prosperity, our energy, food, infrastructure, economic and democratic institutions are proving to be more fragile than we knew. Some people say that they only want to get back to normal. But for too many Coloradans, 'normal' didn't work.

Implementing the measures listed below will place Colorado among the global leaders in responsibly grappling with these crises. Europe has committed to a "Green Deal."⁷ South Korea,⁸ Costa Rica⁹ and others¹⁰ all have their variants of a "Green New Deal." Cities like Amsterdam are implementing the "Doughnut Economics" model to guide their recovery,¹¹ In the U.S. similar efforts are underway in New York, California, Maine and a variety of cities.¹² California has committed to be emissions free by 2035, banning internal combustion engines and fracking.¹³ Companies from Cargill¹⁴ to McDonalds¹⁵ have joined Unilever¹⁶ and General Mills¹⁷ in committing to help farmers on millions of acres to transition to regenerative agriculture. Recently, Walmart¹⁸ also committed to becoming a regenerative company.

Colorado has the opportunity to join these leaders as we address these global issues in locally appropriate ways and help Colorado build forward.



FUNDAMENTALS FOR A REGENERATIVE RECOVERY

The Colorado Emergence Series meetings invited participants to identify what needs to happen to emerge stronger from the pandemic and create a regenerative future.

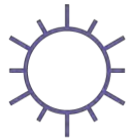
Regenerative Recovery:

COVID-19 economic recovery efforts that builds a robust, localized economy abundantly meeting human needs while equitably providing clean water, air, energy and food.

The working groups of the Regenerative Recovery Coalition will follow the eight fundamental aspects of a Colorado regenerative recovery:

- Transition Rapidly to Renewable, Distributive, Reliable Energy
- Strengthen and Increase Colorado's Regenerative Food System
- Provide Equitable Access and Opportunities for All
- Build the Industries and Workforce of the Future
- Invest in Natural and Built Infrastructure
- Build Colorado's Circular Economy
- Preserve and Strengthen Democratic Institutions
- Leverage Diverse Partnerships to Demonstrate Regeneration in Action





The global energy system is the prime driver of climate change, a crisis far worse than COVID-19 that is already impacting us. To solve the climate crisis, it is urgent that we transition to renewable energy production combined with efficient use of energy. A conventional narrative says Colorado's economy is based upon extractive industries. That used to be true. Now however, Colorado is getting more jobs from clean energy¹⁹ than fossil fuels, even prior to the COVID-19 crisis. Clean energy delivers more than 66,000 jobs, growing at 9 percent in 2019²⁰ compared to oil and gas extraction at 40,000 jobs.²¹ Fossil fuel jobs fell by 8.4 percent statewide between 2012 and 2017 and have fallen faster since then, losing 10,000 jobs in 2020 alone.²² Arts and culture bring delight to life and are a larger creator of jobs and revenue for the state (more than 100,000 jobs) than oil, gas, coal, mining, timbering and the other extractive industries. Outdoor recreation, which employs almost six times more Coloradans than fossil companies, is harmed by the extractive industries, as climate change threatens our skiing, hydraulic fracking fouls our air, and mining degrades wild lands tourists seek for recreation.

Even before COVID, Colorado committed to achieving a renewable energy system that is distributed and reliable.²³ Renewable energy has been recognized as the cheapest way to meet our energy needs since 2017.²⁴ Recent Xcel Energy bids proved that renewables are now abundant and cheaper than natural gas.²⁵ Participants agreed that this agenda should be accelerated, setting a goal of decarbonizing the state's economy by 2030, considerably earlier than the 2050 date now listed in the state documents.²⁶

Dozens of key priority actions were identified by participants, including:

- Accelerate the work now underway by the Polis administration to achieve bold action on a just and equitable transition to a clean energy economy to reduce pollution, create jobs, improve public health and accelerate the state's science-based emissions targets.
- Support Climate Cabinets Climate Roadmap.²⁷
- Create and implement plans to reduce the largest sources of carbon emissions in the State (energy, transportation, and buildings, industry and agriculture²⁸) as set forth in HB 1261 Carbon pollution reduction plan.
- Ensure sufficient funding for renewable deployment, which could include permanent solar and wind tax credits.
- Establish a renewable electricity plan that would result in all the utilities actually reaching 90-95 percent renewable by 2030.
- Create incentives to encourage installation of battery storage in combination with renewable energy generation at all scales (residential, commercial and utility).

- Prioritize the retirement of fossil fuel plants in or near underprivileged communities first.
- Assist in helping fossil fuel workforce find new employment.
- Establish a plan and preference for widespread electrification of vehicles and buildings, including:
 1. Establish a fair, transparent and streamlined bidding and interconnection process for independent power producers, ensuring that the grid offers authentic community and customer choice.
 2. Increase public investment and funds matching for widespread EV charging infrastructure, while preparing for the advent of autonomous electric vehicles.
 3. Encourage solar deployment on rooftops to deliver at least 50 percent of the solar we need.
 4. Adopt a state building code that favors solar, battery storage and net zero buildings.
 5. Establish funding programs to retrofit older buildings, especially in low-income neighborhoods, as Fort Collins has done.





STRENGTHEN AND INCREASE COLORADO'S REGENERATIVE FOOD SYSTEMS

Colorado has been transitioning to a more regenerative food system for over a decade: revenues from industrial farming have fallen while the state's natural foods industry has grown. COVID-19 made the fragile and inequitable nature of our food system transparent. The pandemic shuttered restaurants to which many farmers traditionally sold their produce, disrupted national and state supply chains and sickened workers.

The transition became apparent as industrial meat production stumbled, while local packers could not keep up with demand. Farmers markets flourished and small-scale production increased.²⁹ Interest in regenerative agriculture, locally based practices that restore soil fertility, capture carbon, improve the nutritional value of crops grown and support the resilience of farms continues to grow rapidly. This matters because agriculture uses 47.5 percent of the state's land, but farm production contributed only \$7.1 billion in both 2016 and 2017, representing just 2.1 percent of Colorado GDP.³⁰ Agriculture has the potential to play a significant role in the state's recovery, creating jobs, ensuring food security and underpinning both rural and urban prosperity. This will require a transition to higher value agriculture, greater support for distributed agriculture production.

Corner Post Meats is a family-run ranch demonstrating regenerative practices in Colorado Springs. In partnership with the National Audubon Society, their ranch is restoring native habitat while raising delicious, grass-fed products that are sold directly to consumers and establishments such as the Broadmoor Hotel.



Colorado Emergence Series participants approved of the Colorado Department of Agriculture's (CDA) commitment to "Support economic opportunity (i.e. market access) and overcome structural barriers (i.e. cost of doing business, financing) in order to keep family farmers and ranchers in business, and allow the generations to follow to build a career in agriculture." The CDA seeks to advance farmer- and rancher-led soil, water and climate stewardship, prevent greater loss of agricultural land and water, and protect essential resources for working lands.

Participants recognized that human health and environmental health are linked and called for state policies to promote regenerative farming styles and methods that restore health and vibrancy to the ecosystem and ensure that such methods have direct (or equal) market access.

Conversations expanded beyond the production of food to address distribution systems, access to markets and ways to support local production and processing of agricultural products. There was extensive support for using agricultural lands to sequester carbon, enhance wildlife and support rural livelihoods as a part of a regenerative future.

The following are key priority actions that were identified by participants.

- Support a resilient agricultural economy to strengthen rural and urban communities by investing in decentralized systems that enhance food resilience. These will augment the vulnerable global supply chains that failed in the pandemic, reduce fossil fuel dependence and keep more money in the pockets of our farmers and ranchers.
- Invest in local food processing for meat, quinoa, peaches, grains, potatoes, sweet corn, etc., to cut transportation and enable more value-added processing. Transport increases costs and reduces nutritional value.
- Ensure ethical treatment of agricultural workers and immigrants.
- Explore use of tax benefits to make local processing more economically viable.
- Ensure the health of Colorado soils and waterways to create an abundant food system that delivers nutrient-dense food to all communities and enhances biodiversity.
- Heal grasslands with managed grazing, mimicking nature in livestock management and maximizing the ability for soils to absorb carbon.
- Encourage carbon farming to help landowners move to more regenerative practices. This also increases soil water holding capacity and lowers operating costs for farmers.
- Increase farmers' understanding of the benefits, return on investment and practices of regenerative agriculture; promote the sharing of best practices and expertise.
- Explore vendor matching to find markets for seconds and other "less than perfect" agricultural products. E.g., peach growers connecting to a cider company.
- Support the Department of Agriculture's block grant proposal. This could allow neighborhoods to design projects that could be replicated and used as educational tools.
- Provide additional money for SNAP to support regenerative farmers.
- Promote agrovoltatics that combine solar gardens with food production.

Front Line Farming operates over four acres of urban farm land committed to providing food to people of all income levels by sustainably growing affordable local food in the Denver Metro Area. It engages the communities it serves by educating young people and neighborhoods on how to grow food locally. It promotes healthy, active lifestyles, beautifying neighborhoods with edible landscapes and reducing the distance from farm to plate.



- Incorporate resiliency and climate forecasts in water and land planning to better deal with floods as well as droughts and other dislocations.
- Create a network of converted conex containers to grow hydroponic food in food deserts or areas with distressed soils. These can cut harvest variability due to changing conditions from climate change. Hybrids of traditional and hydroponic farming reduce risks from hail, temperature swings, drought and floods.
- Create incentives for regenerative agriculture to ensure rural revitalization, increased food resilience and soil-based carbon storage;
- Explore and develop different regenerative ways to distribute food. including web models (direct to consumer delivery); incentivize farmers to implement these practices.
- Ensure equitable market access for new and small-scale farmers:
 - Educate the public regarding the value of regenerative agriculture and soil health by building and demonstrating the business case for regenerative practices.
 - Establish decentralized networks food production and distribution; right-size systems so they are not too big to fail nor too small to succeed.
 - Ensure food sovereignty for communities, respecting their unique food systems.
 - Ensure that AQCC methane standards for cows do not adversely affect regenerative agriculture practices.





PROVIDE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The health impacts of COVID-19 are felt disproportionately by Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. To date, Hispanics represent 28 percent of all state COVID cases, while only making up 21 percent of the population. Black and African American cases represent 7 percent while only making up 3 percent of the state population. “We know that social and health care inequities affect outcomes, and that becomes even more apparent in times of disaster,” Executive Director of CDPHE Jill Hunsaker-Ryan said. “There have been generations of institutionalized barriers to things like preventive medical care, healthy food, safe and stable housing, quality education, reliable transportation and clean air. Research shows that these types of factors are the most predictive of health outcomes. There is much to be learned from this disaster, and the uneven effects of COVID-19 on different communities will perhaps be one of the most profound lessons. It’s apparent now more than ever why we must bridge these inequities and even more closely track the outcomes of COVID-19 by race and ethnicity.”³¹

Equity was a key theme underpinning all of the Colorado Emergence Series. The old normal blocked access for BIPOC to all social systems. It entrenched systemic inequity, blocking engagement across all aspects of society, from how we feed people, deliver education, provide health care, and manage the justice system. A regenerative economy is founded on a commitment to address and remove systemic barriers. It establishes the conditions to achieve shared prosperity and provides opportunities for all voices to be heard and participate in decision making.

Series participants offered solutions from investing in community infrastructure, to creating good paying jobs by re-localizing food production, eliminating pollution that has fouled the air and the water particularly in front-line communities, and strengthening the public sector.

GrowHaus serves as a source of fresh food in the Elyria-Swansea and Globeville neighborhoods of Denver where there are few traditional grocery stores within walking distance for many residents. GrowHaus has built trust by using community-based staff who they call “promotoras”, who know families in the area struggling and connect them with the benefits they need.

When COVID-19 hit, GrowHaus received a massive increase in households looking for services. They mobilized their team by packing and delivering emergency food packages to homes at no charge. GrowHaus is currently serving 2,500 residents and partnering with other local organizations, like Bondadosa, Denver Food Rescue, and we Don’t Waste.



The sessions prioritized serving previously ignored communities and strengthening organizations that support equitable access and decision making.

The following are key priority actions that were identified by participants:

- Include diverse stakeholders whenever statewide plans are created, as the city of Denver did when writing its climate action plan³².
- Establish equity and inclusion standards in the trades. Require or incentivize training in equity, diversity and inclusion that employers could take to familiarize themselves with the obstacles of diversifying their workforce.
- Prioritize areas like the Globeville/Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods for regenerative and restorative activities, as these areas have some of the dirtiest water and air quality.
- Prioritize rural communities that have been impacted, e.g. San Luis valley.
- Ensure that the historical barriers faced by farmers of color are eliminated in relation to loan and funding access.
- Ensure that documents containing post-high school information are available in languages including Vietnamese, Chinese, Arabic and Spanish to eliminate the language barrier.
- Eliminate the digital divide by delivering universal broadband as a public utility, delivering affordable, reliable, high capacity technology to youth in schools to, especially in rural and BIPOC communities to deliver digital skills training and equip them to join the future workforce.
- Review the “State Blue Book” of 300 Boards and Commissions to make sure the process of selecting board members is inclusive, resulting in more racially and ethnically diverse appointees. At present, regulations on who sits on what boards and review regulatory agendas for agencies are opaque or written in statute.
- Work with groups like: Focus Points, Project Voyce, Colorado Inclusive Economy, Jobs with Justice and The Equity Project to advance racial equity in communities and workplaces.
- Give subsidies for land stewards in indigenous cultures who implement regenerative agriculture.





BUILD THE INDUSTRIES AND WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE

Economic forecasts for Colorado were not encouraging. In May, IHS Markit, which provides economic and industry-level forecasts and data, warned that post-COVID “Colorado will be in the top 10 for job losses, fifth worst” in the nation.³³

The real outcome was not fate, but choice: job losses were far less than feared. By August national unemployment stood at 10.2 percent; Colorado was at 7.4 percent, one of the best in the U.S due to government and citizen success in flattening the curve and allowing the economy to reopen.³⁴ The state is still suffering, and communities of color especially so, but Colorado is an entrepreneurial birthplace, known for creating niche markets like hemp and CBD that go on to lead the nation. The shift to clean technology, regenerative agriculture and the other job creation engines offers Colorado the chance to create a more inclusive, resilient life for all. In the wake of COVID-19, the state should invest in the industries of the future, not those of the past.

This is already happening: The relative size and importance of such legacy industries as oil, gas and other extractive industries is overstated.³⁵ As stated above, clean energy employs twice the workers employed in the oil and gas sectors,³⁶ and clean energy employment is increasing, while employment in fossil fuels is falling.

Many of the industries that are actually essential economic engines contributing to the Coloradans’ livelihoods are underappreciated. The University of Colorado’s four campuses employ more than 32,000,³⁷ putting it on par with oil and gas. The IT-software industry cluster employs 58,000 in the nine-county Metro Denver.³⁸ Arts and culture directly employ more than 100,000 statewide.³⁹ Outdoor recreation is the real engine of Colorado’s economy, directly employing almost 230,000. Counting direct, indirect and induced employment, the industry supports a whopping 511,000 jobs in the state, constituting almost 19 percent of Colorado’s labor force. By comparison, oil and gas support 89,000 direct, indirect and induced jobs, almost six times fewer than outdoor recreation.⁴⁰

GreenLatinos is a national nonprofit organization that convenes a broad coalition of Latino leaders committed to addressing environmental, natural resources and conservation issues that significantly impact the health and welfare of the Latino community. It maintains a listing of “green jobs” as part of their outreach.



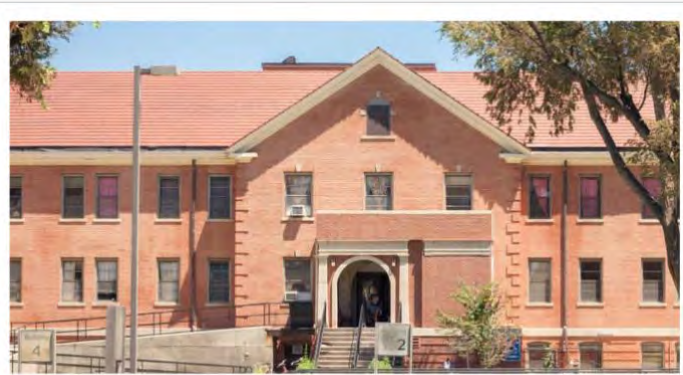
Smart regions identify, map and recruit the industries of the future. If Colorado is to have the economy it desires, it will have to attract the companies we want and train the workforce needed to deliver that regenerative economy.

Participants agreed that the state should prioritize industries that contribute to clean air, clean water, clean energy and pay meaningful wages. Workers need equitable access to training and job placement that enables them to build a flourishing life. Colorado's entrepreneurs need support to launch the new companies that are the job creation engine of any economy.

The following are key priority actions that were identified by participants:

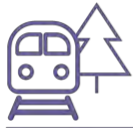
- Recruit the companies of the future, and preferentially invest in creating the industries of a regenerative economy.
- Workforce training to transition from Boomer-generation electrical contractors that are retiring and move people from fossil to renewables; subsidize tuition for people going into renewable energy.
- Provide job skills training to transition oilfield workers to provide careers with meaningful ages without uprooting their families.
- Work with trade associations like Colorado Solar and Storage Association, and community workforce development groups like Activate Workforce Solutions and Focus Points⁴¹ to ensure that educational programs train people for the jobs for which companies will be hiring and de-risk the hiring program.⁴²
- Engage the chambers of commerce of the communities of color across the state.
- Ensure that BIPOC and underrepresented communities are given a priority voice in creating the workforce Colorado will need for industries supporting a regenerative recovery.
- Implement an effective high school vocational program (IT, healthcare, clean-tech, regenerative agriculture, etc.) including apprenticeships for students who do not want to attend traditional colleges.
- Align 2020 talent pipeline report with regenerative jobs, then create the certificate programs to support the skills transition.⁴³

In 2019, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) \$200,000 to fund a job-training program supporting the Fort Lyon Supportive Residential Community (SRC). It provides training to help secure full-time environmental employment. The SRC is a recovery-oriented transitional housing program helping those who are experiencing or at-risk of homelessness and struggling with substance abuse disorder.



- Create certificate programs for the jobs that are needed in the state, teaming with such groups as Solar Energy International and the Sterling Wind technician training program.
- Integrate workforce development programs with more aggressive building codes that mandate greater energy efficiency and renewable energy.
- Engage state legislators in conversations about job creation potential of regenerative agricultural practices.
- Encourage and promote agritourism and ecotourism for Colorado's mountain and rural locations.





INVEST IN NATURAL AND BUILT INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure conventionally means “the basic physical and organizational structures and facilities... needed for the operation of a society or enterprise.” The presence of properly located and maintained roads, bridges, airports, rail lines, broadband, power grids, sanitation and buildings are critical to a healthy economy, but they are not all that matters. Even more important is our natural infrastructure, including intact ecosystems that provide our life support systems (air to breathe, water to drink, fertile soil to grow our food and climate stability) underpin all life—all economic activity. This natural infrastructure is essential to Colorado’s economy. Tourism, much of it to enjoy our great outdoors, provides 165,000 jobs and almost \$6 billion in revenue.⁴⁴ With 1.7 percent of the U.S. population, Colorado has almost 8 percent of the nation’s tourism jobs. Outdoor recreation generates 8.3 percent of the state’s workforce⁴⁵, delivering \$28 billion of annual consumer spending, 229,000 direct jobs, \$9.7 billion in wages and salaries and \$2 billion in state and local tax revenue.⁴⁶ The Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) based in Boulder, serves more than 4,000 suppliers, manufacturers, distributors, sales representatives and retailers in the active outdoor lifestyle.⁴⁷

In recoveries from economic downturns, “shovel-ready,” roads and bridges infrastructure projects are often the first investments made. The question participants in the Colorado Emergence Series discussed was, “As Colorado recovers, what are the infrastructure needs of the future?”

Participants agreed that we must ensure that the clean water resources necessary for urban resilience agriculture, recreation, industry and ecosystem viability are protected and enhanced. We must restore damaged lands and parks. This will require Integrating regenerative principles into land planning and infrastructure. The following are key priority actions that were identified by participants:

- Prioritize investment into natural infrastructure including wildlife corridors per the governor’s Executive Order to safeguard wildlife while

The Geos Neighborhood located in Arvada, Colorado combines traditional village living with the most advanced design and building practices to be Colorado’s first net-zero energy development. Colorado’s unique climate enables Geos to use the sun and the earth to produce as much energy as the community consumes, with a total cost that’s equal to or less than ordinary built-to-code homes and businesses.



enhancing public safety,⁴⁸ deferred maintenance and urban green spaces to support our outdoor industries and the health of our communities. Restore damaged natural infrastructure.

- Encourage practices that use agricultural land to protect biodiversity and carbon sequestration, in addition to food production.
- Work with One Earth's Global Safety Net, Department of Natural Resources and conservation NGOS to develop a state land use and conservation plan to ensure Colorado has the adequate and intact ecosystems to sustain life and reduce carbon.⁴⁹
- Repurpose existing infrastructure as use patterns change to avoid stranded assets; e.g. parking lots can be converted to vertical agriculture.
- Promote safe walkable, bikeable communities by closing streets, investing in last mile solutions and ensuring safe transit.
- Create a template plan for making towns more walkable, more bikeable, more accessible to nature and parks.
- Investigate existing zoning regulations that prohibit regenerative transportation options and modify codes to support regenerative practices.
- Adopt a net zero building code and retrofit old buildings;
- Redefine rivers as a public good. Ensure that Colorado has the clean water necessary for urban resilience, agriculture, recreation, industry and ecosystem viability.
- Work with each water basin, the Colorado Water Plan⁵⁰ and State Water Board to prioritize projects needed to fix the supply and 2050 forecasted demand gap. Include multipurpose and multi-stakeholder processes.
- Implement paving alternatives to not use impermeable paving in parking lots if there are soils/ filtration/ wetlands options that support the natural environment.
- Incentivize restoration and reclamation of degraded lands due to industrial operations.





BUILD COLORADO'S CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Extractive industries helped build Colorado's great economy. But the linear model of taking, making, using and discarding (wasting) comes at an unacceptably high cost. The emerging model of economic prosperity, the *circular economy*, is based on reclaiming raw materials that were used to create products and returning them to usefulness, keeping them from being discarded. Colorado Emergence Series participants discussed opportunities to create jobs through supporting such enterprises as supporting and growing recycling entrepreneurs and material end-markets in Colorado.

Today, Colorado has a small recovery industry reclaiming scrap, but it lacks industry to take that reclaimed material and make new products from it. For example, EcoCycle and others divert some plastic, aluminum and other materials from landfills (Colorado still buries \$265 million worth of aluminum, cardboard, paper, glass and plastic in our landfills every year⁵¹) but nearly all of the paper, metal and plastic recovered get shipped out of state to be made into new products elsewhere, taking those value-added jobs with them.

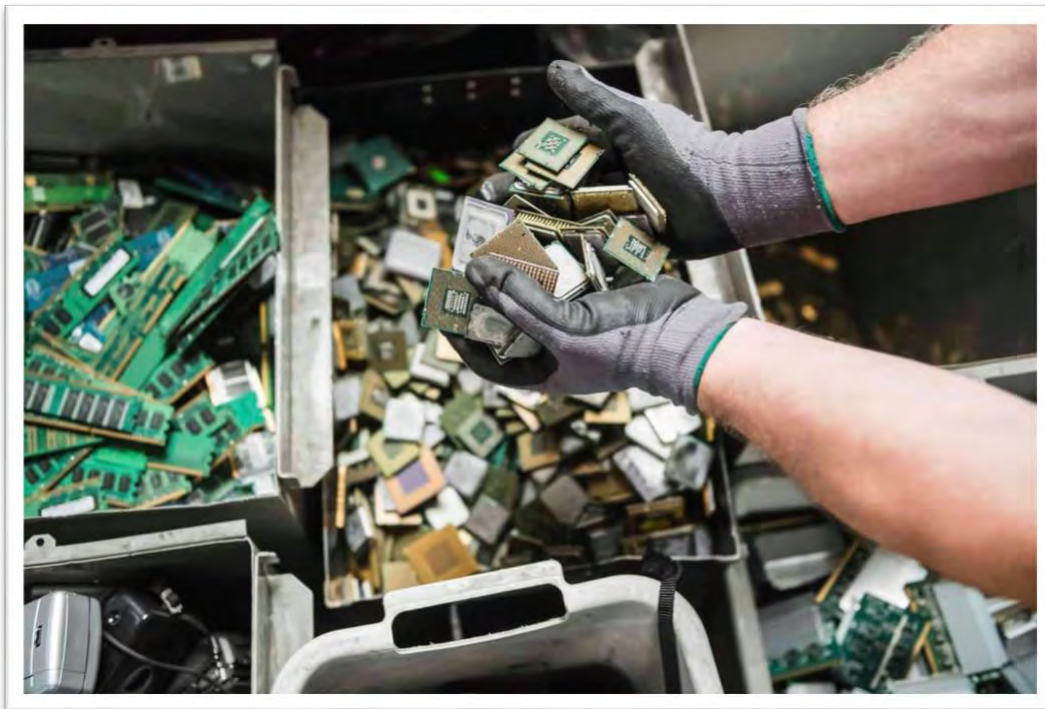
Establishing Colorado as a regional recycling hub can drive an innovation wave of material reuse and create new jobs and tax revenue. Legislation (CO Bill SB20-055) seeks to establish circular material businesses for repurposing materials in packaging, plastics like PET, textiles, electronics, etc. This would replicate the job creation that South Carolina achieved due to the increase of industries tied to material recovery. South Carolina's recycling business has an economic impact of more than \$13 billion, derived from 500 recycling companies creating 2,477 jobs. North Carolina's recycling industry drives \$17 billion in revenues and 17,000 jobs.⁵²

Blue Star Recycler's mission is to recycle electronics to create jobs for people with disAbilities. The organization has provided good paying disassembly and supervisory positions to individuals who may not have been able to secure employment otherwise. By turning what would have been hazardous waste into jobs, in 2019 they diverted over three million pounds of electronics from the landfills and provided \$272,000 in taxpayer savings.



The following are some of the actions identified by the Colorado Emergence Series participants to support a circular economy in the state:

- Promote municipal composting operations for urban and rural operations.
- Encourage efficient and circular flows of materials throughout Colorado's economy.
- Identify and transition away from industries that are polluting.
- Identify programs that eliminate food waste and increase connections to organizations that can distribute food to food banks and other ways to feed people in need.
- Create a Colorado-centric communication campaign to bring awareness to recycling and composting that is easy to understand and targets Colorado residents and tourists. Standardize communication across the state so it is easy to understand and is translated into different languages for all of Colorado's residents.
- Create a trade marketplace for farmers/ranchers and construction workers to share and swap big equipment, thus reducing their overhead and increasing the sharing economy.
- Develop a statewide circular economy app that allows for people to trade and swap gear, clothes, books, electronics and other gear.
- Support gig economy workers by ensuring that the application services that hire them pay living wages and health benefits.





PRESERVE AND STRENGTHEN DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

“Real democracy is much more than elections and voting: it also means that everyone commits to fairness and ensuring vibrant and meaningful public participation in decision-making, especially by the most marginalised people. This means responsibility to future as well as current generations of people.”

- Access Initiative

A functional democracy is essential for achieving progress on any of our agendas, yet democratic institutions are under attack across the country. A regenerative recovery must protect and strengthen our democratic institutions, as well as revitalize active and inclusive civic engagement. For democracy to flourish, it must have an educated and engaged citizenry, a free press that is respected and the guarantee to all citizens that they have the opportunity to speak openly and to dissent. Democratic institutions have historically blocked access to BIPOC, resulting in systemic oppression. A regenerative recovery must prioritize access, voice and equitable opportunity to all communities, especially BIPOC. In the third Colorado Emergence Series session, participants discussed what is needed now to ensure that our democracy is healthy and that the changes we want to see implemented can be achieved in Colorado.

The following are key priority actions that were identified by participants:

- Make voting easy, including automatic registration, extending the time frame to return the ballot, direct voter registration during motor vehicle registration, creating a state holiday for voting, and more voting boxes placed in BIPOC communities.
- Ensure diverse voices on Colorado’s 3,000 Boards and Commissions, especially those who cannot now afford to apply or attend meetings.
- Provide information on how families can engage at the state and local levels, and how individuals can

New Era Colorado is the leading voice for young people in Colorado politics and one of the most effective youth civic engagement organizations in the country.

The organization works toward a better Colorado for everyone, not just for a privileged few, and shape our democracy to work better for everyone.



connect to their city, state and federal government.

- Better enfranchise remote communities. For example, the west slope/east slope program that involves remote communities through technology; increases opportunities to participate in giving remote testimony; enabling remote communities to connect to their state government.
- Ensure that logistical, racial and cultural barriers to voting are eliminated.
- Encourage down-ballot engagement by providing education.
- Establish an interesting and hip statewide civics education program for youth and college students, focusing on both issues and inclusive participation.
- Create accessible and multilingual ballot guides that translate legal language on ballots into common wording so voters can better form their own opinions.
- Encourage television networks to promote a website with public accountability that provides information about upcoming elections and counter disinformation.

“Colorado really leads on both fronts [the pandemic and voting security] and can serve as a model for voting under both crises. The first and foremost is the use of mail-in ballots, early voting and the accessible elections we have. For the second, Colorado is one of the safest states in which to cast a ballot.”

- Jena Griswold, Colorado Secretary of State

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MAKING IT HAPPEN: FUNDING A REGENERATIVE RECOVERY

The final session of the Colorado Emergence Series focused on what is required to make the transformational changes needed for a regenerative recovery. Obviously, a regenerative recovery in Colorado will need to be supported by more than government funding, as the state is facing a challenging future. Some analysts estimate that COVID-19 will force a \$6.8 billion deficit on us over the next several years.⁵⁴

All of the proposals put forth by Colorado Emergence Series participants will require resources and funding to implement. Participants suggested a wide variety of funding mechanisms that often extended beyond traditional boundaries and reflected the nature of collaboration required for a regenerative recovery.

The following are key priority actions that were identified by participants:

- The Regenerative Recovery Coalition should create an investment strategy for funding regenerative recovery.
- The Polis administration and state legislature should support authorization for cities/counties/regions to create local public banks/green banks to support local needs and create a business plan for creating a state bank.
- Create a process for evaluating spending and effectiveness of projects against a regenerative Colorado vision.
- Implement permanent solar and wind tax credits. This can be done at a state level, as well as federal.
- Support campaign to suspend and/or repeal TABOR to support investments in a regenerative recovery.
- Seek federal community block grants for regenerative projects.
- Create three partnership pillars: allocate state and federal recovery dollars to seed pilot projects, activate foundations to launch projects and create proof of concept, then use to attract private sector funds to scale.
- Strengthen the Clean Energy Credit Union.
- Provide additional money for SNAP to support regenerative farmers.
- Invest sufficient funds into public lands to ensure their ecological integrity, including strengthening existing infrastructure.
- Explore the creation of a sharing economy for farming capital equipment. Encourage cooperative structures. Empower farmers to build local coalitions.
- Explore use of tax benefits to make local processing economically viable and seek ways to invest in local food processing.
- Create financial mechanisms and market structures that support regenerative outcomes; for example, encourage Slow Opportunities for Investing Local (SOIL) chapters.
- Compensate farmers and ranchers for conservation initiatives to get buy-in. Use federal money for water smart and conservation programs for farmers.



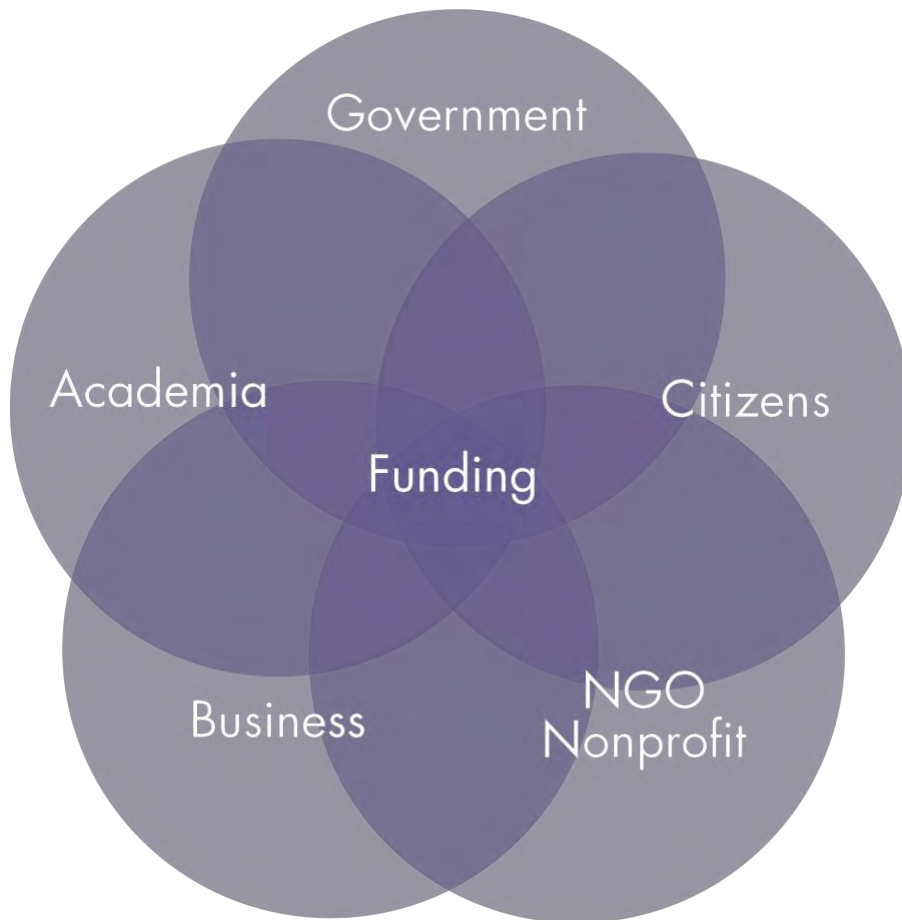
- Support young people getting involved in agriculture by classifying it as public service, and a method for repaying or forgiving loans and increasing the social status of agriculture work.
- Use Water for Colorado’s list of projects when seeking infrastructure funding and ensure that the funding from sport betting money remains in use for the Water Plan.
- Establish a state commitment that federal dollars will go preferentially to BIPOC communities. Start with the recently signed small business stimulus bill.
- Have the business community provide support, resources and a scholarship fund focused on BIPOC students.
- Have the business community offset costs at two-year institutions as part of a plan to encourage four-year schooling.
- Engage the business community to provide support for the students of color to navigate the educational/training system, especially for first-generation students.





LEVERAGE DIVERSE PARTNERSHIPS TO DEMONSTRATE REGENERATION IN ACTION

Establishing a regenerative recovery is an urgent priority. It will take efforts on a scale we're not used to. But there really is no choice. That is why the Regenerative Recovery Coalition is being built. As of October 1, 2020, the Coalition has 155 members representing over \$2.5 billion in annual revenue and more than 19,000 jobs in Colorado. The Coalition has members from diverse sectors including for-profit, nonprofit, media, academia, state and local governments and individual citizens. Many members have helped to shape the strategies outlined in this report, all have signed on in support of the regenerative recovery and are now ready to get to work to build Colorado forward.



A sample of Coalition members include:

- Business for Water Stewardship
- Denver Museum of Nature and Science
- Denver Zoo
- Focus Points
- The Equity Project
- Mile High Connects
- New Era Colorado
- South West Energy Efficiency Project
- Boulder Organic Foods
- Brendle Group
- Cornerstone Capitol
- Montanya Distillers
- Switch Automation
- Group 14
- Colorado Department of Local Affairs
- Denver Climate Action, Sustainability and Resiliency Office
- San Miguel County

As the initiatives identified above are implemented, these demonstration projects will share information. The Coalition will seek partnerships and collaboration across diverse boundaries. Making it happen will also take creative approaches to funding and supporting these efforts. If we are successful, we all win.



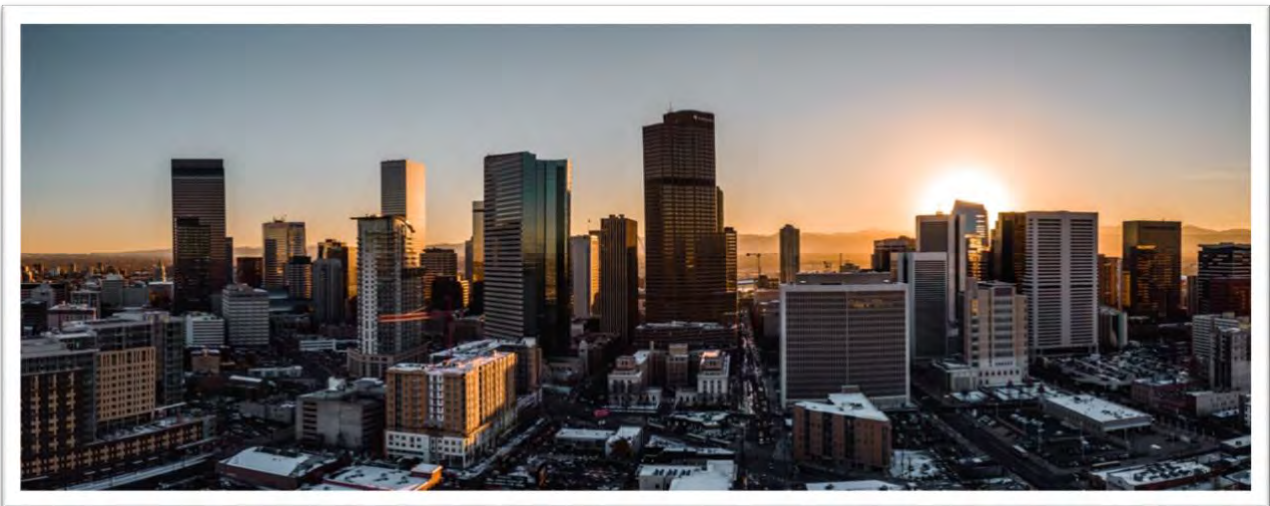
**A gap analysis is currently underway to identify who is missing from the Coalition to ensure diverse and effective engagement, targeted recruiting will then follow. Two priority areas for engagement are with rural Coloradans and increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of the Coalition members.*

METRICS

Creating a regenerative recovery needs timely and effective feedback in order to amplify successes or implement course corrections. One of the first tasks of the Colorado Regenerative Recovery Coalition and its membership will be to establish and test metrics by which to judge the success of the actions suggested above.

During the Series, participants discussed possible metrics for success, including:

- Job creation, i.e., unemployment decreases to rates that are pre-COVID-19.
- Growth in regenerative jobs. We need to establish a baseline metric of the number of jobs currently in the 'regenerative' category and analyze future potential for such jobs.
- Number of people retrained for the regenerative economy.
- Amount of renewable energy generated per year until 100 percent renewable energy is achieved by 2030 or sooner.
- Amount of the state's energy that is supplied by renewable sources in various sections (transportation, industrial, residential) and track progress to the state's renewable plan.
- Conversion of acreage to regenerative agriculture.
- Number of farmers' markets.
- Reduction of individuals who are food insecure.
- Increase in number of engaged youth.
- Involvement of communities of color in leadership and decision-making.
- Air quality; attainment of federal air quality standards throughout the state.
- Increase in amount of state's land protected.
- Broadband availability in all neighborhoods; broadband supplied to every part of the state.
- Every community is electrified (transportation, built infrastructure).
- Diversity celebrated in all communities.
- All Coloradoans have access to quality health care.



NEXT STEPS

The Alliance will continue to lead the regenerative recovery movement and coordinate the Regenerative Recovery Coalition that we are creating together. The next steps include:

- I. Formalize partnership with the administration
 - A. Secure the commitment of the governor's office to a regenerative recovery.
 - B. Continue conversations with the following departments to identify a best partnership structure for the next phase of this work. Include other applicable departments:
 1. Department of Local Affairs
 2. Office of Economic Development and International Trade
 3. Colorado Energy Office
 4. Inter-agency Climate Team
 5. Department of Higher Education
 6. Department of Labor
 - C. Establish effective meeting cadence to ensure this work supports the priorities of the administration while advancing a regenerative recovery.
 - D. Establish relevant Coalition working group membership from key offices within the administration.
- II. Establish long-term funding streams
 - A. Identify where The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding or other recovery dollars may be allocated for pilot projects.
 - B. Continue to build key philanthropic partners and develop the concept of catalytic funding to endow the regenerative recovery movement in Colorado.
 - C. Apply for federal, state and private grants to support this work.
 - D. Seek corporate sponsorship and major donor gifts.
- III. Communicate the regenerative recovery narrative
 - A. Create a public-facing narrative.
 - B. Create and implement media and marketing plan to engage a wide and diverse audience.
 - C. Collect and share stories of inspiration and impact.
- IV. Advance key policy initiatives for the 2021 legislative session
 - A. Identify key policy priorities from the administration and legislature for 2021 and map to the regenerative recovery strategies.
 - B. Meet with key policy leaders and Coalition members leading into the 2021 session to collaborate on policy initiatives.
 - C. Activate the Coalition policy members during the 2021 session to pass key policies that support this work.
 - D. Begin to map 2022 and beyond policy needs.
- V. Build, activate and support the Regenerative Recovery Coalition
 - A. Complete gap analysis of Coalition members to identify who is missing, identify and recruit key members to ensure diverse representation and essential participation across all eight of the fundamentals to a regenerative recovery.
 - Focus on racial, geographic and industry diversity



- B. Establish effective working groups of the Coalition for each of the eight fundamentals to a regenerative recovery.
 - C. Host plenary session of all Coalition members Q4 of 2020.
 - D. Activate working groups Q4 2020 into Q1 2021.
- VI. Create regenerative zones/pilot locations throughout Colorado representing the diversity of the state.
- A. Q1- Q2 2021 identify key pilot projects for each working group.
 - B. Pilot projects will be selected to accelerate implementation of strategies in the report and baseline metrics will then be established for each project.
 - C. Impact metrics will be tracked year-over-year to determine success, impact and scalability.
 - D. Working groups tasked with advancing each pilot project and collecting metrics.
- VII. Inventory and engage businesses and organizations already pursuing regenerative activities in Colorado.
- A. Agriculture
 - B. Energy
 - C. Businesses
 - D. Government agencies
 - E. Nonprofits
 - F. Individuals
- VIII. Replication model
- A. Document process and outline replication model of other states and localities.
 - B. Research and connect with other recovery efforts in the US and abroad that share similar values.



CONCLUSION

The world is changing. 2020 gave us a glimpse of change at scale. This time, when our world has been upended and things are slowed and sped up at the same time, is the perfect time to change, because everything already is changing.

The Alliance Center partnered with the Polis administration, Natural Capitalism Solutions and Greener Solutions to host over 200 individuals from diverse backgrounds across Colorado to rethink how we can repair Colorado's economy and move forward in ways that are regenerative of our people, natural resources and economy. This Series sprang from the recognition that we must seize this unique moment in time to create a better life for all, as we protect the vast and beautiful resources in our state.

As we emerge from the shards of the old normal, we need to craft an economy that is about more than just goods and services. Building forward cannot be based on the old system. Our differences must become our strengths. Coloradans can lead the nation to show how a regenerative future will happen. It is time to enable everyone in Colorado to thrive.

Achieving this will require moving through three distinct steps:

- I. Stop the harm.
 - Transition to renewable, distributed, reliable energy.
 - Build Colorado's circular economy.
 - Ensure healthy, community-led regenerative food systems.
 - Invest in natural and built infrastructure.
 - Use workforce development to reverse inequity and structural poverty.
- II. Create conditions for healing and prosperity.
 - Commit to equity, diversity and inclusion.
 - Prioritize decentralized and local solutions.
 - Strengthen democratic institutions.
 - Prioritize equity and prosperity.
 - Build the workforce of the future.
- III. Learn along the way: It's an imperfect journey.
 - Build on what's working today.
 - Create regenerative opportunity zones.
 - Form partnerships; collaborate with a common goal.

The tragedies wrought by COVID-19 crisis seem all consuming. Yet it is essential that we prepare to address other life-threatening issues, from global loss of biodiversity to inequalities of our economic system to the dangers to our democracy to the myriad challenges of the climate crisis. Many people long only to return to "normal." The Alliance Center convened this Series because there can be no return to what once constituted normal.



This is an interstitial moment—a time between. It is a powerful time, a time to lean into executing a regenerative, resilient and promising future.

Our task now is to build on recommendations in this report and identify the best path to implementation, working together to deliver a regenerative recovery for Colorado. Participants in the Colorado Emergence Series have begun the hard work to craft a plan that ensures a better future for all Coloradans. In partnership with the Polis administration, the Coalition will tackle the biggest issues facing Colorado. As we go forward, we commit to creating a regenerative economy based on equity and inclusion, diversity and shared prosperity on a healthy planet.

It's not Impossible. It just hasn't happened yet.



APPENDIX

The Colorado Emergence Series Process

In April of 2020, The Alliance Center announced the Colorado Emergence Series, six separate facilitated meetings. Experts in the respective areas were surveyed to determine participants to be invited. Every effort was made to ensure geographic, ethnic and industry diversity.

Participants were sent a document prior to the meeting that provided Colorado specific statistics, background information on the topic and examples of regenerative progress.

The meetings were held virtually on Zoom and were approximately two hours in length. Each session was facilitated and carefully structured to provide subject matter content, brainstorming time in break-out rooms and then an opportunity to report back to the plenary session. The participants also used the Zoom chat function to provide additional content, ideas and discussion during each session.

Each session was recorded, and AC staff kept careful notes of all recommendations, intentionally non-attributed. The actions and recommendations provided were summarized into meeting proceedings and sent to each participant for review.

Analysis of Recommendations

The Colorado Emergence Series yielded over 250 recommendations for action to support a regenerative recovery for Colorado. Many of the recommendations reached beyond the topic of the session. Many had implications that positively impacted different systems. The authors of this report designed a system to catalogue all of the participants input.

A [Google Sheet](#) was created and all of the recommendations were entered by session and the suggested timeline (now, six months, one year +). The following are the steps that were followed to prioritize and aggregate the Series action items.

- **Step 1:** Recommendations were reviewed and duplicate recommendations eliminated.
- **Step 2:** Each recommendation was reviewed for breadth of impact to determine the number of sessions to which the recommendation was relevant. This was tallied as “Session Frequency.”
- **Step 3:** Each recommendation was given a “*Priority Impact Score*,” which was the result of *Ease of Implementation* (scored from 1-5 with 5 being the easiest to implement) multiplied by *Impact Score* (scored from 1-5 with 5 having the most impact). All recommendations with a score of 12 or higher were considered High Priority Impact and noted in red. Recommendations that were scored with 4 or higher in Ease of Implementation for Impact Score were also included.
- **Step 4:** Each recommendation was reviewed to determine who should be responsible for implementation and if local or state policy changes were needed.



- **Step 5:** Each recommendation was then carefully reviewed for patterns and affinities and were organized according to the Fundamentals for a Regenerative Colorado.

Contributors to the Report

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- [Colorado Emergence Series participants](#)

Glossary of Terms:

Agrovoltaics: solar photovoltaics arrayed so that crops can be grown or animals pastured under the cell arrays.

AQCC Methane Standards: Standards on methane emissions set by the Air Quality Commission of Colorado.

BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, People of Color.

CDOT: Colorado Department of Transportation.

Circular Economy: concept created by Walter Stahel that calls for minimum materials design and construction, recovery of scrap materials, recycling and reuse of end of life products and materials.

Climate Cabinet: Governor Polis’ group of agency heads who are responsible for implementing climate protection in Colorado.

Climate Roadmap: Governor Polis’ plan for climate protection in Colorado.

COSSA: The Colorado Solar and Storage Association.

Decarbonization: eliminating the use of fossil carbon throughout the economy to reduce emissions of CO2 that are driving the climate crisis.

Distributed Energy: small-scale renewable energy installations that are spread out to where the energy is used. It includes, rooftop solar, garage scale batteries, small wind generators.

DNR: Department of Natural Resources.

Doughnut Economics: concept put forth by economist Kate Raworth of an economy that operates below the scientifically determined planetary boundaries, yet ensures enough material sufficiency for all people to achieve dignity. The resulting “safe and regenerative operating space for humanity” is the sweet, doughnut-shaped economy that delivers a world that works for everyone.

Ecosystem Viability: intact ecosystems have integrity that enables them to be sustainable, because they are regenerative. Human intervention that chops up ecosystems, eliminates species, removes too many resources destroys the viability of the ecosystem.

Equitable Access: ability of all people regardless of race, age, gender or other distinctions to get the goods and services that they need from the system.



Food Resilience: ability of the agricultural system to withstand disruptions to production, the supply chain and equitably and affordably distribute nutritional food to everyone who needs it.

Food Sovereignty: ability of communities to decide what sorts of food they will grow, eat and sell.

Green New Deal: Congressional resolution to reduce fossil fuel use, cut greenhouse gas emissions as it guarantees high-paying jobs in clean energy industries. Europe, South Korea and Costa Rica, among many other jurisdictions, have committed to similar or more aggressive Green Deals.

Hydroponic Food: Food that is grown in sophisticated water-based systems without soil that can use up to 90 percent less water than conventional methods.

Land Stewardship: The conservation of the property's natural resources and features over a long period of time.

Natural Infrastructure: Strategically planned and managed network of natural lands, such as forest and wetlands, working landscapes and other open spaces that conserves or enhances ecosystem values.

OIA: Outdoor Industry Association.

Opportunity Zones: A designation and investment program created by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 allowing for certain investments in lower income areas to have tax advantages.

Regenerative: to regrow or be renewed or restored, especially after being damaged.

Regenerative Agriculture: Farming and grazing practices that start with soil health. It achieves, among other benefits, climate protection by rebuilding soil organic matter and restoring degraded soil biodiversity; resulting in both atmospheric carbon reduction and improved water cycles.

Regenerative Economy: A regenerative economy aligns itself with living systems principles, patterns of systemic health, self-organization, self-renewal and the laws of physics. It is founded on a commitment to address and remove the systemic barriers that created the inequalities of the past. It establishes the conditions to achieve shared prosperity on a healthy planet and provides opportunities for all voices to be heard and participate in decision making.

Regenerative Food Systems: An approach that actively reinstates and regenerates the environment, ecosystems and food systems that have been destroyed or devastated by conventional industrial agriculture.

Regenerative Recovery: COVID 19 economic recovery efforts that builds a robust, localized economy abundantly meeting human needs while equitably providing clean water, air, energy and food.

Regenerative Zones: Building on the model of Opportunity Zones, a designation for a town, municipality or region to receive special funding to demonstrate regenerative recovery projects.

SNAP: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) - a US Department of Agriculture program that provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of needy families so they can purchase healthy food and move towards self-sufficiency.

Structural Poverty: The state of being poor because of weaknesses in the economy that does not give people a chance to earn a sufficient income.



Citations

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COLORADO'S
**REGENERATIVE
RECOVERY**

BUILDING COLORADO'S
ECONOMY FORWARD

A COLORADO PROJECT
MANAGED BY



**THE ALLIANCE
CENTER**

UPDATED NOVEMBER 2020

COLORADO EMERGENCE SERIES

Never let a good crisis go
to waste.
- Winston Churchill



We're at a turning point. COVID-19 hit Colorado hard. To meet this crisis, the Alliance Center created the six-month Emergence Series. The pandemic exposed flaws in an economy that worked well for some, and not others:

- Our supply chains are brittle.
- Too many Coloradans are economically insecure.
- The healthcare system only works for some.
- Food systems let far too many go hungry or underserved.
- Polluted water, bad air and inequitable access to services harm many.
- Extractive energy choices drive climate change causing droughts, floods and deadly fires.

The Colorado economy is already in transition to something better, a regenerative economy. Industries fight hard to keep things the way they have always been, however:

- Renewable energy already supplies more than twice the jobs of oil and gas.
- Outdoor industries and hospitality are the largest employers in the state.
- Colorado is the national home of the natural foods industry. Conventional agriculture is declining year on year, while organic food production is soaring. In the pandemic industrial meat processors closed, while farmers markets prospered.

The Colorado Emergence Series convened diverse individuals from across Colorado to share ideas for a recovery that would deliver a resilient and regenerative economy. The resulting action plan moves from vision to impact, addressing climate change, food systems, energy, water, infrastructure, natural resource management, workforce development to build a stronger democracy. The first outcome was the formation of the Regenerative Recovery Coalition to craft and oversee this transition.

Join us to Build Colorado Forward.

REGENERATIVE RECOVERY COALITION

The Alliance Center convened the Coalition to amplify the work of the Emergence Series and regenerative efforts already underway in our state. The COVID-19 pandemic, combined with the intersecting crises of climate, racism, economic inequality and loss of biodiversity requires us to bring businesses, academia, nonprofits, government and citizens together to drive implementation of a regenerative economy based on equity and inclusion, diversity and a shared prosperity on a healthy planet.

The Regenerative Recovery Coalition created working groups to shape and implement the new economic system. These will enable Colorado to:

- **Transition** rapidly to renewable, distributive, reliable energy
- **Strengthen** and increase Colorado's regenerative food system
- **Provide** equitable access and opportunities for all
- **Build** the industries and workforce of the future
- **Invest** in natural and built infrastructure
- **Build** Colorado's circular economy
- **Preserve** and strengthen democratic institutions
- **Leverage** diverse partnerships to demonstrate regeneration in action



Regenerative Recovery:

COVID-19 economic recovery efforts that builds a robust, localized economy abundantly meeting human needs while equitably providing clean water, air, energy and food.

AN ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR ALL

Emergence Series participants put forth hundreds of suggestions for the Regenerative Recovery.

For the full list, visit thealliancecenter.org/emergencereport.

2030

Regenerative Recovery Coalition's goal of decarbonizing Colorado

10,000

oil and gas jobs lost in Colorado in 2020 alone

\$6.7 billion & 16,000

potential revenue and renewable energy jobs for Colorado per year over five years if we implement these solutions



Among these suggested solutions were:

- Create Regenerative Recovery Zones.
- Remove barriers that limit individuals and communities from implementing renewable energy.
- Initiate a Colorado Conservation Corps to restore damaged ecosystems and deliver jobs and training.
- Ensure that diverse stakeholders are included whenever statewide plans are created.
- Eliminate historical barriers faced by farmers of color in loan and funding access.
- Strengthen the Colorado Climate Roadmap to rapidly decarbonize the state.
- Prioritize areas like the Globeville/Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods for regenerative and restorative activities, as these areas have some of the worst water and air quality.
- Eliminate the digital divide by providing universal broadband and affordable technology to youth in schools, disabled citizens and in rural and Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, equipping them for the future workforce.
- Provide training and incentives to encourage the transition to regenerative agriculture.
- Recruit the companies of the future and preferentially invest in creating the industries of a regenerative economy.
- Implement an effective high school vocational program including apprenticeships for students who choose not to attend traditional colleges.
- Support the Colorado Water Plan.
- Provide job skills training to help oilfield workers gain new careers without uprooting their families.
- Work with trade associations and community workforce development groups to ensure that educational programs train people for the jobs for which companies will be hiring and de-risk the hiring program.
- Promote resilient and decentralized energy solutions, especially in rural areas and BIPOC communities.
- Invest in waste reduction and recycling industries that create jobs.
- Build a comprehensive conservation plan for Colorado.
- Encourage and promote agritourism and sustainable tourism for Colorado's mountain and rural locations.
- Work with resort and tourism-based communities to build year-round economic opportunities.

COLORADO IS AN ECONOMY IN TRANSITION

Jobs by sector in Colorado*

IT industry in metro Denver

58,190

Clean energy

66,223

Arts and culture

100,631

Outdoor industry

511,000

Oil and gas

40,420

*Pre-COVID-19 numbers. More information can be found in the full report.



Colorado's diversity is its strength. Our people, geography, professions, people, industries and cultures together underpin Colorado's economy. From the orchards of the western slope to the plains of the east, from the ranching valleys to the urban I-25 corridor and the ski towns of the mountains, we share a desire to build an economy for Colorado that works for all.

Our task now is to work together to deliver a regenerative economic recovery for Colorado. In partnership with the Polis administration, the Regenerative Recovery Coalition will tackle the biggest issues facing us. Together we can create an economy of equity and inclusion, diversity and shared prosperity on a healthy planet.

Join us to Build Colorado Forward. We look forward to working with you.



COLORADO'S
**REGENERATIVE
RECOVERY**

Visit thealliancecenter.org/coalition to learn more and join us.