



Community Assessment June 1 & 2, 2015



**DOWNTOWN
COLORADO, INC**

**Mineral
County**
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1893
Colorado

CITY OF CREEDE
A COLORADO TOWN



*BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITIES BY PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO DOWNTOWNS,
COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS AND TOWN CENTERS IN COLORADO THROUGH EDUCATION,
ADVOCACY, INFORMATION AND COLLABORATION*

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Team Members

The Creede Assessment Team appreciates the invitation to get to know your city and to assist your community in maximizing its considerable assets. The volunteers worked diligently, pre- and post- visit, to provide relevant and realistic input towards the betterment of your commercial district.

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Creede Community Assessment Report Narrative

June 1 & 2, 2015

Introduction

Welcome to the community assessment for the City of Creede, Colorado. Downtown Colorado, Inc. (DCI) is proud to offer affordable, quality assessments for all Colorado member communities to build and maintain vibrant commercial districts, town centers, and downtowns in our state. Qualifying communities in Colorado have the opportunity to apply for assistance through DCI and receive the work of high quality consultants at a low cost thanks to the in-kind contribution of consultants from DCI's professional membership base. The community assessment for the City of Creede was also made possible by the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT), the Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination Team (RWEACT), and the Creede Community Foundation.

The goal of a DCI community assessment is to gather community leaders and stakeholders and develop a structure for the community to best support local businesses and a vibrant commercial district. The process results in a road map to guide community leaders in providing services and training to help local businesses thrive.

To ensure quality and affordable services, DCI assembles a team of professional consultants experienced in their discipline, including designers and architects, marketing and branding specialists, land use planners, redevelopment and real estate specialists, economic developers, and finance experts.

These consultants form DCI's team, which then works in the community over the course of two days to contribute to this final report. Team members valued the invitation to learn about and assist your community and have worked diligently to provide relevant and realistic input in this report.

Executive Summary

In the fall of 2014, the City of Creede and the Creede Community Foundation requested a community assessment from Downtown Colorado, Inc. (DCI). The assessment visit was held on June 1 and 2, 2015, with the purpose of identifying community issues and opportunities, and providing tools, insights and direction to help Creede achieve its community revitalization goals.

Prior to this visit, the City of Creede and the Creede Community Foundation planned the agenda, identified key stakeholders for focus groups, and provided extensive background information about the history and status of Creede's downtown revitalization efforts. Because Creede has been considering applying to the Colorado Main Street program and a downtown assessment or plan is required for acceptance into that program, the agenda for this



Photograph courtesy of Creed Community Facebook Page

assessment was developed with that goal in mind. Main Street staff also participated in the assessment.

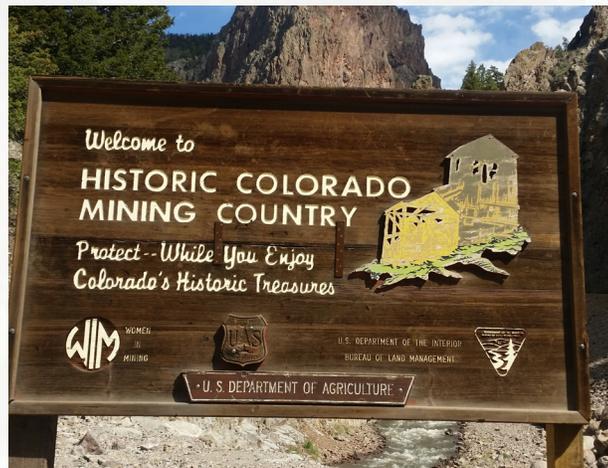
DCI organized an assessment team with combined experience in organizational management, marketing and promotions, branding, economic development, land-use planning, design and architecture, historic preservation, resource development, and financing mechanisms. Upon arrival in the community, team members were given a presentation on the community history and current issues, and a tour of the town. Throughout the day, the team conducted focus groups with arts organizations, elected officials, town staff, service providers, business owners, and the general public. The focus groups allowed the team to meet directly with stakeholders and hear multiple perspectives about the issues facing the downtown and the community as a whole. It also provided a chance for team members to ask the community about the perceptions, strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities related to Creede.

On the second day of the assessment, DCI's team members gathered to discuss their observations and formulate recommendations. That evening, team members presented their findings in the form of a PowerPoint presentation followed by a question-and-answer session open to the community-at-large. The following report provides a brief history of the community, a list of observations and recommendations for short and long-term projects in four areas: Organization and Management, Marketing and Promotions, Economic Development and Restructuring, and Physical Improvements and Design. The report appendices contain an action plan and documents related to the recommendations. The community will also receive an Implementation Toolkit to assist with implementing the provided recommendations.

Background and Context¹

The City of Creede, Colorado, a statutory town incorporated as a city in 1892, is the county seat and only town in Mineral County. The population of Mineral County, according to the 2010 U.S. Census, is 712, the majority of whom work and do business in Creede. The City of Creede is located in the San Louis Valley, near the headwaters of the Rio Grande River, 23 miles west of South Fork and 52 miles east of Lake City on the Silver Thread Byway.

Creede holds the claim of last silver boom town in Colorado, and has a notable outlaw history. Bob Ford, the man who killed Jesse James, owned a saloon in Creede² and was himself killed, in Creede, by Edward O'Kelley. Poker Alice, probably the most famous female poker player in the old west, worked in Bob Ford's saloon.³ "Soapy" Smith, famous con artist and crooked businessman, operated the Orleans saloon and gambling hall in Creede.⁴ Other notable figures with connections to the area include William Jackson Palmer and the Browns (of relation to the "Unsinkable Molly") who



1 According to information provided by the community during an orientation presentation, tour, and focus groups on June 1, 2015.

2 Ries, Judith (1994). *Ed O'Kelley: The Man Who Murdered Jesse James' Murderer*. Marble Hill, Missouri: Stewart Printing and Publishing Co.

3 Weiser, Keith (2012) *Legends of America*. <http://www.legendsofamerica.com/we-pokeralice.html>

4 Smith, Jeff (2009). *Alias Soapy Smith: The Life and Death of a Scoundrel*, Klondike Research

owned land in the surrounding area

Creede's roots are deep, with many community members having family ties extending back to some of the first settlers of the area. Mining was an important aspect of the community's development and continued in Creede until the 1980s. Even today there is an effort to reopen a mine on Bull Dog Mountain. Art became a key aspect in Creede's later development. In the 1960s, a proposal was written to bring a performing arts theater to downtown. The proposal was accepted and from that day the Creede Repertory Theatre (CRT) grew into a community center-piece. Today, the CRT is known nation-wide and is credited by the community for sparking the arts culture in Creede.

Today, Creede is a community loved by both its residents and by second home-owners, who predominantly hail from Oklahoma and Texas. Both long-time families and part-time visitors enjoy the area's natural beauty and sense of community. Creede has a strong seasonal economy driven by tourists and summer residents coming to experience the heritage, art, and festivities of Creede along with the public lands that cover 96% of Mineral County. During the off seasons, summer residents return to their homes and most of the shops and lodging locations shut their doors. The community has a strong desire to supplement its valuable seasonal economy with a more dependable year-round economy.

The community has expressed that there are many people who desire to live in Creede and Mineral County but who cannot take up residence due to the limited housing and job opportunities due to Creede's seasonal economy. The largest employers in the community include the Creede Repertory Theatre, the school district, the City of Creede, the hardware store and Mineral County. In recent years, Creede has seen a burst of film activity with two commercials and the 2013

film "The Lone Ranger" partially filmed in the area.

The West Complex Forest Fires that occurred during the summer of 2013 devastated the local economy but galvanized the community's support efforts and led to several positive collaborations. The Creede Community Foundation formed in 2013 as the Creede Community Relief Fund and after assisting businesses affected by the fire, has taken the lead in pursuing designation with the Colorado Main Street Program and downtown revitalization. The Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination Team (RWEACT) has fostered stronger regional ties that include Creede and Mineral County to protect against future fire damage. Creede is also active in the Silver Thread Scenic Historic Council, another regional approach that is working to strengthen local economies by promoting the sites and towns connected by the Silver Thread.

The community has seen additional success in its ability to implement several water and mine reclamation projects and thus minimize the size of an EPA Superfund Site. They have also responded to an identified demand from pilots to sell fuel at the local landing strip. Finally, they have developed creative events, such as the Chocolate Festival in late November, to activate slower times in the winter and shoulder seasons. Other events that have had notable success during these times include: Halloween, Winter Boomtown, Christmas, Pond Hockey Tournament, Cabin Fever Daze and Spring Break. Creede has a strong foundation on which to build. With a plan of action and collaboration among the active groups, the community will be able to address

its challenges and ensure that the future of Creede matches their vision for a successful and prosperous community.

Focus Group Observations

The following observations were made during the orientation, focus groups, and tour held during the community assessment:

- Creede has several wonderful assets including an iconic and historic mining district, a strong arts community, and plentiful outdoor recreation opportunities.
- There are several destination businesses both within Creede and in Mineral County, many of which are independently marketing Creede and the region.
- Creede is currently dependent on a seasonal economy, with activity during the summer months and very few products, services or amenities available during other seasons.
- Creede struggles to meet its housing needs and it can be difficult for those who desire to live in Creede to become permanent residents.
- Creede's roots are deep, with families of residents, visitors, and second-home owners extending back for multiple generations.
- There is a growing economic presence in Mineral County just south of Creede.
- The Willow Creek Reclamation project illustrates the community's long term commitment to conserving its natural beauty and maintaining a safe environment for locals and visitors.
- The recent coordination between city and county officials and the community's involvement in regional efforts build a strong foundation for Creede's revitalization efforts.
- There are many organizations and groups working to improve the community with the support of engaged community leaders.

Assessment Team Recommendations

This assessment focuses on activating stakeholders and resources in a comprehensive approach to capture and direct existing activities into the following topic areas that are vital to revitalizing downtowns:

- **Management:** Primarily focuses on resource management including human resources, partnerships, and finances.
- **Marketing and promotions:** Primarily focuses on branding and messaging, communication, and events.
- **Economic development and restructuring:** Primarily looks at opportunities to collect data, enhance services for business, and identify and catalyze underutilized assets.
- **Physical improvements and design:** Primarily looks at beautification, infrastructure, parking, connectivity, and historic preservation.

The observations gathered from the community have been categorized into these topic areas below. Recommendations specific to the City of Creede follow each observation.

Organization and Management

The first section of this report focuses on organization and management, which includes developing collaborative efforts, recruiting and managing volunteers, fundraising to support projects, and developing operational strategies based on those adapted from the National Main Street Approach. Best practices in organization involve getting everyone working toward the same goal and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement a downtown revitalization program. The three principal components of organizing a downtown revitalization program are: public and media relations, volunteer development, and fundraising.

A governing board and standing committees make up the fundamental organizational structure of

a volunteer-driven program. Volunteers are best organized and developed by a paid, full-time or part-time program director. This structure not only divides the workload and clearly delineates responsibilities, but also builds consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders. While a paid downtown coordinator may not currently be feasible, it is something to strive for in the future.

Notwithstanding this fundamental description of a typical downtown organizational structure, numerous variations exist throughout the State of Colorado as well as nationwide, and are driven largely by local circumstances. In some towns, for example, the chamber of commerce is strong enough to add an organizational component designated to focus on the downtown. Other areas develop some form of special district to dedicate resources and focus on downtown. In others, the Board of Trustees may be the governing board to facilitate and organize efforts.

Regardless of the organizational structure chosen, the most successful communities accomplish their desired outcomes by developing a solid organizational component early in the process to oversee and manage their downtown revitalization efforts. If the community does not create this coordinating function early on, the program will have difficulty accomplishing the desired outcomes and will be at risk of fading away before it has a chance to succeed, despite the best intentions of all concerned.

Making organizational development the highest priorities of early revitalization activities is not the most exciting part of the process, but it is the most critical. The community must absorb and contemplate what is feasible to accomplish with these efforts based on the capacity and resources of the community and various organizations. When facing many priorities, success will come through a team approach of shared responsibilities.

Observation: Creede is blessed with amazing scenery and a long history of tourism. The 2013 West Fork Complex fire galvanized the community

for the need of more long-term planning to ensure sustainability.

Recommendation: Strengthen Creede’s planning, communications and partnerships with a focus on the downtown as the heart of the community and let your objectives shape your decisions.

- While the downtown has long drawn visitors and served as a gathering place for locals, there are several developments occurring that will divert resources and people into other areas of the county. With the school and library leaving the downtown, it will be necessary to make a deliberate choice to declare downtown a priority. The Trustees should develop a statement of the importance of the downtown and outline clear objectives to guide all decisions regarding use of resources. For example, Lake City DIRT has as their mission “Using the ‘Four Point Main Street Approach,’ work to strengthen, revitalize, and broaden the economic base of Historic Lake City while recognizing and promoting the historic, cultural, social, and economic significance and the spectacular resources of the San Juan Mountains.” They then list guiding principles to inform decision-making (see www.lakecitydirt.com, “Vision, Mission & Guiding Principles” for more information).
- Use the geographic area outlined in the Creede Main Street Application as a guide. It will be important to continue to focus on the Main Street core of Creede to ensure



- that its success continues, especially with the school and library leaving downtown.
- Creede should be incredibly proud of its downtown core, particularly the area along Main Street between the Kentucky Belle store and the Courthouse. The success of this vibrant, idyllic and well-functioning commercial district should be lifted up as an example for other areas of Creede and Mineral County. Looking carefully at the characteristics that make downtown a success, including historic buildings, authentic character, active community involvement, diversity of uses (including residential, commercial and civic), walkability, views to open space and cultural resources.
 - The assessment team heard repeatedly that the priorities and focus areas for Creede are Heritage, Arts and Recreation. These are themes that can be used to shape decision-making processes. The brand of Creede and marketing materials, whether printed or online, should showcase these aspects. Events should engage stakeholders to include event components that highlight these themes. Shape fundraising to speak to audiences in these areas. These themes should be incorporated into physical design elements, signage and displays as well.
 - Develop a stronger focus on engaging diverse local groups into one celebratory event for all of Creede. A community-wide appreciation event can bring the whole community together, accentuating and celebrating the differences in background and history to weave together a tale of Creede's past, present, and future. Establish a process to engage and invite each organization to develop a unique component of the event:
 - Include an oral history project for school youth to interview the early families with multi-generations and create an oral history presentation that the Historical Society can showcase. Add to this each year and while the original families can be the foundation, be sure to look at the various decades that Creede has been in existence. Tie it back to national and global events.
 - Invite artists to develop the

awards for distribution at the event. They can use found materials that symbolize some aspect of "Creede."

- Create demonstrations or contests from recreational groups to provide entertainment and fun.
- Don't forget those who are new to the community by creating an award for the most active new businesses or family in town.
- Utilize the stakeholder analysis to formulate communications and strategies with key groups. Consider how these relationships can advance implementation of recommendations made in this report. This will be an ongoing process that needs to be evaluated and refined monthly. Each month, look at 2-3 groups and consider their interests, contributions to downtown, and the best approach to work with them.
 - For groups with strong partnerships, like the city and county, consider how to formalize and preserve the positive relationship that currently exists. This might be through written agreements and outlining specific roles.
 - When groups that have formed for specific tasks reach their objectives, disband the group to avoid burnout. Make sure to celebrate the success of their work.



Observation: Inclusive approaches create a stronger community package. In a traditional membership model, important entities often feel excluded, causing missed opportunities for new contributions.

Recommendation: Consider ways to expand the Chamber to serve the whole community.

- Use an investor model instead of a membership model to expand the reach of the organization. This approach allows creative ways for different types and sizes of businesses and organizations to be included. Get everyone to “buy in” in whatever way they can. For more details, please see the investor model information in the appendices.
- Perform a welcome center function for the whole community. For further discussion on this recommendation please see the “Marketing and Promotions” portion of this report.



Observation: There are many active organizations and individuals working to improve the community, but they are overwhelmed with meetings and “wearing too many hats”. It will be important to streamline the work of active groups by setting unified objectives in the community and reducing duplication.

Recommendation: Define roles and responsibilities for organizations. Use one of the DCI follow-up visits to facilitate a dialogue with the various groups to outline the ways that each group is contributing to the community’s development and sustainability. Following the initial summit, move to regular monthly check-in meetings (not lasting more than 45 minutes) with non-profits, community groups and community leaders to expand and refine collaboration. Areas that should be considered by all groups during the monthly summits include:

- Grouping or condensing meetings to reduce multiple meetings per month and to be respectful of everyone’s time and

energy.

- Pursuing fundraising cooperatively by outlining complementary roles and co-marketing the impacts of multiple groups e.g. history and the arts; health, education, and recreation.
- Finding ways to share staff and volunteers to eliminate duplication of effort. In addition to the Chamber Visitor Center, both museums could serve this function and distribute community-wide material.
- Expanding an annual appreciation event to solidify established relationships and recruit new individuals. See details above.
- Creating a community project identification and volunteer day. This could be an excellent approach for getting small, achievable projects identified, assigned and completed, further unifying the community through a sense of tangible accomplishment. Build your objectives for planning and engagement into this strategy.

Observation: There is untapped potential in (1) the efforts of several entities that are independently supporting the community through marketing efforts and (2) in the love of community by long-time seasonal residents.

Recommendation: Harness local assets and existing efforts to reach community goals by cultivating partnerships with three key sectors:

Local Marketing Efforts

This includes local businesses, guest ranches, the Creede Repertory Theatre, and Mountain Views RV Resort and Park. Encourage “co-branding” with local marketing partners whereby they use their advertising, social media, website, email databases, PR efforts and collateral materials to promote Creede. Local marketing partners should use a unified and consistent Creede logo and slogan with a brief description of the area’s trademark attributes: Heritage, Arts, and Recreation. Promoting their physical location through these channels adds equity to their brand and business offering, creating a win-win situation.

Regional Marketing Efforts

In order to generate significant visitor traffic to Creede, tourism experts suggest that there must be two nights and three days’ worth of appealing activities in the area. Capitalize on the two highest profile “attractions” in the area, the Silver Thread Byway and Wolf Creek Ski Resort, to attract the attention of travel writers, bloggers and active outdoor recreation travelers. Collaborate with Lake City and South Fork to offer exciting three-day get-a-ways to the region. Utilize all of the marketing and promotional resources available in each of your three cities to create a synergistic and dynamic offering sure to attract attention from your target audiences.

Part-Time/Seasonal Residents

It is critical going forward that these important but often unseen members of the Creede community be both acknowledged and activated in helping the city achieve its goal to become more of a destination for those seeking heritage, art, and recreation in a pristine, natural mountain environment.

There is a dire lack of available housing options for both off-season visitors and “friends & family” of Creede year-round residents. This partnership would enlist the help of part-time residents through the rental of their residences during their absence. Key messages to gain participation by these important downtown stakeholders are based around a theme to “Support Your Local Community.” It should be acknowledged that these part-time residents are part of the Creede family (“We Are Family”) and that their help is critical if they want to “Keep Us Creede Strong”.

Please see appendix IV for a suggested communications approach for this initiative.

Marketing and Promotions

Marketing and promotions assist in building a vital downtown by creating and delivering a positive image of the commercial district. A clearly identified image encourages consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play, and invest in the commercial district. By marketing a district’s unique characteristics to residents, investors, business owners, and visitors, an effective promotional strategy creates a positive image. This image can then be reinforced through advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns carried out by local volunteers. These activities improve consumer and investor confidence in the district and encourage commercial activity and investment in the area.

Observation: The community does not have a comprehensive marketing approach. There is a depth to the community of Creede that could be captured and demonstrated with a cohesive message.

Recommendations:

- Develop a community brand and targeted marketing campaigns. Focus on the three main messages of the city: Heritage, Arts, and Recreation. These three messages should be the DNA of the community’s brand. Every implementation of any type of collateral materials and events should be planned through the lens of these pillars.
- Use one of your follow up visits with DCI to evaluate Creede’s current brand and further discuss the process of creating

a new brand. This conversation should involve community stakeholders as well as the perspective of an expert from outside the community. The process of branding will require community participation, creative brainstorming, and likely several iterations of ideas.

- Create a strong community brand, logo, tagline, letterhead, business card, full page ad, banner program, bumper sticker, and T-Shirt. Give audiences a clear understanding of the message of the community by narrowing down specific goals of the community: to enhance, promote, attract, create, etc. Focus all of the collateral materials and marketing around this goal. This process will help the community find its identity and strengthen its internal bonds.
 - To begin this process, create a stakeholder group focused on developing the community brand. Draw from a mixture of business owners, property owners, residents, staff, youth/high school students and elected officials. A group of 10-15 members is ideal.
 - For the final logo, consider using a professional as this will be the image of the community. However, if there are no funds available, there are very user-friendly logo apps available for free or a very low one-time cost. (e.g., LogoScopic). Enlist the help of your local graphic designer and a community group to weigh in on preferences.
 - Develop a yearly branding budget for creation of first-priority brand execution materials. This will assist the community in prioritizing marketing campaigns. Knowing

the available funds and using them in a strategic way is the first step in creating a sustainable brand for the community. During the budget process make sure to consider any consultant fees, material fees, and printing fees. In addition, create a projected implementation calendar annually.

- Once a community brand has been established, a signage and way-finding program could help reinforce the brand, while also helping to direct visitors and residents into and around the community. The brand should be translated into the physical signage on the street. This will aid visitors in their basic understanding of how destinations, amenities, and businesses are accessed throughout the community. For further discussion on signage please see the “Physical Improvements and Design” portion of this report.



- Currently, Creede’s Chamber of Commerce holds five events per year. Re-evaluate all events in the community and, as necessary, re-direct events to align with the community’s marketing goals which focus on heritage, arts, and recreation. All events should be strategically planned with objectives and a process for consultation with the branding stakeholders group. There should be no confusion from the target audiences about how each of these events ties into Creede. If necessary, it may be time to decide whether past events should be continued if they do not align with the brand of the community. Complete the Strategic Event Planning Matrix in the appendix to assist with event evaluation.
- Develop marketing campaigns that focus on the previously identified messages. Work with the branding stakeholder group to determine the final order of importance for different marketing campaigns. Tie the order of importance to economic development needs outlined in the recommended economic development plan (see the report section on “Economic Development and Restructuring”).
- Work with surrounding communities to coordinate and publicize an annual events calendar. It is important to connect with events in neighboring communities so that there is not overlap or competition for audiences and themes. This strategy will also eliminate any gaps in the calendar. If there is an event in South Fork, Lake City, or Wolf Creek identify ways to share in the visitors (e.g., offer a discount for people showing their ticket from a Lake City event.)
- Use DCI Downtown Tracking initiative to collect hard data on visitors, dollars spent in the community and the effectiveness of the marketing campaign. The community should implement a tracking initiative of its own related to downtown, so that volunteers, projects, money invested and quantifiable results of advertising or other campaigns can be measured.
- Work with the Chamber to develop buy-in around leveraging resources for enhanced

marketing impacts. Assess the Chamber investor package included in this report (Appendix V) as one way to increase sustainability of the Chamber as an organization. Use one of your DCI follow up visits to help facilitate this dialogue.

Observation: Marketing efforts in Creede through multiple organizations and various messages currently focus on a Baby Boomer audience; however, the community expressed a desire to attract younger generations and families. According to the demographic profile of Creede provided by the State Demographer (see Appendix V), age groups most commonly associated with families are among the largest declines in Creede.

Recommendations:

- In order to diversify the target audience to include younger generations, a strong social media presence must be developed and maintained.
 - Create an editorial calendar which pinpoints social media goals. This should include how many followers the community should have and a timeline stating when those goals will be reached. There should be a weekly goal of



Facebook and Twitter posts.

- Improve upon Creede’s successful social media presence with branding and key objectives. The Chamber run “Creede Colorado” page is extremely successful and has generated a large following—the Chamber of Commerce should continue this great work.
- Utilize two students from the high school interested in media communication to assist with Creede’s social media presence. Establish the amount of time each will need to assist with an Editorial Calendar or other objectives (no more than 2 hours per student.



per week).

- Using the three main messages of the City of Creede, diversify, expand, and integrate the marketing approach by always identifying the target audience for ALL material and social media. Each generation is going to be reached in a different way. It is advised that members of the Chamber of Commerce and business owners attend social media and/or destination business training (see Downtown Colorado, Inc.’s website for upcoming events offered through DCI.)
- Focus promotional dollars on marketing to specific groups who may not already

be coming to Creede. The current visitor guide efforts are great for a Baby Boomer audience; however, most millennials will not sit down and read all of the information provided. The visitor guide can be condensed into a 1-page (double-sided) slick sheet of all the businesses and attractions in the area – not just Chamber members. More detailed information should be found on the website or in the Visitor Center. Limit the visitor guide funds to the regional partnerships of Lake City and South Fork. The time and costs associated with a large visitors guide can be transferred to a larger audience online. Assess this short visitor’s guide as part of an overall marketing and branding strategy and decide which organization or coalition would be best able to execute the project.

Observation: There is not one obvious location that houses all the events, businesses, or recreational activity information.

Recommendations:

- Develop a one-stop shop for information. Adjust the Chamber of Commerce center to emphasize its role as a Visitor Center. Visitors need somewhere that immediately catches their eye, where they can talk to someone about the town, and find the appropriate information for their interests and needs.
- Create a map containing all of the businesses in the city. This map should be color-coded by business type (e.g., green for retail, yellow for restaurants, etc.) and easily accessible in locations throughout the city. This map should be updated annually and placed strategically throughout the downtown district.

Economic Development and Restructuring

The focus of economic development and restructuring is to assist in efforts to recruit, retain and expand opportunities for investment in downtown. This is accomplished by ensuring that investors and businesses are aware of all of the resources available for assistance as well as the benefits of choosing to locate their business

downtown. This includes the opportunities that may exist to capitalize on promotional activities. It also works to build strong relationships between downtown businesses, residents, and users.

Observation: There is a need for a comprehensive economic development plan for long term economic stability.

Recommendations:

- There are three main components for any community's long term economic stability: business attraction, retention, and expansion. Develop a strong economic development plan which uses existing assets for these three goals and includes a focus on entrepreneurial development when looking at business expansion. This plan should also identify opportunities for regional development and marketing.
- Consider a test study to assess the economic and marketing impacts of connecting downtown to Bachelor's Loop for ATVs. This assessment should include a survey of county residents and could include a trial period in which a trail was opened for one summer.
- Based on recommendations from the developed plan, Creede should continue to pursue appropriate funding opportunities through federal and state agencies as well as targeted incentive and assistance programs. These initiatives should support the existing business community as well as attract new businesses that will complement and grow Creede's economy.

Observation: Creede's economy is heavily dependent on the summer season, mostly between Memorial Day and Labor Day, requiring existing businesses to strive to make the majority of their profit during this time. In order to avoid significant losses during the slower winter months, many businesses will close during the "off" season. Those businesses that are open during the winter months acknowledge that they anticipate losing money but recognize that activity downtown will encourage a more robust winter season.

Recommendation: Identify ways to create a year-round economy that will encourage existing businesses to stay open - at least part-time during the "off" season - and new businesses and entrepreneurs to start businesses in downtown.

- Creede has done an excellent job making internet available to downtown businesses, with 22/25 businesses having internet service. Further, the service has proven to be generally affordable to businesses, at \$70/month.. Because of its beauty and rich cultural heritage, Creede has an opportunity to attract non-location based businesses and others who rely on fast internet. Consider ways to market Creede to technology focused businesses looking for a beautiful, affordable and community oriented setting.
- During the winter months, there is a lack of lodging options available in Creede for winter tourists and local visiting family. Cultivate additional short-term rental options to fill these lodging gaps. Develop partnerships with second-home-owners as detailed in the report section on "Organization and Management."
- Continue building events and activities during the winter season and market the numerous winter assets that are available in Creede (i.e. snowmobiling, Nordic skiing).
- Many businesses are unable to stay open during the winter months due to extremely high energy costs. Find ways to offset these energy costs by working with the San Luis Valley Rural Electric and the propane providers to identify/ create potential subsidy and financial assistance programs. Explore alternative options such as geothermal heating or solar energy that may be more affordable if purchased as a group.
- Use the comprehensive plan process to provide tools and guidance to leaders in developing long term strategies for a year-round economy. For recommendations related to Creede's comprehensive plan,

see the “Physical Improvements and Design” section of this report.

Observation: Creede has great attractions and destination businesses for part-time residents and tourists, but there may be gaps in the local market for goods and services needed by local residents and businesses.

Recommendation: Target initial business attraction efforts on those businesses that address the needs of local residents and businesses.

- Identify goods and services needed by residents that are currently not available within Creede. Consider completing a retail leakage study to identify retail dollars that are being spent outside of Creede.
- Survey existing businesses to identify those services (printing, faxing, etc.) needed to support the existing business community.
- Continue the great work that has been initiated by CCF and SBDC to provide Leading Edge courses and business seminars. As the first of its kind in the state of Colorado, these innovative programs should be supported and encouraged. Continue to promote these courses and seminars and connect potential entrepreneurs to these resources. Build a permanent foundation for the workshops to grow on.

Observation: While there is limited land for new construction and development within Creede, there is an obvious concentration of economic growth occurring outside of Creede. This growth could have a positive impact on Creede’s future growth and development; however, Creede needs to build strong partnerships with these developments and identify how there can be connections between the downtown and development in Mineral County.

Recommendation: Develop a symbiotic relationship between downtown and the new development occurring in Mineral County south of town. This relationship

should explore ways to ensure that there is a physical connection between Mineral County and downtown as well as potential marketing opportunities.

- Encourage connectivity between downtown and Mineral County. This could be done by using directional signage as well as encouraging the use of the Willow Creek Multi-Use Trail.
- Where appropriate, collaborate on marketing and promotional efforts between these developments and Creede. This could include cross-referencing in brochures and on websites.

Observation: Business training opportunities can provide much needed support and valuable information for both existing businesses and potential new start-up businesses.

Recommendations:

- Training offers business owners an opportunity to explore and create alternative ways to support business growth and development. Trainings can range from simple business operational and management topics to complex technical topics. Given the range of businesses in Creede and the opportunity to identify potential business ideas for entrepreneurs, training topics should be targeted and offered at times that do not conflict with business operations. There should also be a focus on encouraging business owners to suggest topics that might benefit employees.



- Survey businesses to determine the type of training or assistance needed and when to schedule these trainings. There is a better chance of having larger participation at these training options if businesses are engaged and provide input on the planning.
- Continue to work with the San Luis Valley Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and other regional partners to identify business seminars and workshops that would prove to be the most useful for Creede businesses. Work to identify the possibility of using local businesses or community members with expertise in specific topics to conduct training workshops. Topics should include social media, marketing, and other technical components of business operation.
- Given the new technology that will be available at the library, consider engaging the library for business development and training, especially on topics involving technology and social media.
- Complete the relocation package so that new residents and businesses have a concise document that provides informative content on Creede and its economy.

Observation: There is a vibrant arts community in Creede with many talented craftsmen.

Recommendation: Given this amazing arts culture and the tremendous community support that exists for the numerous artists and craftsmen, Creede should focus on expanding the craft trades and the arts. As more craftsmen and artists are encouraged to grow, Creede will continue to strengthen its reputation as a cultural arts center in Colorado.

- Create events and programs that are supportive of the craft trades/ arts and allow these individuals to showcase their work. Allow artists to identify what events and programs could provide the most impact and when these events should be held. Work closely with the arts council to market the numerous artists/ craftsmen and their work and share this information

with regional, state and national outlets.

- There are a considerable number of small, home-based artists and craftsmen that are unable to focus full-time on their work due to financial constraints. Consider implementing an economic gardening program to provide focused training and support for these artists. Create mentorship programs to guide crafters from home to downtown.
- Develop a coop, pop-up, or artist in residence program to provide additional space for artists in the downtown. Be sure to include space for larger crafts. Staff these coops and pop-up stores with actual artists so that artists can connect with potential clients.

Observation: There appears to be a lack of youth involvement and participation in Creede.

Recommendation: Enhance opportunities for youth, especially in Creede's three focus areas: heritage, arts, and recreation.

- Create a workforce/training program to cultivate youth involvement. Look into the Colorado Youth Summit Program which provides youth training and experience in historic preservation.
- Given the many artists in Creede, there is an opportunity to connect these established artists with youth in a mentorship program or collaborative project. Consider creating a vocational training program through the arts council to introduce students of all ages to a variety of artistic mediums. Local artists serving as teachers and mentors can provide training to students around the arts and crafts industry.
- Support existing student work at the theater and encourage more students to pursue opportunities to work within the theater.
- Develop an opportunity to engage youth in collecting oral histories and preserving the

town's heritage. Connecting youth to the town's roots may inspire more to stay and support their home town as adults.

- Develop an opportunity for youth to become more involved and more interested in their downtown and its appearance.
- Utilize the student council to identify student interests for training, internships, volunteer opportunities, and community leadership opportunities. Create a position on community boards or committees for a student representative.



Physical Improvements and Design

Design takes advantage of the visual opportunities inherent in downtown by directing attention to all of its physical elements, including: historic assets, public and private buildings, storefronts, signs, public spaces, landscaping, merchandising, displays, and promotional materials. Its aim is to stress the importance of design quality in all of these areas, to educate people about design quality, and to expedite improvements in the downtown in order to improve the experience of visiting downtown for residents and visitors. The celebration of these assets and historic preservation ethic will be an important component if you intend to apply to become a Colorado Main Street community.

Observation: The City of Creede has recognized that there is an opportunity to be proactive in the development of the current growth patterns.

Recommendation:

Continue the City's work on the development plan. The community image noted in earlier sections based around Heritage, Arts and Recreation should be woven into the comprehensive plan and other documents to be created. Integrate the need for work force and creative worker housing. This may require further study of housing needed through the use of assessments. Surveys of

historic properties may also be integrated into the development plan leading to future integration of historic districts or building guidelines targeted towards historic assets.

- Continue with work on the development plan already begun by city staff. Seek public comment prior to completing the document. Integrate other community plans such as housing, recreational master plan and recommendations made in the existing comprehensive plan. When the new comprehensive plan is completed, update this development plan as needed.
- Update the existing 2000 comprehensive plan. The existing comprehensive plan identifies many of the items identified during this assessment. Create a steering committee to gather public input and review existing comprehensive plan recommendations as well as provide new recommendations. Continue work on keeping building code and regulations up to date to conform with the updated plan.
- Explore creative ways to engage the public. Development plans, comprehensive plans and building codes are difficult to understand without education. Use other organizations or events to update the community. Provide small informational articles or presentations about the status and purpose of the current code activities being provided by the city.

Observation: Creede has incredible history, both built and cultural, but there is a gap at the local level to advocate for celebrating your culture and heritage.

Recommendation:

- Formalize and support the existing historic group to help further the other recommendations in this section and really be the champions for Creede’s cultural heritage. This board could also serve as the future board that will be required to become a Certified Local Government.
- Consider becoming a Certified Local Government (CLG) through the History Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP). CLG status ensures the municipality is conducting preservation properly and opens up a new funding source just for CLGs. This funding can pay for a historic survey, for example. In addition, CLGs have the authority to locally designate historic properties, provide more local control of preservation, and have easier access to state and federal tax credits.
- Host educational opportunities for the community to learn about the importance and benefits of cultural and historic preservation. Training is especially important for local non-profits, citizens, and the city. It is also important as a foundation for maintaining Creede’s unique identity. History Colorado and/or DOLA may be able to provide training(s).

Observation: Historic Preservation is underutilized as a community builder and financial tool.

Recommendation:

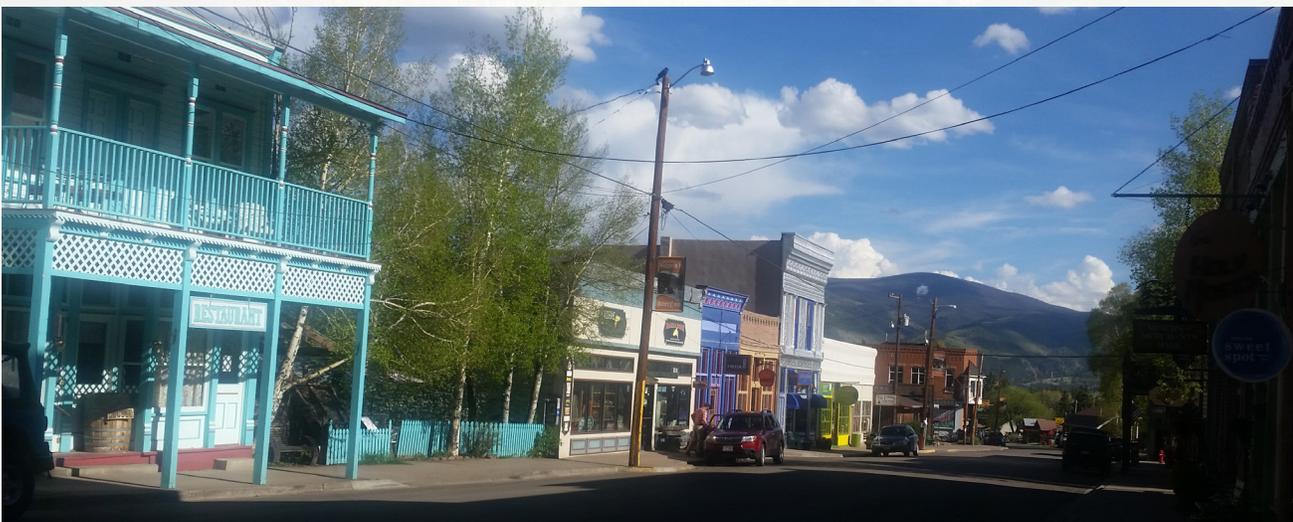
- Hold public meetings about the benefits of historic preservation.

- If there is public support, the second step is to identify historic resources through either a general survey or a survey of certain individual historic buildings. See the below observation for more detail on a historic building survey.

Observation: Creede has a number of historic buildings which, if historically designated, could benefit from available rehabilitation financial incentives. Reinvestment in these buildings through historic designation and available incentives can increase the tax base, improve livability and help maintain the unique character and culture of the community.

Recommendation:

- Create a historic building inventory starting with downtown. The survey will help the community better understand the inventory of historic buildings, identify important buildings, and may begin to describe their condition. The survey can also help determine if local buildings and available resources are best suited for a CLG. See the “Funding Mechanisms” section of this report for details on support offered by History Colorado the State Historical Fund. History Colorado offers the majority of their survey support through the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.
- Use the survey to identify local, state, and/or national significance for historical designation and to determine the availability to create potential historic districts. Designation can provide access to the state and federal preservation tax





credits programs.

- Once the survey is complete, the city and community should prioritize available resources and develop a plan for reinvestment. Create incentives for building owners and ensure that city regulations promote saving and reusing existing buildings. Update current ordinance language, such as the zoning code, regarding historic buildings to better reflect community values. Incentives should include energy efficiency as a high priority.
- Review local building codes as they relate to existing buildings. Consider adopting the 2012 or future 2015 International Building Code (IBC) and create localized amendments to streamline processes for existing buildings. A more up to date building code may open up some federal funding sources. The IBC series of codes specific to existing buildings has opportunities to use alternate code compliance methods to rehabilitate older buildings. Consider creating a program to help building owners get up to code.

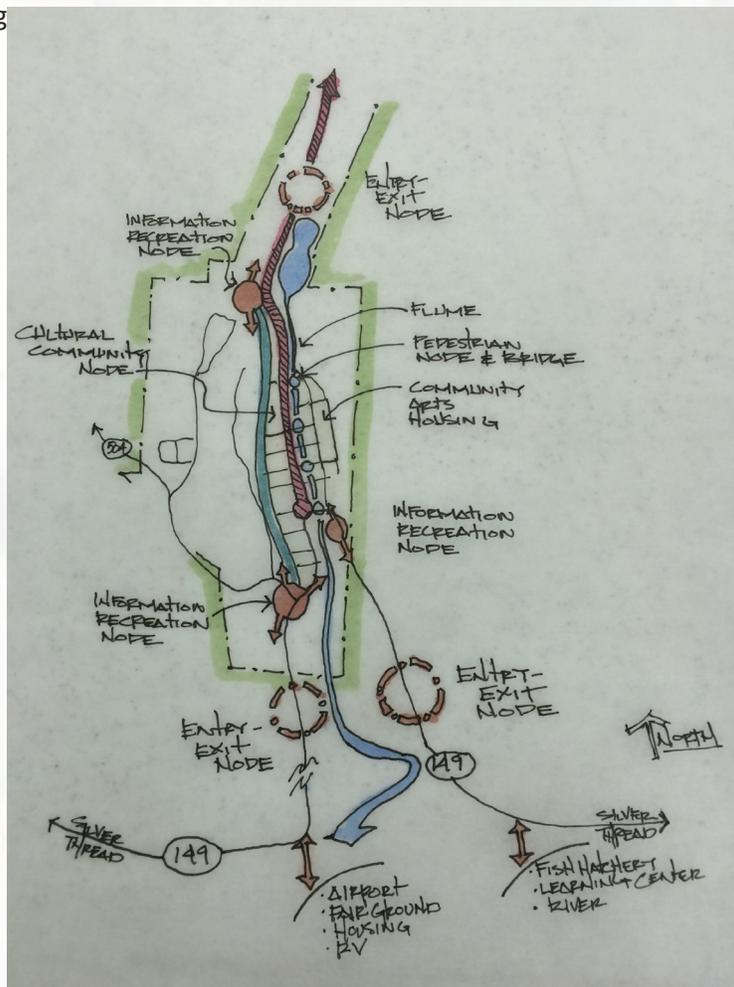
Observation: Heritage tourism could be significantly improved through signage. Tourists may appreciate seeing and learning about your history.

Recommendation:

- Expand the existing tour of the community's history to help capture the heritage tourists that are already

driving through the community. This tour could be a brochure, phone application, volunteer-led walking tour, driving tour, signage, kiosks or historic markers. A historic survey can help inform this tour. Include significant buildings, sites, pictures and interesting community information or stories. According to History Colorado's publication, "The Economic Power of Heritage and Place," heritage tourists spend more money and stay longer.

- Install informational plaques on important historic buildings or at significant historical sites. A historic tour (in the recommendation above) can lead to these informational plaques. These plaques will help tell the community's story and allow people to better connect with the city.
- Work collaboratively with other historic communities and groups along the Silver



Thread Scenic Byway to develop a regional approach to heritage and cultural tourism. These groups should build upon each other and help the entire corridor become a rich cultural attraction.

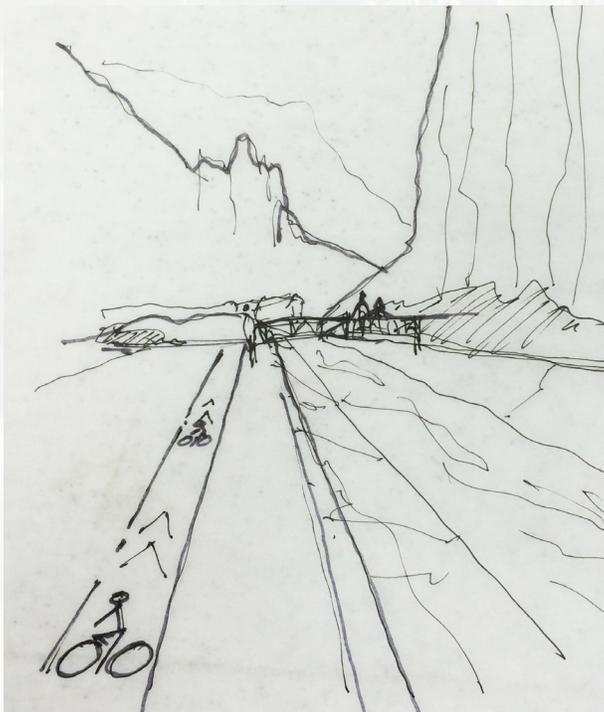
- Tell the story of Creede's outlaw and wild west past. Use the above suggestions to highlight the stories of Bob Ford, Poker Alice, Soapy Smith and Creede's wild beginnings.

Observation: Multi-generational families in the region contain a treasure trove of fascinating history. Many wonderful oral histories have been documented, and represent a fantastic resource for the community.

Recommendation:

- Consider creative ways to utilize existing oral histories. Play parts of the oral histories on the radio or through local television or other media. Include them as part of a historic tour. A grant for a project such as this may be awarded from History Colorado or the State Historical Fund.

Observation: The continued growth and development of the community has created a long standing shortage of housing.



Recommendation: Consult with DOLA's Division of Housing to identify possible funding sources and define a scope work for a housing study. Secure funding for the assessment. Identify potential consultants and engage one to complete the assessment. The housing study can also include the analysis of how to support the creative people in the community. The assessment will allow a targeted approach to housing needs as well as opportunities for incentives. Coordinate this work with the ongoing comprehensive and development plan work.

Observation: There are many outdoor activities and amenities with access points throughout the community and no coordination between activity points.

Recommendations:

- Create a recreation master plan of outdoor activities. Consider how those physical assets are accessed and can be used and connected to Creede.
- Include such activities, amenities, and access points including but not limited to: pedestrian, ATV, bicycles, hiking, rock climbing, snowmobiling, regional traffic, and heritage tourism.
- Identify possible funding sources. Secure funding for work and identify potential consultants. Create a small task force to coordinate various community groups actively engaged in outdoor activities.

Observation: The downtown streetscape is not cohesive, and does not take advantage of many opportunities which would help promote the unique attributes within and surrounding Creede.

Recommendations:

Short Term

- An inventory and analysis should be conducted by the City of Creede, with significant citizen input, to identify the existing assets and cultural opportunities to attract people downtown. The analysis should include identification of what physical elements would attract more residents and visitors downtown.

- Prior to undertaking a complete streetscape master plan, preliminary streetscape and placemaking ideas and concepts should be identified. This could include potential locations for new benches, bike racks, street lighting, banners, or other pedestrian amenities.

Long Term

A follow up step to the preliminary streetscape and placemaking concepts would be to prepare a downtown streetscape master plan with the goal of implementing new streetscape in most of downtown. Improvements should be considered from the highway on the south end of town to the community center on the north end of town. New streetscape should include but not be limited to:

- new curb and gutter
- sidewalk improvements
- curb extensions
- street furniture such as benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, newspaper racks and others
- signage for pedestrian and vehicular movement
- improved street lighting and year round banners
- additional street trees and landscaping
- specialty paving at important intersections

Observation: Creede has many types of signage which creates a very confusing situation for visitors who may not know how to reach destinations.

Recommendations:

- The city should create a signage and wayfinding plan for downtown. It is important that this plan include significant signage for motorists traveling on Highway 149 as well as regional, county or local social trails. Wayfinding signage should be provided for:
 - Parks
 - Schools
 - Theatre

- Civic uses
- Parks
- Regional mining area
- Parking
- Outdoor recreation areas serving motorized vehicles (ATV, Snowmobile) and pedestrian (hiking, climbing, fishing, hunting)

- Access between destinations could be improved by providing alternate routes for different modes of transportation.
- *Long Term:* Prepare a city-wide transportation connectivity plan to identify other important connections not only in downtown but throughout the entire region.

Observation: There appears to be adequate parking in the downtown. However, signage and identification of public/private parking areas is inconsistent.

Recommendations:

- Engage local businesses and residents to identify needs or gaps in the way existing parking is being utilized.
- Long term parking should be limited to off-street parking lots. Employees, employers, and long-term visitors should be directed to use the off-street parking lots for long-term parking. The wayfinding signage program should include signage that identifies public parking lots and directs downtown visitors to these lots. This will be especially important for those using ATVs, snowmobiles or other recreational activities in which vehicles are left for long periods of time.
- In time, the city may consider parking meters (coin operated meters or “smart meters” that accept credit cards), or pay stations for on-street parking in the downtown. This is a more efficient and effective means of controlling parking. It would also generate funds to pay for the parking personnel - or other downtown

needs, such as streetscape improvements or maintenance. Parking in off-street parking lots should remain free to encourage their use.

is already a dirt trail established through the Lower Willow Creek area up to the Fairgrounds. By enhancing and extending the trail, students could potentially use it throughout the year.

Funding Mechanisms

As the community begins to implement projects, it will become important to identify appropriate funding sources to support those projects. The community should strive to develop sustained funding sources and leverage local funding with external resources in ways that maximize the impact of local resources. This section recommends specific resources that the community should investigate when considering how to implement projects.

Observation: It is important for the city and other organizations to fully understand and prioritize the needs of the community in order to recognize when funding opportunities from other sources become available. Available funding from state agencies, foundations or other programs can provide needed finances to get a project done, but only if the community chooses to access them and understands their own needs.

Recommendation: There are opportunities for the city and other entities to leverage available local funding with outside resources. Research available funding that aligns with the work being done in Creede. The city and other groups are doing great things to enhance the community. This work can only be enhanced with funding from other sources.

- The Department of Local Affairs assists communities interested in completing capital improvement plans (CIP). The CIP is an important tool in prioritizing projects, timing and funding needed. Potential funding opportunities for capital projects include:
 - Safe Routes to School – With the new school moving out of town it will be important to find ways for students to safely move to and from the new building. There

- Department of Local Affairs – DOLA provides funding to local governments for community development projects. There is a potential that improvements and upgrades will need to be made to the flume that runs through downtown. There are also potential water/wastewater upgrades that may come in the future. Though the town may have enough cash on hand to fully address one of these needs, if there is an opportunity to harness other funding resources - saving the city some cash for a local match - both issues could be addressed in a timely fashion.
- USDA-Rural Development – Like DOLA, USDA can provide funding for community facilities and improvements. Prioritizing needs and engaging the community are key steps in accessing these funds.
- Colorado Creative Industries – The Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Colorado Creative Industries is partnering with other state agencies and the Boettcher Foundation to provide funding and technical assistance to projects which incorporate artist live/work spaces. Creede should



look at this program for potential project areas in the downtown, old school, or the Hatchery.

- Build on the connections and ideas developed in September’s Rural Philanthropy Days. Contacts, ideas and momentum from the event should be carried forward.
- History Colorado may have resources to help complete a historic building windshield survey or an initial survey. In addition, History Colorado and the State Historical Fund (SHF) offer grants to help pay for surveys. A minimum 25% cash match is required and needs to be in hand when applying for the grant. There are two grant rounds: April 1 and October 1. Be sure to get in touch with SHF if you are thinking of submitting a grant application; you will need to leave yourself enough time to complete a competitive application. A survey update similar to this should take about six months to complete.



know that there money is being matched. Think about creative ways to have the reporting work done. A qualified intern or an AmeriCorps VISTA could do a significant amount of the reporting work.

Observation: The city and county have the responsibility of administering a number of funding sources that should bring value to the community. They also have the ability to collect and distribute other funds that could generate additional value. These funding sources are great opportunities to reinvest in the downtown.

Recommendations:

- Establish processes and outcomes for the internal funding sources available for community projects.
 - The Virginia Christensen Fund (VCF) is a valuable resource for Creede. Look to this fund to leverage funding for beautification, economic well-being, environment, historic preservation and art downtown. Think creatively about how to provide a match—private philanthropy, fundraising or crowdsourcing campaigns could be effective for projects that benefit the whole community. People are more inclined to give if they
 - Mineral County distributes the lodging tax collected by the various establishments in town. These funds, by statute, must be spent on marketing activities that will bring visitors to town. The county, through the application process for these funds, can and should also set up a return on investment report and understand how these funds are furthering the priorities of the community. Furthermore, though the Lodging Tax board is a sub-committee of the Board of County Commissioners, it does not currently have bylaws or term limits. While making these changes should be done slowly and with as much input as possible, a strong formal structure will help the board function at its best going forward. Work with DCI to research options for training and awareness building about sunshine laws and transparency

for entities receiving tax funds.

- Identify opportunities to bring in additional dollars and track new and existing businesses. Creede could potentially collect a small business license or special events fee.
 - These should not be considered a large source of funding, potentially \$10 per business per year, but could be used as a way to track the businesses in town, reach out to them to provide assistance, and understand fully the activities taking place in town. These dollars could be used to help off-set the administrative functions taken on by the clerk or be redistributed out to different organizations, again, based on a return on investment and furthering community priorities.
 - A business license form and fee should be established and available to all businesses online and at City Hall. The Chamber should partner with the city to reach out to all businesses, including those on Main Street as well as home-based businesses and those located in other commercial districts. The form should request contact information including name, address, phone number and email address. This will give the city and Chamber the necessary information to include all businesses in promotional materials as well as to communicate with businesses about important information and upcoming events.

Other Funding Elements

The community should investigate and discuss include the following recommendations:

State Historical Fund Grants: History Colorado offers competitive grants for Acquisition and

Development, Survey and Planning, and Education. Other non-competitive grants may be available for Historic Structure Assessments, Archaeological Assessments or Surveys. Depending on the type of grant and whether the property is privately or publically owned, a 25%, or 50% cash match is required. You may request up to \$200,000 for competitive grants. For detailed information, see the State Historical Fund Grant Application Handbook available for download on DCI's resource library.

Historic Preservation Tax Credits: A tax credit is a dollar-for-dollar reduction in the amount of tax owed to the government. Tax credit projects create jobs and provide financial incentives to revitalize buildings with federal historic designation, state designation or locally designated building through the CLG process. Federal and state tax laws offer tax credits for historic preservation projects that follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards as provided by the National Park Service.

- Tax credits can be used to help span the financial gap as well as leverage other funds when rehabilitating properties.
- The national tax credit is administered by the IRS. The federal government offers a tax credit between 10 and 20 percent, which can be paired with the state tax credit.
- Colorado's tax credit is reviewed by History Colorado and the Office of Economic Development and International Trade. The state tax credit can be used in addition to the national tax credit if the building is a nationally registered property. The state tax credit can also be applied for if the property is a state registered historic property or if the property has been designated locally through the use of a Certified Local Government.
- Becoming historically designated also creates access to historic funding pools, grant programs etc.

DOLA Energy Impact Assistance Fund Grants (EIAF): These funds may be used for streetscape improvements which are owned by a local government. This is an excellent way to obtain

funding for historic buildings which are owned by a local government as a match with History Colorado the State Historical Fund grants.

- Local Governments are the only eligible applicants
- May be used for studies, planning, design and capital improvements
- Generally require matching funds on a 50/50 basis

Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Rural Economic Development Initiative Program (REDI): Funds community asset analysis to determine potential economic development opportunities; stakeholder convening for solution development resulting in new or updated local plans; competitive grant funding for community infrastructure, business facilities and job training. Check the latest eligibility requirements to determine whether this can be a tool for Creede.

Community Development Block Grant: These are federal funds that are distributed by DOLA. The Division of Housing (DOH) and Division of Local Government (DLG) have funds available, as does the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT). DLG money is used for public facilities, DOH money is used to provide gap financing for affordable housing projects, and OEDIT money is used for Economic Development. Visit each agency's website to learn details.

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO): Uses a portion of lottery proceeds to help preserve, protect, enhance and manage Colorado's wildlife, park, river, trail and open space heritage. Consider applying for these funds to enhance access to Creede's recreational opportunities.

The following resources can assist with business development:

- Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT): This agency has several programs from economic development assessments to small business development centers.
- CDPHE Brownfields Program: This program provides direct funding for

brownfields assessment and cleanup.

- Colorado Energy Office (CEO) and USDA Rural Development (RD) Energy Programs: Both agencies have new funding programs to retro-fit both public and business HVAC and lighting systems. *Local businesses could utilize new technology and renewable energy sources to reduce costs.*
- Rural Business Opportunity Grants: The USDA provides funds to public entities, authorities, and non-profits to support small and emerging enterprises. Funds can be applied towards a plethora of business development activities including trainings, strategic planning, incubation, acquisition of land, and building renovations.
- Small Business Administration and Economic Development Administration: These are two federal programs that can assist local businesses in business startup, expansion and relocation.

Other Resources – As a member of Downtown Colorado, Inc., Creede will continue to be eligible for DCI services, training, and educational programs in addition to two follow-up technical assistance visits agreed upon by the city. Creede is an Affiliate member of the Colorado Main Street program, and will continue to receive support through this program as well.

Participating Stakeholders

Please see Appendix IX for the full attendance lists.

- Business Owners
- Chamber of Commerce
- City Staff
- City Trustees
- Commercial Property Owners
- Creede Arts Council
- Creede Community Foundation
- Creede/Mineral Arts & Recreation
- Creede Early Learning Center
- Creede Mining Heritage
- Creede Repertory Theatre
- Galleries and Studios
- Guest Ranches
- Hatchery Arts Center
- Library Board
- Mineral County Ambulance
- Mineral County Commissioners
- School Administration
- Silver Thread Byway Council
- Recreational Trails Groups

Team Member Bios

Katherine Correll, Downtown Colorado, Inc.

Katherine Correll has experience spanning the fields of community outreach to advance downtown and community development, not-for-profit administration, project development and management, local government planning,

marketing, financial and economic development services, and education. Katherine joined Downtown Colorado, Inc. as the Director of Communications and Operations in 2006; in 2007 she became the Executive Director. Katherine received her Master's Degree in Public Administration from Rutgers University and her Bachelor's Degree in Politics with a Minor in Urban Studies from New York University.

Christy Culp, Department of Local Affairs

Christy Culp has worked for the Department of Local Affairs since May 2006. She currently serves as the Regional Manager for the South Central Region of Colorado. She has previously worked as the liaison between the Department and various organizations in the state, including DCI, CRDC, OEDIT, and CRHC. Christy has experience facilitating economic development sessions and rural outreach programs and developing collaborative partnerships with elected officials, residents, businesses, institutions, and organizations. Christy works with communities, monitoring conservation trust fund compliance reports, community service block grant applications, and assisting local governments and community members in identifying and accessing technical and financial resources at the local, state, and federal level.

Christy received her Master's from the University of Colorado at Denver in Political Science with an Emphasis in Politics and Public Policy. Her final project focused on planning for small communities and was a finalist in the Colorado City and County Manager's Association's Best Master's Project competition. Prior to taking a job at DOLA, Christy was an intern in Town of Poncha Springs through the University of Colorado at Denver's Best and Brightest Program.

Michael Short, MH Short & Associates

Michael is the founder of MH Short & Associates, a consulting company specializing in lifestyle marketing strategies for downtowns, festivals as well as entertainment and special events promoters. From 2011 through 2014, he was the Executive Director of the Downtown Fort Collins Business Association, a 501c6 non-profit with

260 members where he help orchestrate their conversion from an event-driven organization to a marketing-centric one and realized many other significant successes while leading the organization on its mission to “Promote Downtown and Help It Thrive”. Short currently serves as Chair of the Development Committee on the DCI Board of Directors and as a board member on the Fort Collins Advisory Parking Board.

Tim Stroh, Colorado Main Street Program

Tim Stroh AIA is a Main Street Architect with the Community Development Office at the Department of Local Affairs focusing on design and historic preservation, rehabilitation with the Colorado Main Street Program. He has over 17 years of experience working on historic preservation projects throughout rural Colorado. His background includes providing practical education about design, preservation techniques, incentives and benefits of historic preservation and good design. Tim received his Bachelor’s in Environmental Design and Master’s of Architecture from Montana State University in Bozeman, Montana. He is a registered architect in Colorado as well as an active member with the Colorado American Institute of Architects.

Nicole Thompson, Lake County Economic Development Corporation

A recent transplant to Colorado from Virginia, Nicole J. Thompson has been the Executive Director of the Leadville Lake County Economic Development Corporation since August 2013. She has almost twenty years of experience in community and economic development. Prior to moving to Colorado, Nicole worked for numerous localities throughout Virginia, included King George County, the City of Portsmouth, Fairfax County, the City of Norfolk, and the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development. Nicole graduated from the University of Richmond (Richmond, VA) with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and Urban Studies and received a Master’s degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Jessica Turner, Terracon Consultants

Jessica is a highly motivated and high energy business development professional in the architecture, engineering and construction industry. She is responsible for lead generation, networking, marketing, and sales activities for the sole purpose of creating value for her firm’s clients. Her expertise includes driving targeted business development activities, writing and presenting proposals, delivering presentations, and managing business networks. Jessica has proven to be a reliable and resourceful liaison between the client and the firm. She consistently upholds a positive energy in a fast paced environment to determine the client’s needs and develop strategies in order to provide a favorable customer experience.

Hilleary Waters, Downtown Colorado, Inc.

With a background in publishing, events, and public relations, Hilleary Waters brings an extensive and varied background to Downtown Colorado, Inc. As publisher of two community newspapers for over 20 years, she chronicled the news, people, events and developments of central Denver. As an Army brat and dedicated world traveler, Hilleary is equally at home in small town America or a dense, vibrant metropolis. A graduate of Southern Methodist University (theater!), she has called Colorado home for over 30 years—almost a native.

Emerging Leader Team Support

Conor Laing, Lake County Economic Development Corporation

Conor Laing is the Main Street Intern for the Leadville Lake County Economic Development Corporation. He is a Master of Public Affairs candidate at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin specializing in economic, education, and environmental policy. He has previously worked for Consumers Union, Colorado Commits to Kids, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Conor received his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado.

Nancy Sprehn, Downtown Colorado, Inc.

Nancy graduated with a BS in Urban and Regional Studies in December, 2013 from Cornell University where her studies focused on community engagement and placemaking. She brings experience in design, communications, and organizational development from Engaged Learning + Research, in Ithaca, NY, in social services and customer service from NYC Public Service Corps, and in events coordination and operations from the City Parks Foundation, in New York City. She is currently serving as the AmeriCorps OSM/VISTA and Community Assessment Coordinator at DCI.

Appendices

I. Action Plan Matrix

II. Suggested Downtown Stakeholder Roles

III. Blank Strategic Event Planning Matrix

IV. Seasonal Resident Communication Strategy

V. Chamber Investor Model

VI. Mini-Market Analysis Options, P.U.M.A.

VII. Creed Demographic and Economic Profile

VIII. Assessment Agenda

IX. Assessment Sign-in sheets

X. Assessment Presentation, June 2

The community should also consult DCI's Implementation Toolkit for an assortment of planning documents and guidance to assist with implementation of the recommendations contained in this report.

Community: Creede

Project: Community Assessment

Plan Start Date : July-15

Planning Months Out:

Observation	Recommendation	Objective	Tasks to Reach Objectives	Deliverables	Initiators/Partners/ Stakeholders/ Expertise Needed	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18	19-21	22-23	24-25	27-28	30-31	32-34	35-36	
						July-15	October-15	January-16	April-16	July-16	October-16	January-17	April-17	July-17	October-17	January-18	May-18	August-18	
Organization and Management																			
The 2013 West Fork Complex fire galvanized the community for the need of more long term planning to ensure sustainability.	Strengthen Creede's planning, communications and relationships with a focus on the downtown as the heart of the community and let your objectives shape your decisions.	Reduce duplication and increase effectiveness within the community.	Develop a statement regarding the importance of downtown and outline clear objectives to guide all decision regarding use of resources.	Official statement and objectives for the downtown.	City, County	x													
		Create a consistent decision-making process.	Hold a brainstorming session to review stakeholders, partnerships, opportunities and funding for each of the downtown objectives.	Outline of stakeholder engagement strategies for each objective.	City/Creede Community Foundation/Main Street committee	x													
		Methodically engage stakeholders in an effective and organized fashion	Review stakeholder list and begin conversations about partnerships and fundraising focused on Heritage, Arts and Recreation. Formulate communications and strategies with 2-3 groups each month considering their interests and contributions.	Schedule of meetings with each group	City/Creede Community Foundation/Main Street committee	x	x	x											
		Engage stakeholders in methodical way	Formalize the strongest relationships with written agreements outlining specific goals.	Written partnership agreements	City/Creede Community Foundation/Main Street committee		x	x											
	Develop a celebratory event for all of Creede.	Bring the whole community together and recognize efforts contributed to Creede's revitalization.	Determine who will organize the event and select a date after the 50th anniversary of the Theater.	Event description and date on the community calendar.	Creede Community Foundation/Main Street committee					x	x	x							
		Lay the groundwork for celebratory event to be successful	Establish a process to engage and invite each organization to develop a unique component of the event.	Sign up chart for event.	Creede Community Foundation/Main Street committee					x	x	x							
		Organize new component of celebratory event with eye to creating excitement and anticipation	Organize an oral history project and presentation for school youth to interview the early families with multi-generations.	List of participants with student assigned to interview.	Creede Historical Society, School/Student Council					x	x	x							
		Organize new component of celebratory event with eye to creating excitement and anticipation	Enlist recreational groups (Nordic, Hikers or Snowmobilers) to create a contest or demonstration as entertainment.	Description of event component and lead organizer contact information. Registration form distributed if activity will feature a contest.	Recreational trails groups					x	x	x							

Community: Creede

Project: Community Assessment

Plan Start Date : July-15

Planning Months Out:

Observation	Recommendation	Objective	Tasks to Reach Objectives	Deliverables	Initiators/Partners/ Stakeholders/ Expertise Needed	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18	19-21	22-23	24-25	27-28	30-31	32-34	35-36	
						July-15	October-15	January-16	April-16	July-16	October-16	January-17	April-17	July-17	October-17	January-18	May-18	August-18	
			Negotiate media partnership with the local newspaper to help support this initiative.	Series of stories in the local newspaper regarding the importance of helping to increase the housing capacity in Creede. Details included about increasing sales at retailers and restaurants and ultimately generating sales tax dollars for the city.	CCF, Chamber, local newspaper			x	x	x									
Marketing and Promotions																			
The community does not have a comprehensive marketing approach. Current strategies do not demonstrate the depth of the community with a cohesive message.	Develop a community brand and targeted marketing campaigns.	Give audiences a clear understanding of the message of the community.	Create a stakeholder group, ideally 10-15 members, to work with a branding professional. This group should meet monthly for 6 months and yearly following the first 6 months.	Brand Positioning Platform and Execution Materials: a strong community brand, logo and tagline, letterhead, business card, full page ad, banner program, bumper sticker, and t-shirt.	Business Owners, Property Owners, Residents, staff, Elected Officials, and at least one student from the High School (10-15 members). Branding/design consultant.	x	x	x				x					x		
		Determine available funds and use them in a strategic way.	Create a yearly branding budget and execute cohesive marketing campaigns.	Branding budget for 2015 (consultant fees, preliminary brand execution materials), projected implementation budgets for brand campaign.	Chamber, Stakeholder Group (established during branding process)			x			x						x		
	Translate Creede's brand into physical elements and signage on the street.	Help visitors and residents better understand how to access Creede, and easily get around once they've come into town. Draw attention to important community destinations, amenities and businesses, while also promoting the Creede brand.	Establish a budget for hiring a signage design consultant. During the design of signs make sure branding is prominent and cohesive. (Also see the signage recommendations under "Physical Improvements and Design")	Signs and activity node RFP; budget line item for consultant fees and Phase I implementation	The City of Creede Staff, Stakeholder Group (Established during branding process), Signage and Wayfinding Consultant Team		x	x	x										
	Events should be planned strategically with objectives and a process for consultation.	Develop a clear strategy for events.	Determine community wide objectives for events.	Complete the events matrix (see Appendix XYZ). Filter all activities, plans and projects through community event objectives.	Chamber, Stakeholders Branding Group, Arts Council, and Historical Society			x			x						x		
		Work with surrounding communities to coordinate and publicize an annual events calendar. Utilize travelers that will be making plans and ones that are already in the region	Use relationships with neighboring chambers to create a regional calendar.	Calendar of all known events in the region.	Creede Chamber, Lake City Chamber, South Fork Chamber, Wolf Creek Representative	x	x	x			x						x		

Community: Creede

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						July-15	October-15	January-16	April-16	July-16	October-16	January-17	April-17	July-17	October-17	January-18	May-18	August-18	
Economic growth is occurring outside of Creede in Mineral County	Develop a symbiotic relationship between downtown and the new development occurring in Mineral County south of town.	Ensure Mineral County's areas of economic activity are supporting each other.	Encourage physical connectivity between Creede's downtown and Mineral County. See the recommendations related to direction signage and bike paths in the "Physical Improvements and Design" section of this matrix.	A clear connection between downtown Creede and Mineral County that encourages movement between the two.	CCF, City, Chamber, Mineral County, Mountain View RV, School Complex, Airport	x	x	x	x	x	x								
		Ensure Mineral County's areas of economic activity are supporting each other.	Collaborate on marketing and promotional efforts between Mineral County developments and Creede.	Cross-referencing in brochures and on websites	CCF, City, Chamber, Mineral County, Mountain View RV, School Complex, Airport	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Business training opportunities can provide much needed support and valuable information for both existing businesses and potential new start-up businesses.	Work with the local business community for input and involvement.	Business training classes that are appropriate and supported by the business community.	Survey businesses to determine the type of training or assistance needed and when to schedule these trainings.	An action plan of trainings and seminars to offer.	CCF, City, SBDC, business owners, Chamber	x		x		x		x		x					
			Work with the SBDC and local businesses that have expertise in a particular field to offer trainings and workshops. Use the library and other community venues to host the trainings.	Well-planned business training program that is scheduled with identified trainers.	CCF, City, SBDC, library, business owners, Chamber		x		x		x		x		x				
		Inform potential residents and businesses about Creede's community and economy.	Complete the relocation package currently in development by the city.	Concise document available for download and at the Visitor Center.	CCF, City	x													
There is a vibrant arts community in Creede with many talented craftsmen.	Focus on expanding the craft trades and the arts.	Continue to strengthen Creede's reputation as a cultural arts center in Colorado.	Create events and programs that are supportive of the craft trades and arts. Allow these individuals to showcase their work.	Arts components included in community events.	CCF, Chamber, local artists		x	x		x	x	x							
			Implement an economic gardening program to provide focused training and support for homebased artists and create mentorship programs to guide crafters from home to downtown	Directory of local artists, their skills, their training needs, and if they are willing to mentor.	CCF, City, Chamber, local artists, OEDIT, DOLA			x	x	x	x	x							
			Develop a coop, pop-up, artist in residence program, etc. with studio space for larger crafts and staff these co-ops with local artists.	List of potential sites comparing pros, cons, uses, and whether they meet community objectives.	CCF, City, Chamber, local artists		x			x	x				x	x			

Community: Creede

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Plan Start Date : July-15

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						July-15	October-15	January-16	April-16	July-16	October-16	January-17	April-17	July-17	October-17	January-18	May-18	August-18	
	Engage your older native citizens to complete oral histories. Engage youth in this project as well as described in the "Economic Development" section of this matrix.	Capture important historical information before it is gone.	1. Determine a lead for this project. 2. Work with the local school to incorporate this a part of a curriculum or extra curricular activities. 3. Establish a method and technology needs for recording the histories. 4. Determine who you may want histories from. 5. Record histories. 6. Catalog these histories with the local library. 7. Publicize these histories on the radio, local TV, community events, etc. 8. Use the gathered information to enrich your local preservation efforts.	Recorded oral histories of native and long-term residents. Use these histories to augment your other preservation efforts like tours and informational signage.	Historic group, History Colorado, school			x	x	x	x	x							
The continued growth and development of the community has created a long standing shortage of housing.	Complete a housing study for the community.	Identify the demographics of housing needs and incentives available to create housing in the community.	Identify possible funding sources. Secure funding for the assessment. Identify potential consultants and engage one to complete the assessment. Incorporate results into strategic planning efforts described above.	Completed housing assessment	City, Department of Housing, local or regional housing authority		x	x			x	x							
There are many activities and ammenities with access points throught the community and no coordination between activity points.	Create a recreation master plan. Include such activities, amenities, and access points as: pedestrian, ATV, bicycles, hiking, rock climbing, snowmobiling, regional traffic, and heritage tourism.	Facilitate access to community amenities.	Identify possible funding sources. Secure funding for work. Identify potential consultants. Create a small task force to coordinate various groups.	Inclusive recreation plan for all types of uses in the region.	City, local business stakeholders		x	x				x							
The downtown streetscape is not cohesive, and does not take advantage of many oppourtunities which would help promote the unique attributes within and surrounding Creede.	Create a preliminary streetscape idea and concept plan. Include potential locations for new benches, bike racks, street lighting, banners, or other pedestrian amenities.	Identify streetscape and placemaking ideas and concepts.	Host a "Better Block" event, implement tacticle urbanism, or use other temporary improvements to test ideas.	Input and feedback collected from an event or project.	City, community groups, business owners	x			x	x			x	x					

Community: Creede

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Plan Start Date : July-15

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						July-15	October-15	January-16	April-16	July-16	October-16	January-17	April-17	July-17	October-17	January-18	May-18	August-18	
	Create a streetscape master plan. Improvements should be considered from the highway on the south end of town to the community center on the north end of town.	Implementation of new streetscape within downtown.	An inventory and analysis should be conducted by the City of Creede, with significant citizen input, to identify the existing assets and opportunities to attract people downtown.	A final report, inventory and analysis should include identification of what physical elements would attract more residents and visitors downtown.	City, community groups, business owners			x	x	x	x								
Creede has many types of signage which creates a very confusing situation for visitors who may not know how to reach destinations.	Create a signage and wayfinding plan. It is important that this plan include significant signage for motorists traveling on Highway 149 as well as for regional, county or local destinations.	Improve access between destinations by providing alternate routes for different modes of transportation.	Identify possible funding sources. Secure funding for work. Identify potential consultants. Also consider working with the University Technical Assistance program through University of Colorado, Denver.	Signage plan which is inclusive of all means of travel. A clear community identity and ease of use are significant objectives.	City, community groups, business owners		x	x	x										
There appears to be adequate parking in the downtown. However, signage and identification of public/private parking areas are inconsistent.	Limit long term parking to off-street parking lots. Employees, employers, and long-term visitors should be directed to these lots.	Create parking options for various uses in the community. Identify opportunities within the community to park where previously parking was not available.	Work with local groups to identify needs, opportunities and options to address parking issues. Identify potential locations for long term parking, short term parking and general policies for events or high use parking events. Create a plan to show parking areas in private and public areas. Identify lead group or person to lead the initiative.	Plan in place to address parking issues	City, community groups, business owners		x	x	x										
			Create a plan to show parking areas in private and public areas. Coordinate this plan with the other planning efforts within the community such as tactical urbanism projects. Identify lead group or person to lead the initiative.	Feedback from community to inform signage plan, development plan and comprehensive plan.	City, community groups, business owners		x	x	x										
	In time, the City may consider parking meters (coin operated meters or "smart meters" that accept credit cards), or pay stations for on-street parking in the downtown.	Establish more efficient and effective means of controlling parking and generate funds to pay for the parking personnel - or other downtown needs, such as streetscape improvements or maintenance.	Community outreach or small task force to monitor any parking issues throughout year. Parking in off-street parking lots should remain free to encourage their use.	Regular communication between business owners and City to determine if there is a need for further parking studies or needed short term solutions.	City, local business stakeholders											x	x		



Appendix II: Suggested Downtown Stakeholder Roles

Stakeholder	Interest	Contribution	Responsible for Outreach	Outreach Strategy
City of Creede Trustees	Stable Tax Base; Attraction of new business, industry and residents	Facilitating relationships for Creede; Creating environment that is friendly to business and residents; Marketing	City of Creede Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declare the downtown as a priority area and identify the key objective areas for the community. • Outline roles and responsibilities and create a formal statement or resolution to continue and enhance partnerships in XYZ areas.
Mineral County Commissioners	Establish reliable WiFi	Creating environment that is friendly to business and residents; Marketing	Mineral County Commissioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declare commercial areas a priority.
Creede and Mineral County Chamber of Commerce	Increasing membership, diversifying revenues, and broadening access to resources.	Marketing, Events, Advertising, Social Media. Partnering with Colorado Tourism Office and cities of South Fork and Lake City	Arts groups, Creede Community Foundation, and Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an agreement with objectives for marketing, events, information dissemination, and measurement of success.



Appendix IV: Seasonal Resident Communication Strategy

In order to recruit part-time homeowners to participate in renting their properties (see the Organization and Management section of the assessment report), the Volunteer Task Force might consider:

- 1) Creating a "Wanted" poster listing reasons for Part-time Resident Homeowners to participate:

<p style="text-align: center;">WANTED YOUR HOUSE FOR RENTAL Increase business with local retailers & restaurants Help assure the \$\$ viability of local businesses by increasing local customer base Generate sales tax \$\$ to help support the community Build word-of-mouth from renters about why to visit Creede Earn incremental revenue through rentals or donate the \$\$ for a tax deduction</p>
--

- 2) Designing door-stuffers and distributing to seasonal/part-time homes
- 3) Developing a "Keep Our Community Creede Strong" scorecard to be published periodically in the local paper and also promoted on social media and on your local website. The scorecard could track:
 - # of potential homes for rent
 - # of units rented to date + %
 - Goal
- 4) Designing signage to be placed in the front yards of participating homes which identifies available units with a VRBO #.



Appendix V: Chamber Investor Model

Chamber Downtown Benefits Structure

Why is an investor model beneficial?

One key concept in downtown revitalization is that if each individual initiative supports the collective objectives, the entire group will benefit. So that one organization planning an event for a senior pancake breakfast combined with another organization planning a potato sack race for kids, soon becomes a community wide event if these organizations can share details about timing, dates, and objectives.

Use the same concept to consider collateral material that lists 10 restaurants compared to one that lists 20 restaurants. Restaurants and retail thrive in clusters because the potential visitor will show up figuring they will find something they like that is open. A strong marketing tool for restaurants is the idea of a destination with many options. So, regardless of how many of the restaurants have invested, the best service the Chamber can do for retail and restaurants is to list more of them.

The Chamber is usually the best positioned and equipped to serve the function of coordinator of events, materials, and business training. But when considering the community organization aspect, it also becomes clear that there HAS TO BE a place where all businesses are listed and if it isn't the Chamber, it will be another entity that will serve a similar function to the Chamber. This would create a competitive relationship which would not benefit the initiative, so as much as possible, it is better to work within existing organizations to find a way to support the entire community and all businesses. So, as our economy and approach to holistic community and economic development evolves so must the business model for our marketing and business support organizations.

What is a tiered benefit system?

The Chamber program offers three tiers: Basic Members, Chamber Investors, and Chamber Sponsors to allow for overall community promotion with enhanced benefits for those who invest. The following are some ideas for the tiers

- **Basic Membership**

All businesses paying the local business license fee are automatically provided a basic membership to the Chamber. Benefits are limited to online and print material about the options and opportunities available in the community.

- **Chamber Investor**

Chamber Investors have access to all basic member services as well as accessing enhanced services, training, and promotional opportunity.

- **Chamber Sponsor**

Chamber Sponsors have made annual investments for over three years and provide additional funds, volunteer hours, and contribute to building partnership to strengthen and build the Chamber as a pillar of the community.



Appendix V: Chamber Investor Model, continued

Organizational and Tiered Benefit Review

For a healthy and vibrant organization, it is important to have a clear list of benefits that is assessed and updated on a regular basis. Each chamber or downtown organization should annually review the list of benefits it provides to the community as the whole, benefits provided to investors and a gold level sponsorship level for those who provide exceptional financial and organizational support over time.

Structure of Tiered Chamber Benefits Program			
BENEFIT	Basic Membership	Chamber Investor	Chamber Sponsor
Community Business/Events Calendar (online and print)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Includes basic listing of name of business organized by service/products with address and phone number.			
Links to website	No	Yes	Yes
Business listing links to business website.			
Highlighted in (weekly or monthly) Publication	No	Yes. Annually	Quarterly
Each month one business is showcased with new products, special, or news as developed by the business owner.			
Collaborative Marketing Campaign	Yes	Yes	Yes
Chamber works to identify and link your business or organization to specials and promotions with other businesses.			
Afterhours Training and Workshops	\$25/ training	\$5/training	Free
Training and workshops to develop stronger business practices, develop collaborative marketing, and create network of business support and planning community-wide.			
Business Guidance and Assistance	No	Free	Free
One on one business counseling and guidance with accessing loans, grants, and funding support.			
Phone and Email Consultation	No	Yes	Yes
Available any time.			



**Downtown Colorado Inc.
Mini Market Analysis Options**

DRAFT – March 19, 2015

OPTION	COST
<p>Community Market Profile, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of primary and secondary trade areas • Economic profile with key indicators, including demographics, retail gaps, psychographics, traffic counts and others • Two-day consultant site visit to conduct stakeholder roundtables, identify opportunities and improvement priorities • Community market profile report, with summary of economic profile and consultant impressions and recommendations. 	<p style="text-align: center;">\$ 7,500 plus expenses</p>
<p>Market Opportunities Analysis & Action Plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Market Profile (all of the above) • Community retail, service and improvement survey in both online and paper formats • Identify key business and investment opportunities • Evaluate opportunities beyond the local market (i.e. visitor markets) • Assessment of local economic development capacity – both resources and organization(s) • Market Opportunities & Action Plan report including community market profile, survey summary and action plan that identified market opportunities and provides implementation tactics for both short (18 months) and mid-term (5 years) planning horizons. • Second consultant site visit to present recommendations and findings and meet with community/downtown organization leadership. 	<p style="text-align: center;">\$15,000 plus expenses</p>



Community Quick Facts

Population (2013)	292
Ann. Population Growth (2010 to 2013)	0.60%
Median HH Income (ACS 08-12)	\$30,000
Employment (County in 2013)	635

Source: State Demography Office
U.S. Census Bureau

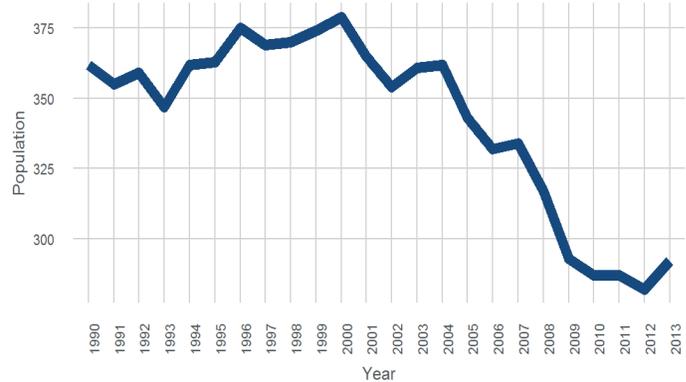


Population

Population Estimates and Forecasts for the resident population are produced by the State Demography Office.

- Creede experienced steady population loss between 2000 and 2010.
- Since 1990, Creede has consistently seen slower growth than the state as a whole.
- Since 2010 both the city and Mineral county have grown slightly despite prior losses due to a small increase in jobs.

City of Creede Population, 1990 to 2013

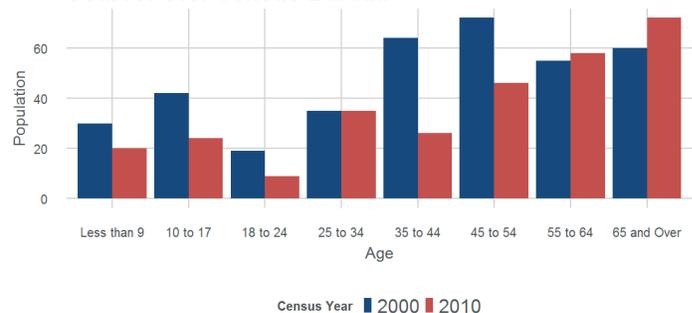


	Population		Annual Average Growth Rate (%)	
	City of Creede town	Colorado	City of Creede town	Colorado
1990	362	3,294,473		
1995	363	3,811,074	0.06%	3.00%
2000	379	4,338,801	0.90%	2.60%
2010	287	5,049,717	-2.70%	1.60%
2013	292	5,264,890	0.60%	1.40%

Population By Age

Creede's population by age is shown in the chart to the right for both 2000 (darker bar) and 2010 (lighter bar). The only increases were in the 55 to 64 and 65 and over groups, which could indicate a need to evaluate aging services in the city. Age groups most commonly associated with families are among the largest declines in Creede.

City Of Creede Town Population by Age
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

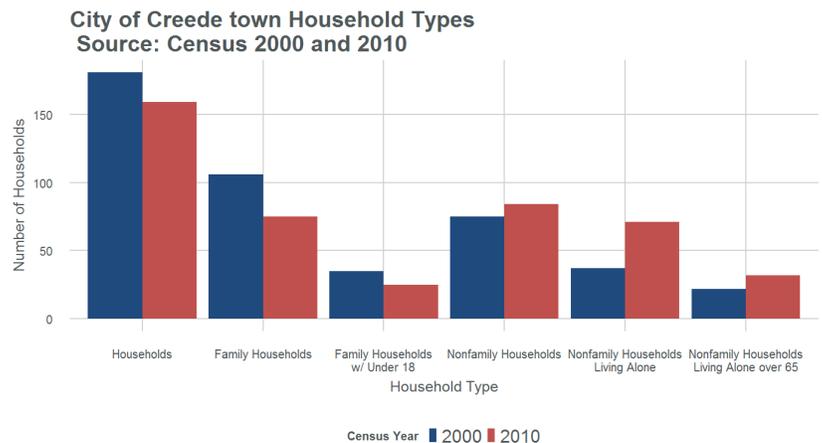


Housing & Households

City of Creede town Housing Units	2000	2010	2010 %
Total Housing Units	275	270	
Occupied Housing Units	181	159	58.90%
Owner-Occupied Units	125	126	79.20%
Renter-Occupied Units	56	33	20.80%
Vacant Housing Units	94	111	41.10%
For Seasonal	73	83	74.80%
All Other Vacant	21	28	25.20%

- The overall vacancy rate was 41% in 2010, excluding seasonal housing it was about 10%.
- Vacancy rates were higher than the state average due largely to seasonal units.
- Most of the units are owner occupied (79%) which means that there are very few rental units.

- Between 2000 and 2010 households decreased overall.
- The largest decline in household types was in family households. As noted by changes in the age distribution above. These decreases were partially offset by increases in nonfamily households especially those living alone and living alone over 65.



Race & Ethnicity

City of Creede town Population by Race/Ethnicity

	2000	2010	2010 %
Total	377	290	
White	361	277	95.50%
Black or African American	0	2	0.69%
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	1	0.36%
Asian	0	0	0%
Native Hawaiian and Other	0	0	0%
Some Other Race	0	0	0%
Two or More	7	4	1.38%
Hispanic	6	6	2.07%

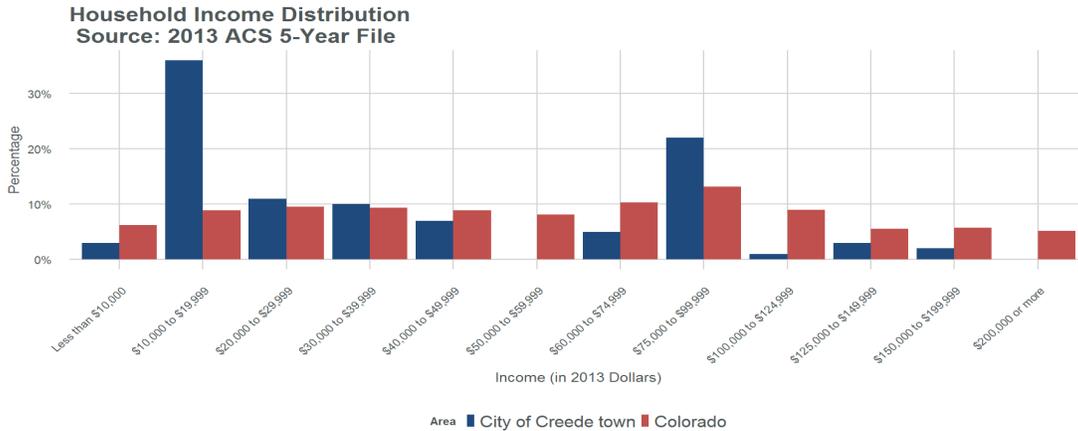
Source: U.S. Census 2010

- Creede is significantly less diverse than the state as a whole.
- The overall decrease between 2000 and 2010 was 87, or just over 23%. The majority of this change was within the White population.

Income

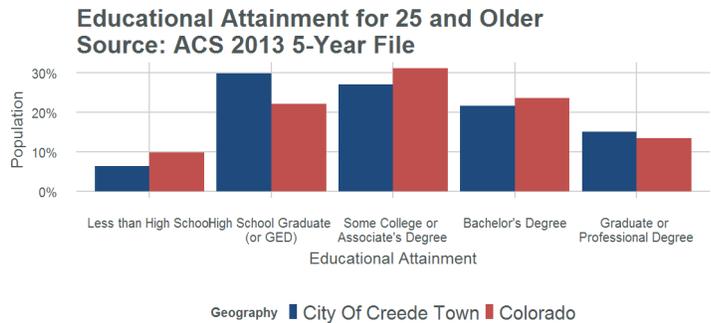
The chart below shows the distribution of income in Creede compared to the rest of the state. Creede has a larger than expected share of those making \$10,000 to \$19,999 than the state and very few households making more than \$100,000. This lower level of income reflects the industry mix and dependence on Tourism. Additionally, the small number of people in Creede may lead to small sample sizes in the ACS which can add uncertainty to these estimates.

The Median Household Income (MHI) for City of Creede town is \$30,000, which is lower than the state MHI of \$58,433.



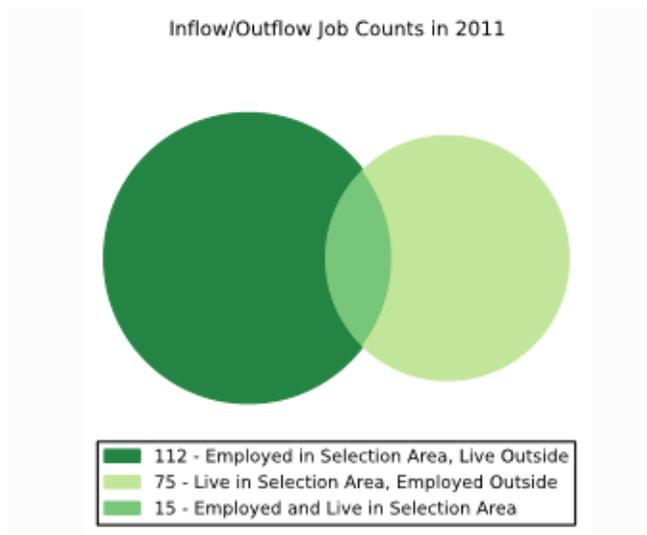
Education

Creede has a slightly lower levels of educational attainment than the state as a whole, which is likely related to the high level of service industries. These industries tend to have lower educational requirements. Creede is fairly similar to the state at the higher levels of education.



Commuting

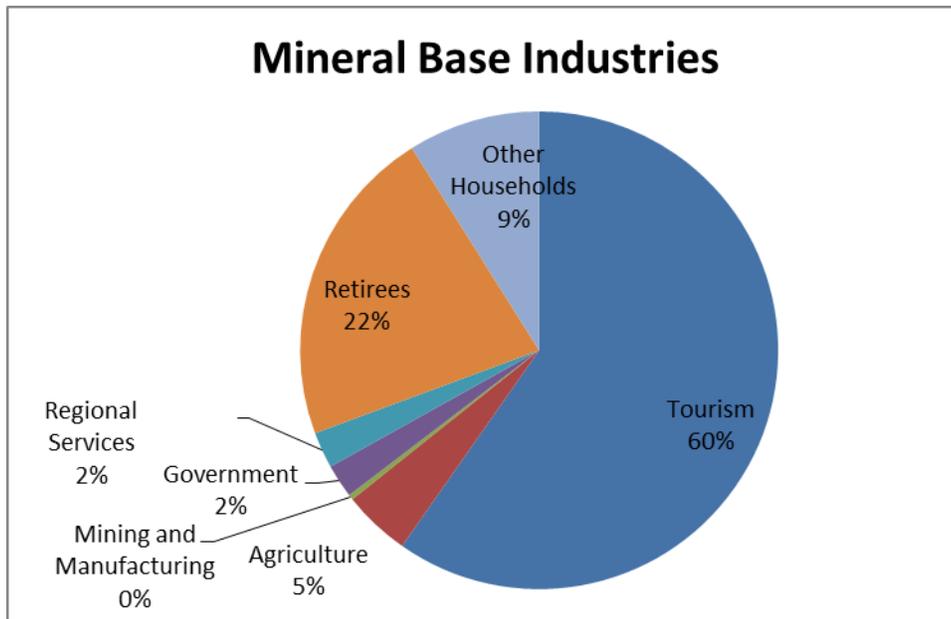
Commuting plays an important role in the economy of an area because not all workers live where they work. Commuting impacts roads and access to employees. The graph to the side shows the data by job and by resident worker. Just under 12% of the jobs are held by residents and 88% of the jobs are held by people who live outside the city. Considering Creede's labor force, just under 17% work in Creede but 83% are employed outside of the city.



Jobs & the Economy

The City of Creede has a slightly different industry mix than Mineral county, as evidenced in the chart below. The largest industries by employment are Accommodation and Food, Government, and Retail. The Base Industries chart shows the centrality of Tourism and Retirees to the county. This likely drives the industry mix. The industry mix is not especially diverse in Creede or Mineral, so it will be important to watch economic conditions in these industries. The relatively small population in Mineral county is not well-suited to supporting a large number of jobs.

Total employment in the county was estimated to be 635 in 2013. Mineral has gained approximately 50 jobs since 2010.



Share of Jobs by Industry	Mineral	Creede
Agriculture	4%	0%
Mining	0%	4%
Utilities	0%	0%
Construction	8%	5%
Manufacturing	0%	0%
Wholesale trade	0%	0%
Retail Trade	10%	16%
Transportation and warehousing	0%	0%
Information	0%	0%
Finance activities	1%	2%
Real estate	3%	1%
Professional and business services	5%	1%
Management of companies and enterprise	0%	0%
Admin and waste	4%	3%
Education	0%	0%
Health Services	1%	2%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	28%	10%
Accommodation and food	18%	31%
Other services, except public administration	4%	1%
Government	14%	23%

Source: CDLE, State Demography Office



**DOWNTOWN
COLORADO, INC**

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Creede Community Assessment

May 31 - June 3, 2015	Community Assessment of Creede, Colorado	Attending	Location
May 31	Assessment Team Arrives		427 River Drive & 106 Amethyst Dr.
June 1			
8:00 AM - 9:30AM	Orientation - Presentation on history of Town and current state of affairs. Coffee and light breakfast	Town Manager & Clerk, Creede Community Foundation (CCF)	Creede Town Hall 2223 N. Main st. Creede, CO 81130
9:30 AM -11:45 AM	Tour of Town and surrounding areas	Town Manager & Clerk, CCF	
11:45 – 12:30	Team eats lunch	Potentially with arts groups	
12:45 PM -2:00 PM	Focus Group Meeting 1 Staff, Commissioners, Trustees,	Town Staff/Trustees, County Commissioners, Planning Commission Members, County and Municipal Planning Department, CCF	
2:15 PM -3:30 PM	Focus Group Meeting 2 Service Providers	Library District, Trails Group, Fire Protection District, Recreation District, Elks, school administration, CCF, CRT	
3:45 PM	Walk into businesses		
4:30 PM	Team de-brief, Dinner delivered for team		
6:00PM-7:15PM	Focus Group Meeting 3 Business and Property Owners	Chamber of Commerce, Business Owners, Commercial Property Owners, CRT, CCF	
7:30PM-8:15PM	Focus Group 4 General Public	Residents, community members at large including members of non-profit organizations unable to attend daytime meetings	
8:45 PM	Team Drafts Recommendations Late night snacks and next daybreakfast items provided for team to take to lodging location		
June 2	Town must provide a working room for the team that has access to a printer, internet, and a scanner.		
8:00am - 10:00am	Working Breakfast - Team members prepare presentation slides		427 River Drive
10:00 AM	Team members submit slides to Assessment Coordinator		
10:30 AM	Team reviews draft presentation; Begin working on report narrative sections, action matrix items, and design sketches		
12:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Team moves to Town Hall and continues revising presentation and writing report; Scanning and printing completed as needed Working Lunch Delivered	Brief (15 min) check-in with community liaisons around noon (either by phone or in person)	Creede Community Center
3:30 PM – 5:15 PM	Meet with client to review presentation Dinner delivered for team following presentation review	Town Administrator, CCF	Creede Community Center
5:30 PM	Creede Council Meeting		Creede Town Hall
7:00 PM	Public Presentation	Invite ALL participants and Town	Creede Community Center
June 3			
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Working Breakfast – Team finishes report sections and action matrices and sends to assessment coordinator		427 River Drive



DOWNTOWN COLORADO, INC

1420 Ogden Street, Suite G-1, Denver, Colorado 80218, P 303.282.0625, F 303.282.0658
www.downtowncoloradoinc.org

Please sign in...

Event Creede Community Assessment Date 6/2/2015
Public Presentation

Name	Organization	Email	Phone
Elizabeth Zurn	City of Creede Creede Repertory Theatre	lizzeezurn@creedecommhall.com	719-480-1465
Binger Alexander			719-658-26383
Lindsay Leavelle	4UR Ranch	Lindsay@4URRanch.com	719-658-0812
Sue Nutt	Quillery Gallery	suzannennutt0120@gmail.com	
Maggie Schmitt	CRT	maggie@creederep.com	719-658-2210 2014-23
Jenni Davlin		gdavlin@g.com	
Doug Paulin	Wagon Wheel Cup	ddavlin@g.com	658-2766
Marc & Vicki Cavit		mvcavit@yahoo.com	620-257-2566
Avery Kucina	Creede America CREMAC MINING MORTGAGE, INC	Avery@creedeamerica.com	719-658-0223
Eloise Hooper	CREEDE/MINERAL ARTS + RECREATION	emaree2010@yahoo.com	719-658-2276
Debbie Whitmore	Creede Arts Council Business Owner	dwhitmore@amigo.net	719-658-0888
Paul Whitmore	NORDIC CLUB/CYCLING	paulwhit@ gmail.com	658-2351
Rebecca Liss	Creede Olive Oil	Becky@creedoliveoil.com	658-2443
Robert Austin	LoZercut, LLC	cycho@ hotmail.com	719 452-0123
Randi Snead	CITY / CCF	devk@creedecommhall.com	719 658-2276
HEATHER DELONCA	CITY / CCF / CCR	hdelwood@gmail.com	(608) 402-2697
Stan Whisman	Creede Snowshoe Lodge	lovesnowshoelodge@yahoo.com	719 658 2315
ROLAND JIMMERMAN	MU. RESORT	ROLAND@MOUNTAINVIEWRESORT	
Julia Lutz	Citizen	jandalutz@gmail.com	719-588-5933
Stan Lutz	Citizen		719-588-4418
Ed Vitz	Citizen	edsvitz@gmail.com	303-641-8284
Della Brown	Creede + Mineral County Chamber of Commerce	office@creede.com	719-658-2374
Cindy Kapatich	Broken Arrow Ranch & Co	SKilp1974@yahoo.com	817229-7262
Kim Sarchild	Teacher / Community Member	kim@creede412.net	719-658-2384



Creede Community Assessment



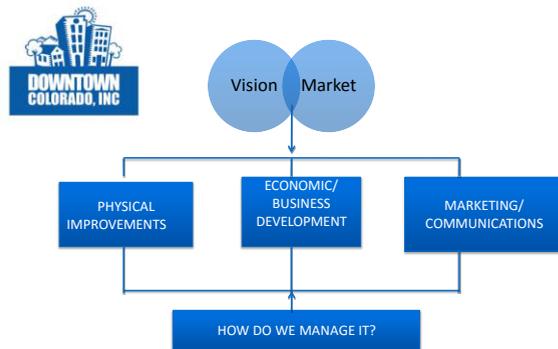
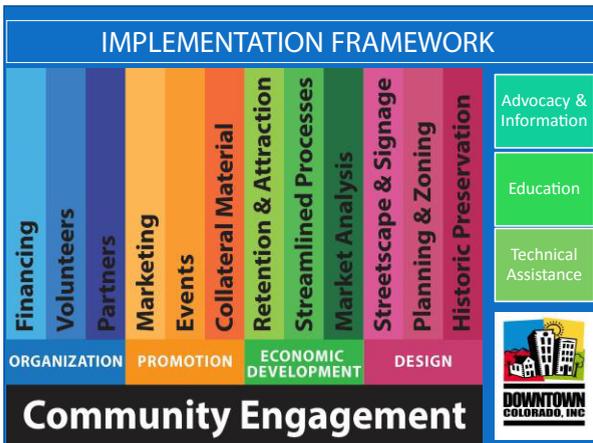
June 1 - 2, 2015



DOWNTOWN COLORADO, INC.

Resources for Vital Downtowns since 1982

Information & Advocacy	Education & Training	Technical Assistance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates and news that impacts downtowns • Clearinghouse of resources and tools • Taking a position on relevant legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly interactive dialogues • Quarterly opportunities for rural workshops • Vital Downtowns Conference • Annual Members Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onsite multidisciplinary teams develop action plan for comprehensive approach • Quarterly guidance for community and economic development



Team Members

- Katherine Correll, Downtown Colorado, Inc.
- Christy Culp, Department of Local Affairs
- Conor Laing, Lake County EDC
- Michael Short, MH Short & Associates
- Nancy Sprehn, Downtown Colorado, Inc.
- Tim Stroh, DOLA Main Street Program
- Nicole Thompson, Lake County EDC
- Jessica Turner, Terracon Consultants
- Hilleary Waters, Downtown Colorado, Inc.

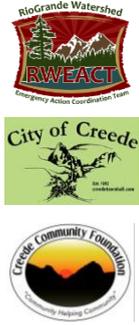


Thank you participants!

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Business Owners | Creede Repertory Theatre |
| Chamber of Commerce | Galleries and Studios |
| City Staff | Guest Ranches |
| City Trustees | Hatchery Arts Center |
| Commercial Property Owners | Library Board |
| Creede Arts Council | Mineral County Ambulance |
| Creede Community Foundation | Mineral County Commissioners |
| Creede/Mineral Arts & Recreation | School Administration |
| Creede Early Learning Center | Silver Thread Byway Council |
| Creede Historical Society | Recreational Trails Groups |
| Creede Mining Heritage | |



..and thank you to our hosts and sponsors!



Great work!

- Partnership between City and County
- Willow Creek Reclamation
- Hosting Rural Philanthropy Days
- Regional collaboration through RWEACT and the Silver Thread Byway
- Prioritizing a relocation package and simplifying town processes
- Moving towards accountability and having clear objectives
- Highly active arts community
- Bringing fuel to the airport
- Exceptional destination attractions: unique downtown businesses, guest ranches, Creede Repertory Theater, RV Resort



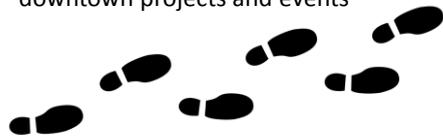
Challenges

- Housing
- Employment
- Seasonality
- Engaging multiple demographics
- Utility improvements



First Steps

- Declare downtown a priority
- Set clear objectives with all groups for guiding downtown projects and events



Organization & Management



Observation: You can't rely on your good looks alone forever.



Recommendation:

Continue to strengthen your communications and relationships with a focus on the heart of the community.

- Heritage, Arts, and Recreation
- Use these themes to expand multi-generational engagement



Recommendation: Create a community wide appreciation event to bring locals together.

- Build on heritage, arts, and recreation.
- Each organization should establish a component.
- Expand the oral history project with the Historical Society to engage youth to interview early families with multi-generations.
- Have an award for the most active newbies.



Observation: Inclusive approaches create a stronger community package.



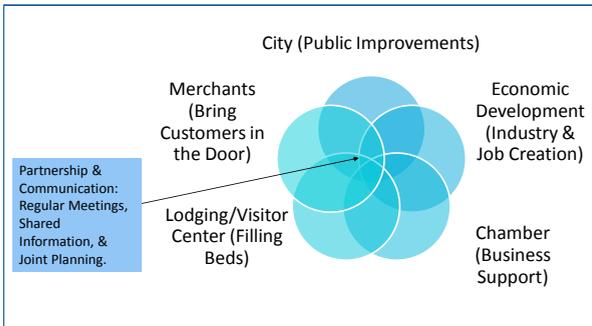
Recommendation:

- Continue the local and national trend of sharing resources and being inclusive.
- Consider ways to expand the Chamber to serve the whole community.
 - Use an investor model to expand the reach of the organization.
 - Perform a welcome center function for the whole community.



Observation: There are many active organizations working in the community.

Recommendation: Define roles and responsibilities for organizations.



Recommendation: Formalize relationships for sustainability.

Stakeholder	Interest	Contribution
City of Creede Trustees	Stable Tax Base; Attraction of new business, industry and residents	Facilitating relationships for Creede; Creating environment that is friendly to business and residents; Marketing
Mineral County Commissioners	Establish reliable WIFI	Creating environment that is friendly to business and residents; Marketing
Creede and Mineral County Chamber of Commerce	Increasing membership, diversifying revenues, and broadening access to resources.	Marketing, Events, Advertising, Social Media. Partnering with Colorado Tourism Office and cities of South Fork and Lake City



Outreach	Outreach Strategy
City of Creede Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Declare the downtown as a priority area and identify the key objective areas for the community. · Outline roles and responsibilities and create a formal statement or resolution to continue and enhance partnerships in XYZ areas.
Mineral Country Commissioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Declare commercial areas a priority
Arts groups, Creede Community Foundation, and Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Develop an agreement with objectives for marketing, events, information dissemination, and measurement of success.



Observation: Creede has made great strides in expanding partnerships and communication.

Recommendation:

- Continue to build on regional approaches.
- Expand local messaging.
- Connect with second home owners.



PARTNERSHIPS

	Local Businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest Ranches • Creede Repertory Theatre • Mountain View RV Park & Resort
	Regional Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake City • South Fork • Wolf Creek • Silver Thread
	Part-time Residents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Messages • Support Your Local Community • "We Are Family" • Help Keep Us "Creede Strong"

Funding



Observation: There are opportunities for the City and other entities to leverage the available funding with outside resources.

- Recommendation:** Research available funding that aligns with the work being done in Creede
- Safe Routes to School – potential upgrades to the trail leading from town to the new school
 - Department of Local Affairs – Improvements and upgrades to the flume; potential water/wastewater
 - Colorado Creative Industries – artist live/work space downtown, old school building, Hatchery
 - Foundations – Rural Philanthropy Days

Observation: The City and County administer a number of funding sources that should bring value to the community.

- Recommendation:**
- Establish processes and outcomes for the internal funding sources you have for community projects
 - Virginia Christensen Fund
 - Lodging Tax
 - Identify opportunities to bring in additional dollars
 - Business License
 - Special Event



Promotion & Marketing



Observation: There is not a comprehensive marketing approach and it does not demonstrate the depth of the community with a cohesive message. The marketing approach is inconsistent with the desired audience.

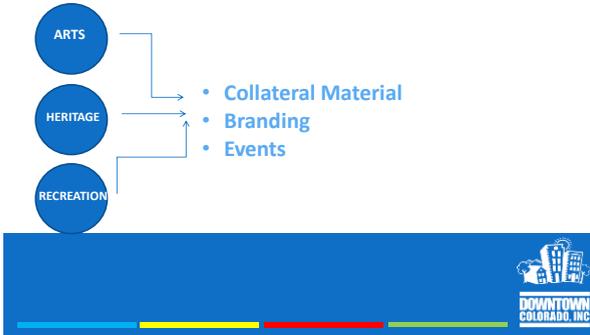
Recommendations:

Focus on the 3 main messages of the city

Arts **Heritage** **Recreation**



Arts, Heritage, and Recreation are the DNA of the community. Every marketing initiative should incorporate these important assets in the message.



What is a 'Community Brand'

Values

Shared Interests

Rituals

Traditions



Why is developing a Community Brand important?

- It's a journey of self-discovery for the community
- Identifies shared values and areas of opportunity
- Tells a story about your community...who are you *today* and who do you aspire to be in the *future*?



BRANDING

Unify branding efforts to represent the community with a cohesive message.

-Maintain the same fonts, colors, and branding bar on all websites, social media, and collateral material.



Recommendation:

- The community is doing a good job marketing to Baby Boomers, however the messages being sent by multiple organizations in the community are missing important target audiences.
- Using the 3 main messages of the community, diversify, expand, and integrate the community's marketing approach by always identifying the target audiences for all material:
 - GenX, Millennials
 - Families with School Age Children

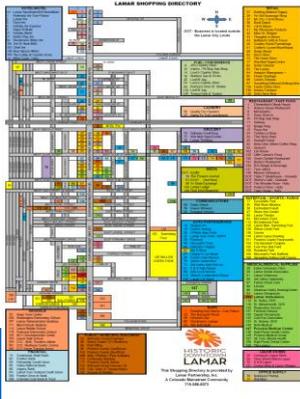


Observation: There is not one location which houses all the events, businesses, or recreational activities.

Recommendation: Develop a one-stop shop for information:

- Management community calendar, Facebook page and social media should be done by one entity.
- Visitor center
- Create one short brochure that lists all businesses
- Create a map containing all the businesses in the city limits.





Create a map containing all the businesses in the city limits:

Color code the map by types of businesses.



ECONOMIC VITALITY



Observation: There is a need for a comprehensive economic development plan for long term economic stability.

Recommendation: Create an economic development plan that focuses on:

- Attracting and growing businesses
- Creating a business retention program
- Identifying appropriate incentive/assistance packages
- Identifying opportunities for regional development and marketing
- Identifying potential funding opportunities



Observation: Creede's economy is heavily dependent on the summer season.

Recommendation: Identify ways to create a year-round economy.

- Bring reliable internet to the area – ensure access and affordability.
- Cultivate other vacation type rentals to fill lodging gaps.
- Continue building events in the winter and market winter assets.
- Find ways to offset energy costs to encourage businesses to stay open year-round.



Recommendation:

- Target initial business attraction efforts on those businesses that address the needs of local residents.
- Identify goods and services needed by residents and businesses that are currently not available within Creede and then attract them to Creede.



Observation: Concentrated economic growth is occurring outside of Creede.

Recommendation: Develop a symbiotic relationship between downtown and the new development occurring in Mineral County south of town.

- Encourage connectivity between downtown and the county site.
- Collaborate on marketing and promotional efforts.



Observation: Business training opportunities can provide much needed support and valuable information.

Recommendations:

- Survey businesses to determine types of training or assistance needed and when to schedule these trainings.
- Continue to work with the San Luis Valley SBDC and other regional partners to identify business seminars and workshops.
- Consider engaging the library for business development and training.



Observation: There is a vibrant arts community in Creede with many talented craftsmen.

Recommendation: Expand craft trades and the arts.

- Create events and programs that are supportive of the craft trades/ arts.
- Consider economic gardening and mentorship to guide crafters from home to downtown.
- Develop a coop, pop-up, artist in residence program, etc. with studio space for larger crafts.



Observation: There appears to be a lack of youth involvement and participation in Creede.

Recommendation:

- Create a Workforce/Training Program to cultivate youth involvement
 - Colorado Youth Summit Program
- Enhance youth opportunities
 - Vocational training
 - Mentorship with locals
 - Utilize student council
 - Support student work at theater



Design & The Big Picture



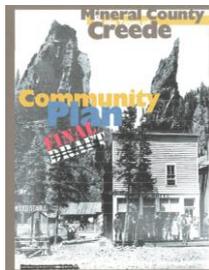
Celebrate the past while being proactive about the future.



Observation: The City of Creede has recognized there is an opportunity to be proactive in the development of the current growth patterns.

Recommendation:

- Continue with work on the development plan.
- Update the comprehensive plan.
- Continue work on keeping building code and regulations up to date.
- Explore creative ways to engage the public.



Observation: Historic Preservation is underutilized as a community builder/financial tool.

Recommendation:

- The city could hold public meetings about the benefits of historic preservation.
- If there is public support, the second step is to identify historic resources through a survey or survey certain individual historic buildings.



Future Common Vision



Opportunities Lost & Gained

Historic school building and physical location within the community.



Opportunities Lost & Gained

The flume is a defining and unique feature within the community.

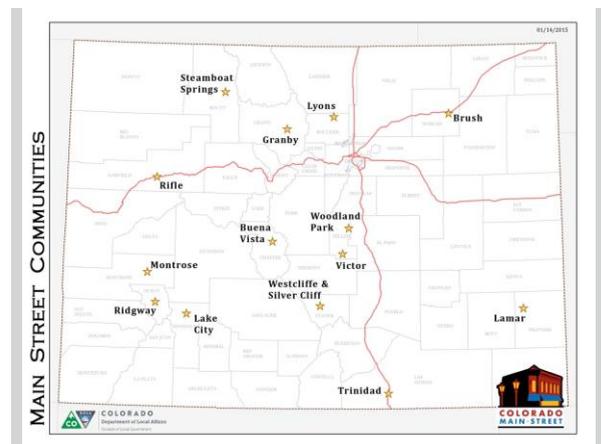


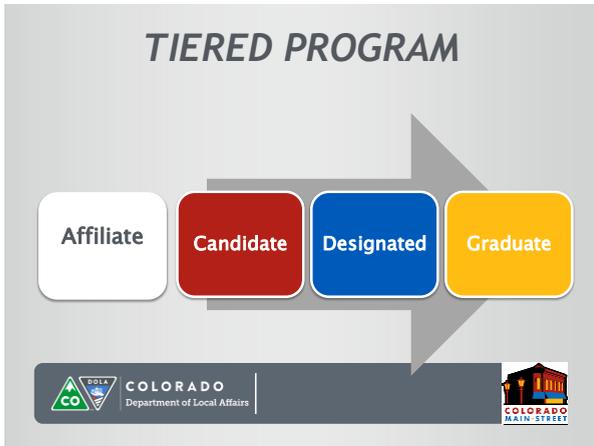
Opportunities Lost & Gained

Open areas benefiting the community



Main Street Four-Point Approach®





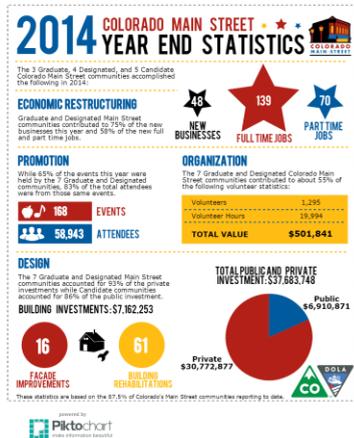
With almost the same amount of volunteers this year, the number of volunteer hours increased by 1,700%.

2014 saw a 54% increase in full time jobs and 27% increase in part time jobs.

For every \$1 publicly invested, \$4.45 was invested privately.

The number of building rehabilitations tripled this year.

The number of events in 2014 is almost double the number in 2013.



Main Street Five Year Growth Projections

35 communities by 2020

- Accept approximately 4 communities per year
- 2,155 projected direct, indirect, and induced jobs created
- 829 projected net new businesses
- Hire contractors to help manage growth



Creede Next Steps

1 – 2 weeks after the technical assistance visit

- Use the presentation to share ideas and spark conversation.
- Plan a follow up meeting to get people together and discuss next steps.
- Develop a means to solicit and collect ideas online.
- Identify ways to cross-promote this summer.

3 – 6 Weeks after the technical assistance visit

- Identify two visible projects that will be noticed around town.
- Develop a survey of skills people might have or want to learn and send it to all participants.

Energize : TRASH CANS

Fun: Bike Amenities

Temporary: Art Studio



Paint the Town



Yarn Bombing



Upcoming Events

- Aug 21** Downtown Institute: Small Towns Growing Consciously, Ridgway
- Oct 6-9** 2015 Annual Conference: Vibrant Colorado Downtowns, Durango
- Oct 20** Creating a Destination Business, Buena Vista & Leadville



Thank you!

For more information contact DCI.

303.282.0625 or

director@downtowncoloradoinc.org

For more information, see our events calendar at www.downtowncoloradoinc.org



Resources for Vital Downtowns since 1982