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**Spotlight
Gene Morse
Former Director and Inspector
Elevator Inspection Program
Retired (Effective August 31, 2016)**



After twelve fun-filled years, Gene has decided to hang up his elevator keys. He announced his retirement almost two years ago when he was Director of the Elevator Inspection program. Because becoming a certified Elevator Inspector is a twelve-month process, it's not easy to keep the group fully staffed. Gene agreed to stay on part-time until there were enough certified inspectors to keep up with the demand. Two additional inspectors just received their certifications, and while that may not be quite enough to keep up with the growth in our region, Gene decided it was time to pass the torch.

In 1998, Gene and his wife decided to follow their grown boys to Summit County. Hoping that one day they'd be blessed with grand-children, they knew they wanted to be close to the family. So they picked up stakes from New England and invested in a white-water rafting adventure company that they ran as a family.

Gene had also been a project manager for a builder when he became an Elevator Inspector with the NWCCOG in 2004. He was drawn to working in this supportive, yet autonomous work environment that enabled him to travel all over the most beautiful parts of the state doing work he truly enjoyed.

Having lived much of his life in New England he grew up skiing at Attitash Mountain in New Hampshire. As the saying goes, "If you learn to ski in the East, you can ski anywhere." Both Gene and his wife, Helen, have been ski instructors for 23 years - first in Attitash, then for Vail Resorts in Breckenridge.

Three years ago their hope to have a grandchild was realized, and two years later another came along. With two special kiddos to keep their grandpa young and spry, Gene is looking forward to spending much time with them. In the meantime, he and his wife plan to take an extended fall vacation to visit New England, then Jackson Hole and Yellowstone, before coming home.

The entire team of the NWCCOG thanks Gene for his many years of service and wish him an adventure-filled retirement with plenty of time for the grand-kids!

A farewell party for Gene will be held at Ruby Tuesday's restaurant on August 31, from 4:00 to 6:00. Anyone wishing to say "Bon Voyage" to Gene is welcome. Ruby Tuesday is located at 270 Dillon Ridge Road, in Dillon.

Spotlight Bennett Schmidt Elevator Inspector

Our newest employee is Ben Schmidt who was recently hired as an elevator inspector. Ben is a Master Electrician with over twenty years' experience, owning his own business and working for others. He was first licensed in 1994.

Originally from Chicago, Ben spent time in central Ohio, then in New England in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. There he lived in the woods and developed his love of the mountains. Among many of his athletic endeavors is cross-country skiing, and he raced in the American Birkebeiner in Wisconsin, which is the largest, longest cross-country ski race in North America.

When asked what Ben likes most about his new position he responded, "I like working with a smaller group of people and being able to travel throughout the beautiful mountains. Of course, I've only been here for twenty days," he added. "So you might want to ask me again in a year!"

Ben and his family currently live in Denver, having committed to his youngest son to at least finish out high school there. He's a devoted family man and loves to participate in outdoor activities. They love to bike, hike, back-country ski, cross-country ski, and of course he supports his children with whatever activities they have going on.

Welcome, Ben, we'll be talking again in a year!



Building Networks of Support for Caregivers



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is a nationally-recognized interactive two-day Train-the-Trainer course that prepares those who will train respite care workers in their own communities.



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REST Training Information

September 8-9, 2016

9:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.

Frisco, Colorado

0083 Nancy's Place
Frisco, CO 80443

Training Fee: \$500

Includes lunch and snacks

Register today! <http://restprogram.org/event/>

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Applicants must reside in Eagle, Grand, Jackson, Pitkin or Summit Counties in Colorado.

Please contact C.J. or Erin for more information.

For Information, contact:

C.J. Grove, Volunteer Coordinator
at volunteers@nwccog.org or
970-468-0295, ext. 122.

Erin Fisher, AAAA Director
at aaa12@nwccog.org or
970-468-0295, ext. 107.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update



NWCCOG Economic Development District is updating its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) this year. The CEDS is meant to be a tool for regional economic development decision making as well as a guide to understanding the regional economy so that we as a region are positioned to take action to improve it. Our CEDS is taking into account and, where appropriate, incorporating other regional planning efforts already under way in the region. Economic development planning - as implemented through the CEDS - is not only a cornerstone of the U.S. Economic

Development Administration's programs, but successfully serves as a means to engage community leaders, leverage the involvement of the private sector, and establish a strategic blueprint for regional collaboration.

The CEDS update process began in January with county-level meetings inviting a broad range of regional stakeholders (local governments, the business community, education providers, workforce groups, nonprofits, and other community groups) to conduct an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) in each county and in the region as a whole.

From analysis of the SWOTs, as well as other planning efforts under way in the region, the following strategic priority areas have emerged:

- Workforce: need for affordable housing, health care, child care, transportation, and education
- Build capacity in our communities to have the community infrastructure necessary to attract human capital, support the business community, and support education; this includes broadband and access to capital, affordable housing, and health care
- Diversity in the economy: develop the entrepreneurial ecosystem and encourage the growth of new industries
- Create and maintain communities and a business climate attractive to entrepreneurs
- Need for higher-paying jobs
- Support our key industries and existing businesses
- Protect our community character and natural environment
- Build capacity of our towns and counties to meet their economic development goals

The next step will be to develop a draft regional action plan for the CEDS.

For more information or to provide input, please contact Rachel Lunney, EDD Director, at 970.468.0295, x106, or rachel@nwccog.org.

Meeting summaries can be found here: <http://nwcoloradobusiness.org/about/comprehensive-economic-development-strategy/ceds-update-2016/>

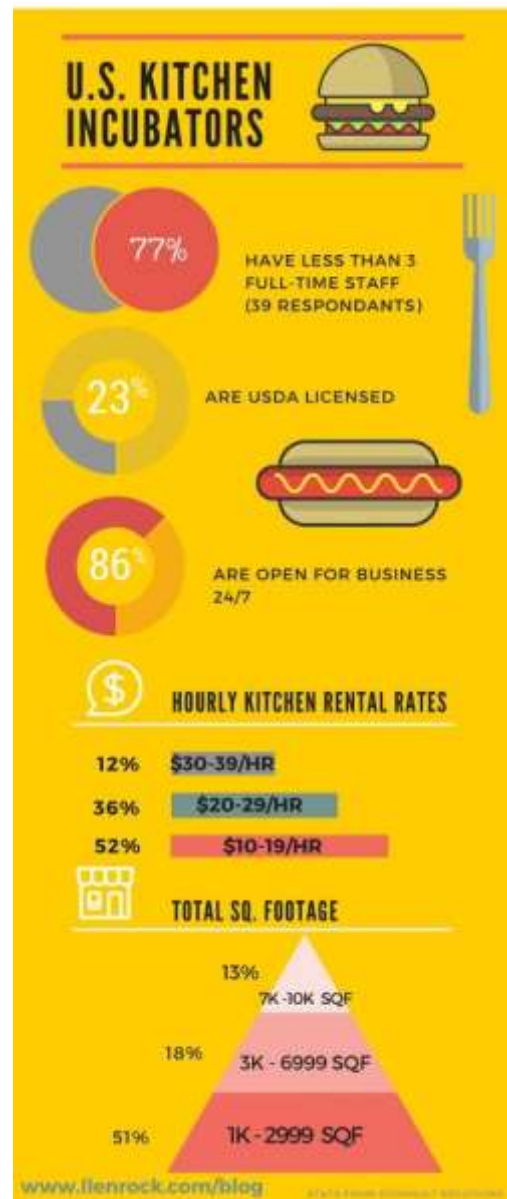
NWCCOG Receives Colorado Blueprint 2.0 Initiative Resources

Lt. Gov. Donna Lynne recently announced the recipients of the first round of the Colorado Blueprint 2.0 initiatives. The Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) launched Blueprint 2.0 last year as a way to examine how best to serve rural communities around the state and to identify opportunities to leverage the state's resources.

"Blueprint 2.0 is a great example of how Colorado is going above and beyond existing resources to support the needs of our rural regions," said Lt Gov. Lynne. "We congratulate today's recipients and look forward to seeing how these regions leverage the new services and resources to help strengthen their economies and communities."

Colorado Blueprint 2.0 Recipients:

- Industry Attraction Initiative: Rio Blanco County, Trinidad
- Competitive Advantage: Fort Morgan, Limon, Dillon
- Grow Your Outdoor Recreation Industry: Ouray, Montrose
- Strengthen Local Business Brand: San Luis Valley, Buena Vista, Delta
- Tiny Homes Community Master Plan: Morgan, Steamboat, Pagosa Springs
- Adaptive Reuse Workshop: Brush, Delta County, Summit County
- Call Yourself Creative: Buena Vista, Rio Blanco County, Kremmling
- Incubator/Accelerator Best Practices: Morgan County, Steamboat, **NWCCOG**
- Tourism Promotion: La Junta, Delta County, Rio Blanco County
- Community-Led Initiative: Custer County



Over the past year, OEDIT hosted thirteen strategy sessions throughout the rural regions of Colorado to develop the ten different initiatives that communities would find most beneficial to

apply for through Blueprint 2.0. Each initiative includes services not previously provided by the state and leverages state resources and partnerships with organizations outside of Colorado to provide technical assistance to regions that expressed an interest in pursuing the initiatives. Many communities applied for Colorado Blueprint 2.0 initiatives, and during the application process, communities and regions were asked to demonstrate collaboration, strong local leadership, and solid support for the initiative they chose to pursue.

Initiatives will be deployed between now and December 2016. A new round of Blueprint 2.0 initiatives will be unveiled in 2017.

** Photo is for illustrative purposes only and does not depict Region 12 statistics.*

2016 NWCCOG COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

Thursday, August 25, 2016

Full Council & EDD Board Annual Planning Meeting

Location: Buffalo Mountain Room, Summit County Commons, Frisco

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Primary Agenda Items: Strategic Planning for 2017

Thursday, October 27, 2016

Full Council Meeting

Location: NWCCOG Office/Conference Call

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Primary Agenda Items: Review of draft 2017 budget

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Full Council & Foundation Board Meeting

Location: NWCCOG Office/Conference Call

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Primary Agenda Items: 2016 budget revisions; approve 2017 budget; adopt 2017 meeting schedule; annual NWCCOG Foundation Board meeting.

Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

www.nwccog.org

970.468.0295

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