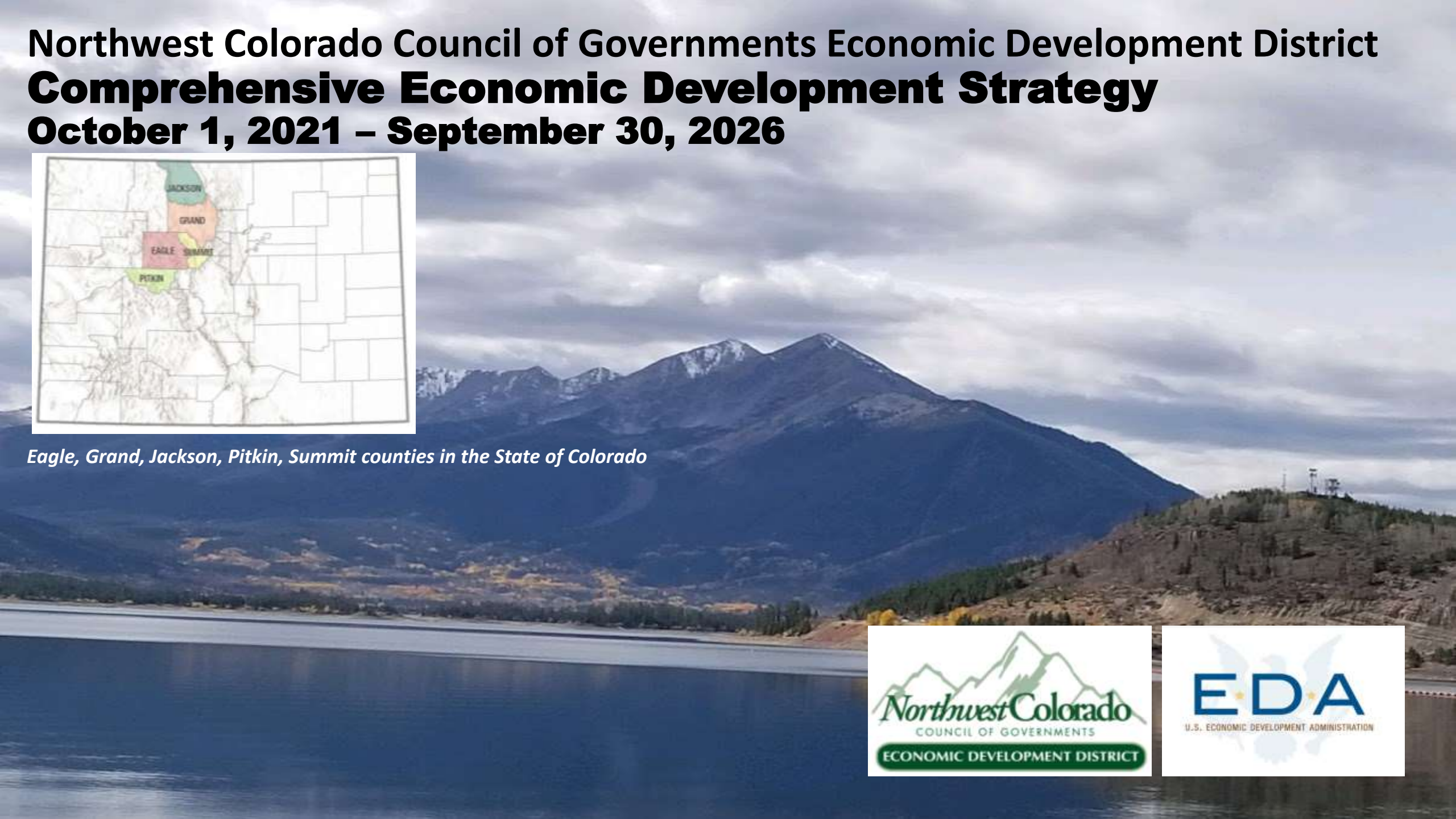


Northwest Colorado Council of Governments Economic Development District **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy** **October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2026**



Eagle, Grand, Jackson, Pitkin, Summit counties in the State of Colorado



Acknowledgements

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The NWCCOG Economic Development District



What is Economic Development?

“Economic development creates the conditions for economic growth and an Improved quality of life by expanding the capacity of individuals, businesses, towns/counties, and communities to maximize the use of their talents and skills to support innovation, lower transaction costs, and responsibly produce and trade valuable goods and services. Economic Development requires effective, collaborative partners focused on advancing mutual gain for the public and the private sector. Economic Development is essential to ensuring our economic future.” *U. S. Economic Development Administration*

EDA Mission

EDA's mission is to lead the Federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. EDA will fulfill its mission by fostering entrepreneurship, innovation and productivity through Investments in infrastructure development, capacity building and business development in order to attract private capital investments and new and better jobs to Regions.

The NWCCOG Economic Development District

Northwest Colorado Council of Governments became an Economic Development District under the auspices of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) in 2012. NWCCOG EDD is one of six in the State of Colorado, and one of 384 in the United States. The NWCCOG EDD receives funding every year from the EDA's Planning Partnership Program. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is the cornerstone of this program. The NWCCOG EDD is responsible for facilitating the development, implementation, and revision of our region's CEDS.

NWCCOG's first ever CEDS covered the period 2012-2016. A region's CEDS must be updated every 5 years. This plan supports economic development plans in the region and exists to promote long-term economic success of the region. One of the goals of the CEDS is to leverage funds in order to implement local plans, build on and improve the region's key sectors, encourage entrepreneurship and innovation, increase economic development capacity, and maintain and improve our high quality of life. The NWCCOG EDD is governed by a Board of Directors.

NWCCOG Economic Development District exists to connect our communities with resources, build partnerships, and foster regional collaboration to enhance the economic prosperity of our region.

About NWCCOG

Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) is a voluntary association of county and municipal governments that believes in the benefits of working together on a regional basis. NWCCOG serves 30 member jurisdictions in a 5-county region of northwest Colorado. Many of our programs and services extend beyond the base region of our membership. Click on the button below to explore maps of each service area, or instead, explore each program by looking through the What We Do Menu above. The Who We Are menu above has more information about our People, including the Council, Admin Staff. It also is a place to access our plethora of recent communications. Each program page has a Client Profile or Success Story to help 'put a face' on what we do.

The CEDS Planning Process



What is a CEDS?

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a locally-based, regionally-driven economic development planning process and document that creates the space for our region to identify its strengths and weaknesses and brings together a diverse set of partners to generate good jobs, diversify the economy, and spur economic growth. This CEDS planning process has engaged a range of partners, including town and county governments, community leaders, residents, chambers of commerce, the private sector, educational institutions, federal and state partners, and other stakeholders in planning for our region's future. Our CEDS planning process identifies locally-grown strategies that will guide regional economic development, encourage partnerships and collaboration, and improve economic outcomes and overall quality of life in the NWCCOG Region. This CEDS is written to allow the NWCCOG Region to maximize its economic development potential, as well as engage with the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and other federal partners to receive infrastructure and technical assistance grants, such as EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. The CEDS is a pre-requisite for federal designation as an EDD and must be updated at least every five years. Economic development planning – as implemented through the CEDS – is not only a cornerstone of the U.S. Economic Development Administration's (EDA) 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 Planning Process for this 5-Year Update

The NWCCOG Region completed its first-ever Comprehensive Economic Development Plan (CEDS) (2012-2016) in December 2011. Per EDA requirements, a region's CEDS must be updated every 5 years. NWCCOG's second CEDS covered the period 2017-2021, and this update covers the period 10/1/2021 – 9/30/2021. The CEDS planning process invited participation and input from a broad range of regional stakeholders (local governments, the business community, education providers, workforce groups, non-profits, and other community groups). Normally we would have held several in-person community input meetings throughout the region, however due to the COVID-19 pandemic prohibiting in-person gatherings for all of most of 2020 and the first half of 2021, we piggy backed on several stakeholder engagement virtual sessions held throughout the region. In fact, there was an abundance of these sessions while our region grappled with the economic challenges caused by the pandemic. Local planning is the cornerstone of the regional CEDS, so we analyzed existing local, state, and regional plans that are already in place.

NWCCOG engaged on a regular basis with the CEDS Strategy Committee both at regularly scheduled EDD board meetings, as well as additional meetings where we focused on specific elements of the CEDS.

CEDS Planning Process – for 2021-2026 CEDS

CEDS Strategy Committee Engagement:

- Memo to CEDS Strategy Committee (11/23/2020)
- Memo to CEDS Strategy Committee (1/15/2021)
- Email to CEDS Strategy Committee (2/10/2021)
- Memo to CEDS Strategy Committee (3/15/21)
- SWOT Analysis (CEDS Strategy Committee Review 3/25)
- Memo to CEDS Strategy Committee (5/17/21)
- Strategic Direction/Action Plan (CEDS Strategy Committee Review 5/26)
- Follow up meeting to discuss Regional Action Plan (6/24/21)
- Review of draft CEDS to date (7/8/21 EDD board meeting)
- 30 Day public comment period (July 26 – August 26)
- Present final CEDS/Approval (Aug. 26 EDD Board Meeting)
- Submit to EDA (Sept. 1)
- New CEDS in effect: Oct. 1, 2021 – Sept. 30, 2026

Summary Background



The NWCCOG Region



Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) region is located in the northwest portion Colorado just west of the Front Range, and includes the counties of Eagle, Grand, Jackson, Pitkin and Summit. It is in the heart of the Rocky Mountains and is characterized by its mountainous terrain and very high overall altitude. The region has a population of 120,637 living in 6,779 square miles, for an overall population density of 17.8 persons.

Most of the area is located among the high peaks of the Colorado Rockies. The region is bordered in the East by the Continental Divide, in the north by the State of Wyoming bordering Jackson County, to the west by Garfield County bordering Eagle and Pitkin Counties, and to the South by the Elk Mountain Range bordering Pitkin County. It is considered the "high country", as elevations range from a high point of 14,270 (Grays Peak in Summit County) to a low of 6,312 in the Town of Gypsum in Eagle County. The average elevation in the region is 8,124 feet above sea level.

Eagle County covers 1,701 square miles and makes up 25% of the region. There are several communities in the County, including the towns of Vail, Minturn, Red Cliff, Avon, Eagle, Gypsum, and Basalt. The largest population center is unincorporated Edwards. The smallest centers, also unincorporated, are Burns, McCoy and Bond, which serve ranches in the northern part of the county, and Wolcott on the I-70 corridor. On the Roaring Fork River, unincorporated El Jebel lies near the Town of Basalt between the towns of Glenwood Springs in Garfield County and Aspen in Pitkin County. Eagle County is home to Vail and Beaver Creek Ski Areas.

Grand County covers 1,869 square miles and makes up 28% of the region. It is known as Middle Park. Six incorporated Towns are located in Grand County: Fraser, Granby, Grand Lake, Hot Sulphur Springs, Kremmling, and Winter Park. Unincorporated communities include Parshall, Radium and Tabernash.

Jackson County covers 1,628 square miles and makes up 24% of the region. It is known as North Park. It is made up of the incorporated Town of Walden, and the unincorporated communities of Cowdrey, Coalmont and Rand.

Pitkin County covers 975 square miles and is located in the heart of the White River National Forest, surrounded by the spectacular peaks of the Elk Range in the northern Rocky Mountains. Pitkin County includes the communities of Aspen, Snowmass Village, Old Snowmass, Woody Creek, portions of the town of Basalt, Meredith, Thomasville, the outskirts of Carbondale and Redstone.

Summit County covers 619 square miles and makes up 9% of the region. The county is centrally located in Colorado, being only an hour's drive from the Denver metropolitan area. Interstate 70, the state's main east west transportation corridor, bisects the County, and enhances its proximity to Denver/Front Range communities. Included within the county are six incorporated municipalities: Blue River, Breckenridge, Dillon, Frisco, Montezuma, and Silverthorne. Summit County has four major ski resorts (Arapahoe Basin, Breckenridge, Copper Mountain, and Keystone), significant National Forest and Bureau of Land Management lands, and two Congressionally-designated Wilderness Areas (Eagles Nest and Ptarmigan Peak).

The NWCCOG Region: Past, Present, Future



The Region's history has included several waves of settlement and activity. The first wave, prior to early to mid 1800's, was the use of the Region by Ute and Arapahoe Indians for hunting grounds. The discovery of valuable materials such as gold and silver in the area in the mid-1800's brought fortune hunters and settlers from the east in droves. The first town to discover gold was Breckenridge in 1859, and thus the Town of Breckenridge was the first permanent town in Region 12 as well as on Colorado's western slope.



While mining was the prominent economic activity in the late 1800's early 1900's, ranching was established in the valley areas of the Region. Because of the high elevations throughout the Region, ranching was limited to primarily cattle and hay.



As mining claims dried up in the early to mid-1900, the seeds of developing ski areas were planted in the minds of 10th Mountain Division soldiers training at Camp Hale near Red Cliff, Colorado. These 10th Mountain Division soldiers training in the High County of Region 12 returned to the area after World War II and became the pioneers of the ski industry which continues to be the mainstay of this region's economy.



The Ski Industry was officially born in 1940 with the opening of Winter Park Resort in Grand County. Soon to follow were Arapahoe Basin (1946), Aspen Mountain (1946), Aspen Highlands (1957), Breckenridge Ski Resort (1961), Vail (1962), Snowmass (1967), Keystone Resort (1970), Copper Mountain (1972), and Beaver Creek (1980). These resorts provided a new industry to replace mining in the four resort counties of Eagle, Grand, Pitkin and Summit while ranching and agriculture remained the mainstay of the economy in Jackson County.

The ski industry led to a thriving tourism economy and today's economy is based primarily on the Region's recreational amenities. This has also led to another mainstay of the economy - the construction and servicing of second/vacation homes.

Region 12's economy has transformed over time from a combination of mining and agriculture in its early history (1800's) to a combination of destination tourism, construction and second homes today. While tourism will continue to be a primary economic driver, some speculate that the next shift in the economy will be towards the knowledge and creative economy with many jobs and activities related to technology, research, design, and entrepreneurialism.

The quality of life, the mix of local businesses, a skilled work force, a beautiful natural setting, and the international name recognition provided by world-class ski resorts are invaluable underpinnings unique to the region's economy. The region's counties and towns should agree to support the expansion and growth of existing enterprises, all the while remaining vigilant to the fact that new economic drivers could be on the horizon. A stable, well-educated workforce is critical to a knowledge/information economy, and the region should promote the creation of advanced learning and skill development programs and institutions. Safe neighborhoods and affordable, high-quality childcare, transportation, and housing are all considered necessary infrastructure to positive economic development and should therefore be available in all communities. Finally, the environment is an extremely vital part of the region's economy, and as such all economic development should be done in a manner that protects the integrity of the region's natural resources and scenic beauty.

What does the future hold for the NWCCOG Region? The Covid-19 global pandemic which began in March 2020 brought a significant economic shock to the region. The region's tourism sector suffered significant economic losses due to the shutdown of businesses. Travel was abruptly shut down, significantly impacting our destination resort communities. While travel was impacted, the lure of our region's high amenity mountain communities was strong, attracting significant in-migration from families who could both work remote and have children attend school remote, thereby creating a surge in population. Our mountain communities are becoming "zoom towns", projecting to increase year-round population. The travel industry has bounced back strongly, but this significant increase on utilization of the region's outdoor recreational amenities comes strain and overuse. Thus, the region's communities are looking for strategies to balance tourism with quality of life for both visitors and year-round residents.

Demographic Overview



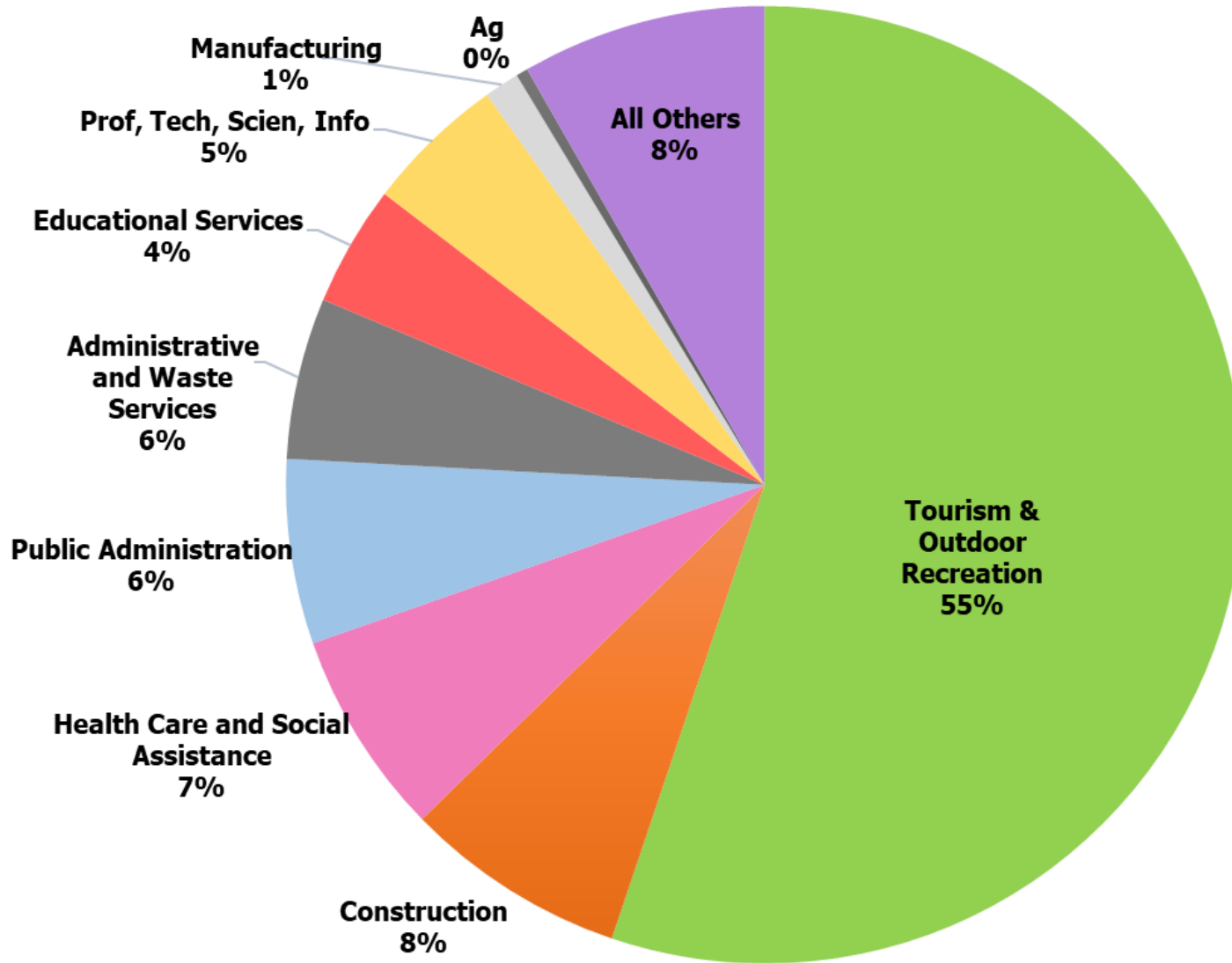
Regional Demographic trends compare to state and U.S.

5-Year Population Trend: County, Region, State, Nation				
	2015 Population	2020 Population	# Change	% Change
NWCCOG Region	117,914	120,637	2,723	2.3%
Colorado	5,453,996	5,763,976	309,980	5.7%
U.S.	320,635,163	330,591,441	9,956,278	3.1%

	2015 Population	2020 Population	# Change	% Change
Eagle County	55,837	54,929	(908)	-1.6%
Grand County	14,726	15,794	1,068	7.3%
Jackson County	1,352	1,389	37	2.7%
Pitkin County	17,948	17,894	(54)	-0.3%
Summit County	30,051	30,631	580	1.9%

Population Forecasts				
	2020 Population	2030 Forecast	# Change	% Change
Eagle County	54,929	61,862	6,933	12.6%
Grand County	15,794	17,675	1,881	11.9%
Jackson County	1,389	1,272	(117)	-8.4%
Pitkin County	17,894	17,909	15	0.1%
Summit County	30,631	34,416	3,785	12.4%
Colorado	5,763,976	6,544,594	780,618	13.5%

The Regional Economy



Q1 2021

- Jobs: **81,637**
- Establishments: **9,252**
- Labor Force: **75,168**
- UE Rate: **4.6%**
- Annual Wage:
- Eagle: **\$49,764**
- Grand: **\$39,324**
- Jackson: **\$38,064**
- Pitkin: **\$56,212**
- Summit: **\$44,356**

Year over Year Changes: Q1 2021 vs. Q1 2020

- Jobs: **-7,236**
- Establishments: **+336**
- Labor Force: **-3,483**
- UE Rate: **-3.4%**
- Annual Wage:
- Eagle: **-0.3%**
- Grand: **+4.7%**
- Jackson: **+4.7%**
- Pitkin: **+4.1%**
- Summit: **+6.8%**

Economic Conditions in the Region



The NWCCOG region's resilience has been tested immensely over the last 18 months. Our region has experienced a global pandemic, devastating wildfires, and the effects of these economic shocks and natural disasters on our tourism-based economy. In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic forced the region's economy to abruptly shut down in the face of containing the spread of the virus. This resulted in ski areas to shut down during one of the busiest times of year; lodging to shut down; restaurants, small businesses, and retail establishments to shut their doors; schools shut down and caregivers were tasked with facilitating on-line school for children; and events that had been planned to be cancelled.

The immediate result was loss of revenue for our local businesses, and the loss of jobs for our workforce. There was a level of fear and uncertainty which blanketed the region, creating mental health challenges for our community. Local business owners struggled to pivot to new ways of doing business, and the workforce struggled to make ends meet while not getting a paycheck. Thanks to quick, aggressive action by the federal, state, and local governments, financial support was provided in the way of PPP loans, Energize Colorado Gap Fund grants, and enhanced pandemic unemployment benefits to keep businesses and the workforce afloat.

After the "storm" began to clear, and vaccines were widely available, and the economy began to reopen, the aftereffects of the pandemic began to be revealed. The region experienced a flood of in-migration as remote work and school emerged as the norm. Many of these newcomers were coming from urban areas, and brought with them relatively higher salaries and wealth, allowing these newcomers to wildly outbid locals for housing, thereby driving up the cost. Our region's communities became "Zoom Towns", luring remote workers with high quality of life. Businesses, while being allowed to open, were forced to do so with reduced capacity. A large portion of the workforce left the region due to being unable to find affordable housing. This created a severe workforce shortage. One member of the NWCCOG EDD board described it as "displacement of people, culture, and character".

Now, our region is focused on our economic recovery, and building our capacity and resiliency as we move into the future. We have a great opportunity in front of us, as we learn from the challenges over the last 18 months and implement the regional action plan set forth in this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. Our priority must be investment in our people, our human capital, our workforce. This CEDS emphasizes the challenges our workforce faces, and the opportunity our regional leaders have to overcome and meet these challenges. Local businesses need local employees; there are important advantages to businesses that are owned by and largely employ local residents. More dollars spent at those businesses stay in the local community. They provide jobs and opportunities and, importantly, amenities for local residents. And, of course, local businesses add to the character of their communities, creating the types of places where a globally mobile (location neutral) workforce and, therefore, high-wage businesses want to locate.

As stated by Chris Romer, President and CEO of the Vail Valley Partnership and member of the NWCCOG EDD board of directors, "Our economic development approach must continue to prioritize the startup and growth of locally owned businesses. The core of this effort is removing barriers to their success by developing an ecosystem to ensure that entrepreneurs have access to the training, funding, and staffing they need. In order to grow and retain business, we need to remain focused on housing and other cost of living challenges. A focus on people development and removing barriers to retention is the roadmap forward to building back better."



Eagle County, Colorado offers ten unique community experiences to suit all sorts of people, businesses and lifestyles. The county is home to two world-class ski resorts, a hospital, a community college, accessible and abundant arts and cultural opportunities, a regional airport and jet center, countless recreational opportunities, a vibrant tourism economy and much more. Eagle County is a wonderful place to call home whether that's year-round, seasonally or as a second home. Its unique mix of urban amenities and small town charm, coupled with a sizable and globally-sourced tourism base, make Eagle County an ideal spot for entrepreneurs and small business owners looking to craft the business and lifestyle of their dreams.

54,929	Population (2020)
5.6%	Population Change since 2010
75,402	Population Forecast (2050)
+37%	Forecasted Population Change: 2020 to 2050
\$89,268	Median Household Income
7.9%	Poverty Rate
88.3%	High School Diploma or more (25+)
47.2%	Bachelor's Degree or more (25+)
18,171	Total Number of Households
32,461	Total Number of Housing Units
36.0%	% Housing Units Vacant for Seas/Rec Use
3.0	Average Household Size
37.0	Median Age
29.6%	% Hispanic
30,525	Total Employment (Q4 2020)
-2,725	Employment Change(since Q4 2019)
3,710	Total Establishments (Q4 2020)
+122	Change in Establishments since Q4 2019
\$ 59,852	Average Annual Wage
13.4%	Change in Average Annual Wage (since Q4 2019)
31,151	Total Labor Force (April 2021)
-1,569	Change in Labor Force year over year
6.7%	Unemployment Rate (April 2021)
-16.5	Change in UE Rate year over year

Eagle County Community Assets

- Home to Vail and Beaver Creek Ski Ares, two internationally known resorts
- White River National Forest and Gore Range Mountains surround the Vail Valley, offering abundant year-round outdoor recreation activities
- Eagle County Regional Airport
- ECO Transit System
- Eagle County School District: 11 Elementary Schools; 7 Middle Schools; 5 High Schools
- Colorado Mountain College Campus in Edwards, CO
- Vail Health Hospital; Steadman Clinic
- County Seat: Eagle, CO

EAGLE COUNTY, COLORADO

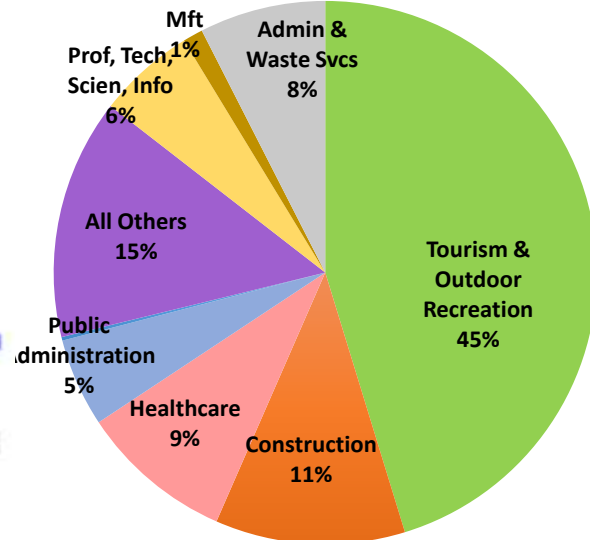
The Eagle County economy is dominated by the tourism and outdoor recreation sector, accounting for 45% of all jobs. The largest occupation is food preparation and serving related, which tends to be a lower paying job. The number one growing occupation, however, is healthcare practitioners and technical, which tends to be higher paying jobs, and is indicative of the county's growing healthcare sector.

Largest Occupations

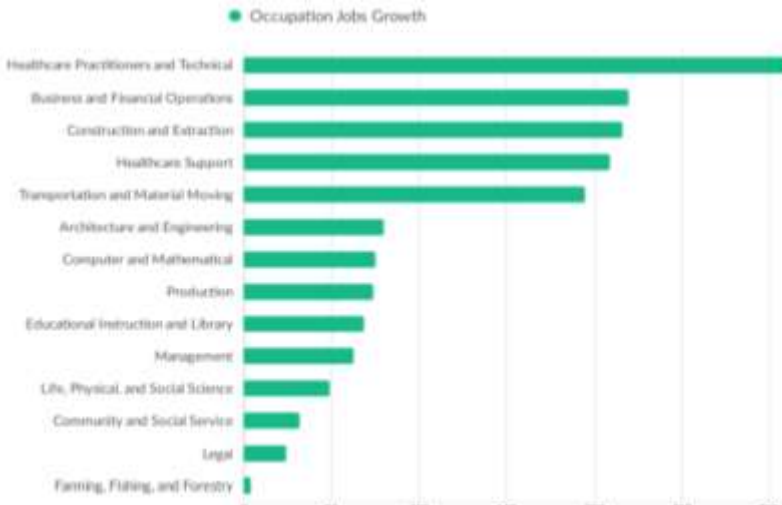


Industry Mix

Total Jobs: 30,525
Average Annual Wage: \$59,852



Growing Occupations

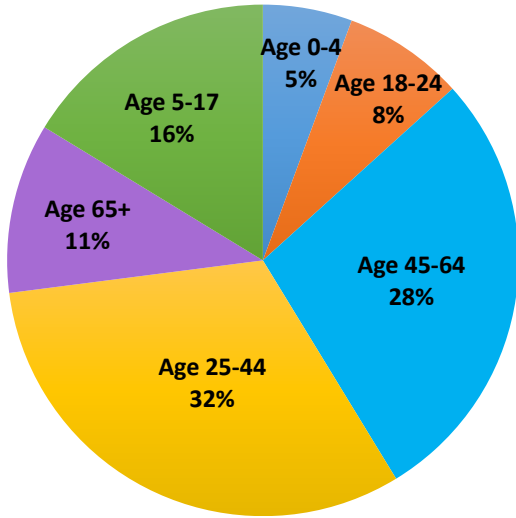


Annual Average Wage by Industry

Industry	Annual Wage
Total, All Industries	\$ 59,852
Accommodation and Food Services	\$ 38,740
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$ 33,488
Retail Trade	\$ 44,564
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$ 78,104
Construction	\$ 74,256
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$ 92,872
Professional and Technical Services	\$ 104,988
Information	\$ 63,388
Public Administration	\$ 70,200
Manufacturing	\$ 60,320
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	\$ 54,704
Administrative and Waste Services	\$ 45,240
Educational Services	\$ 52,988
Finance and Insurance	\$ 103,844
Management of Companies and Enterprises	\$ 194,324
Mining	\$ 74,620
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	\$ 50,700
Utilities	\$ 86,892
Transportation and Warehousing	\$ 54,756
Wholesale Trade	\$ 82,784

Population Mix

Total Population: 54,929
Median Age: 37



Eagle County Population and Workforce

Eagle County has a very young population, with the largest portion being in the 25-44 age group (32%), and a median age of 37. The county has an above average amount of millennials, and a below average amount of those retiring soon.

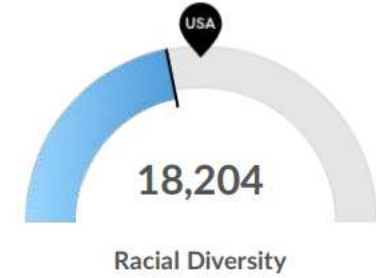
Population Characteristics



Eagle County, CO has 13,077 millennials (ages 25-39). The national average for an area this size is 11,366.



Retirement risk is low in Eagle County, CO. The national average for an area this size is 16,208 people 55 or older, while there are 13,840 here.



Racial diversity is low in Eagle County, CO. The national average for an area this size is 21,989 racially diverse people, while there are 18,204 here.



Eagle County, CO has 2,007 veterans. The national average for an area this size is 3,062.



Eagle County, CO has 1.16 violent crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 3.53 per 1,000 people.



Eagle County, CO has 9.23 property crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 19.79 per 1,000 people.

GRAND COUNTY, COLORADO



Grand County, Colorado offers opportunity for business growth with surprising affordability. It is home to world-class destinations like Winter Park Resort, Rocky Mountain National Park, and Grand Lake, which is Colorado's largest natural body of water. Communities in Grand County include the incorporated towns of Kremmling, Hot Sulphur Springs, Granby, Grand Lake, Fraser, Winter Park and the unincorporated communities of Parshall and Tabernash.

15,794	Population (2020)
6.4%	Population Change since 2010
23,129	Population Forecast (2050)
+46%	Forecasted Population Change (2020 to 2050)
\$71,029	Median Household Income
8.1%	Poverty Rate
94.6%	High School Diploma or more (25+)
38.0%	Bachelor's Degree or more (25+)
5,884	Total Number of Households
16,780	Total Number of Housing Units
57.4%	% Housing Units Vacant for Seas/Rec Use
2.5	Average Household Size
42.9	Median Age
8.8%	% Hispanic
6,737	Total Employment (Q4 2020)
-720	Employment Change (since Q4 2019)
942	Total Establishments (Q4 2020)
+43	Change in Establishments (since Q4 2019)
\$47,060	Average Annual Wage
14.8%	Change in Average Annual Wage (since Q4 2019)
7,673	Total Labor Force (April 2021)
-274	Change in Labor Force year over year
6.6%	Unemployment Rate (April 2021)
-15.3%	Change in UE Rate year over year

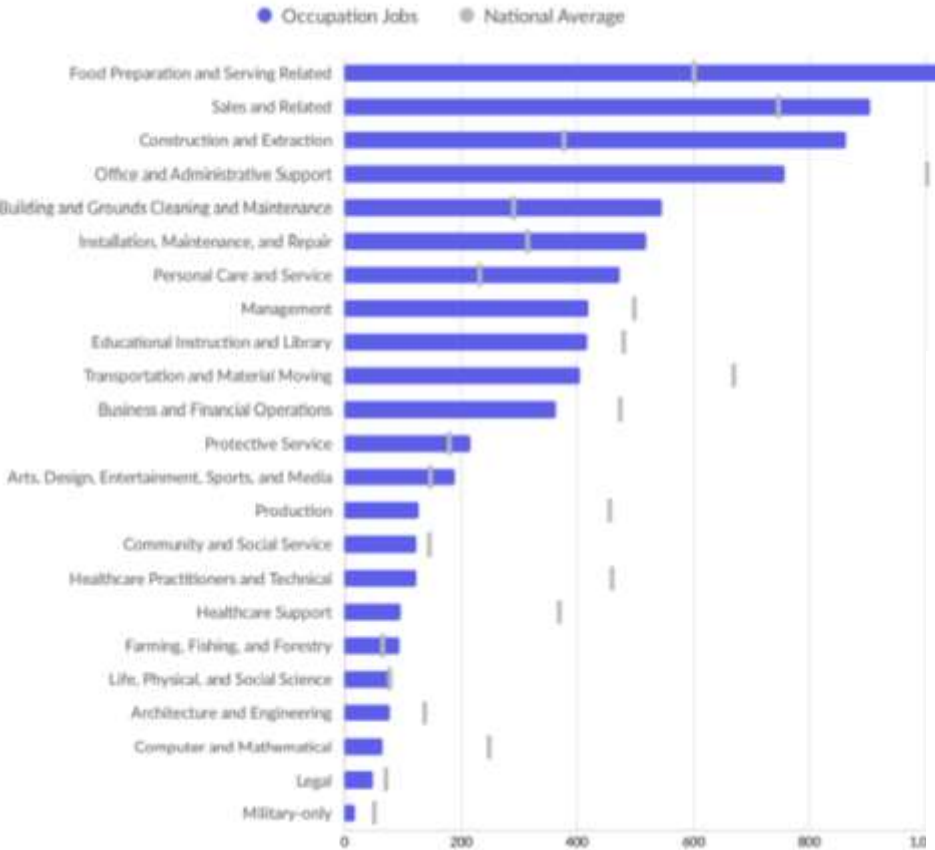
Grand County Community Assets

- ◆ Grand County is home to Grand Lake, Colorado's largest natural body of water.
- ◆ The Town of Grand Lake is the western gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park.
- ◆ The Town of Hot Sulphur Springs is home to one of the best natural hot mineral springs resorts and spas in the country.
- ◆ Schools:
 - Fraser Valley Elementary School (K-5)
 - Granby Elementary School (K-5)
 - West Grand Elementary School (Kremmling) (K-5)
 - East Grand Middle School (Granby) (6-8)
 - West Grand Middle School (Kremmling) (6-8)
 - Middle Park High School, Granby (9-12)
 - West Grand High School (Kremmling) (9-12)
- ◆ Healthcare:
 - Middle Park Health Clinic and Grand Lake Center
 - Middle Park Health Granby Campus
 - Middle Park Health Kremmling Campus
- ◆ County seat for Grand County: Town of Hot Sulphur Springs

GRAND COUNTY, COLORADO

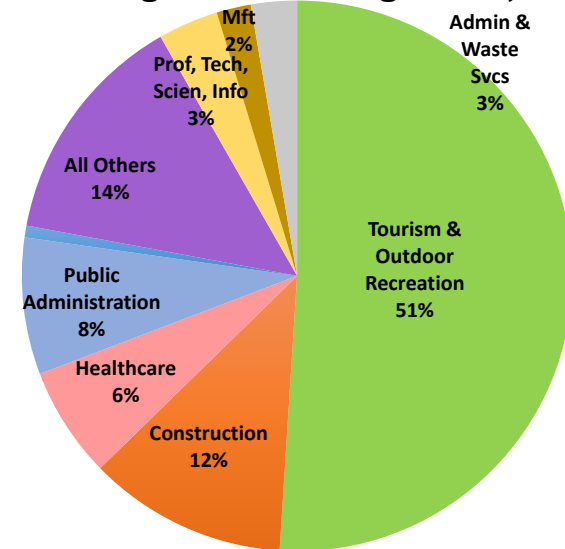
The Grand County economy is dominated by the Tourism and Outdoor Recreation industry, accounting for 51% of all jobs. Given this sector's dominance, the largest occupation in the county is food preparation and serving related, which tends to be a lower paying occupation. The fastest growing occupation in the county is educational instruction.

Largest Occupations

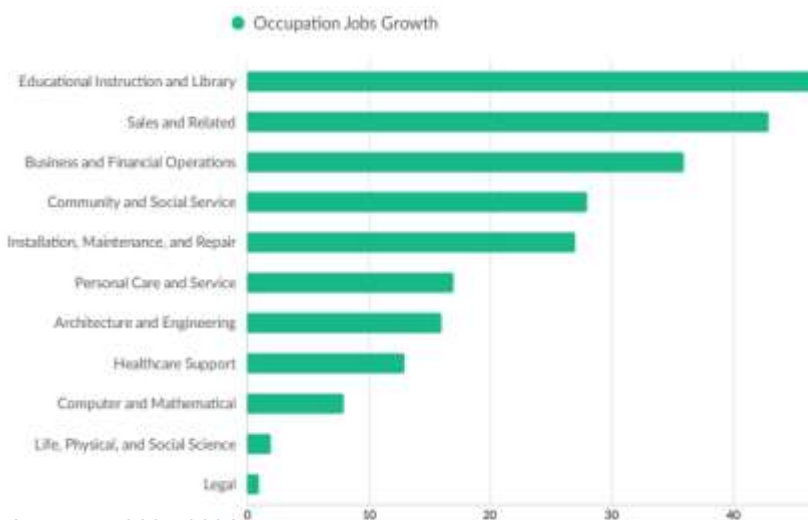


Industry Mix

Total Jobs: 6,737
Average Annual Wage: \$47,060



Growing Occupations

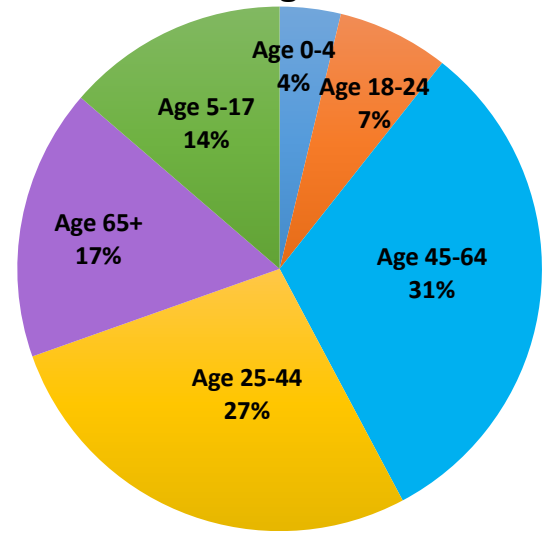


Annual Average Wage by Industry

Industry	Annual Wage
Total, All Industries	\$ 47,060
Accommodation and Food Services	\$ 30,888
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$ 32,552
Retail Trade	\$ 44,512
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$ 59,124
Construction	\$ 56,732
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$ 65,208
Professional and Technical Services	\$ 80,288
Information	\$ 50,752
Public Administration	\$ 66,196
Manufacturing	\$ 41,288
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	\$ 71,760
Administrative and Waste Services	\$ 39,728
Educational Services	\$ 40,404
Finance and Insurance	\$ 72,852
Management of Companies and Enterprises	\$ 73,424
Mining	\$ 50,128
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	\$ 43,368
Transportation and Warehousing	\$ 52,624
Utilities	\$ 86,632
Wholesale Trade	\$ 64,480

Population Mix

Total Population: 15,794
Median Age: 42.9



Grand County Population and Workforce

The largest portion of Grand County's population is in the 45-64 age group. (%). This age group tends to be wealthier with more disposable income, thereby contributing wealth to the county's economy. Grand County also has a significant portion of the population in the 25-44 year old age group, which is an about average amount of millennials.

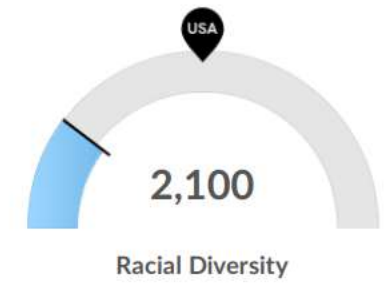
Population Characteristics



Grand County, CO has 3,273 millennials (ages 25-39). The national average for an area this size is 3,244.



Retirement risk is high in Grand County, CO. The national average for an area this size is 4,626 people 55 or older, while there are 5,776 here.



Racial diversity is low in Grand County, CO. The national average for an area this size is 6,276 racially diverse people, while there are 2,100 here.



Grand County, CO has 1,181 veterans. The national average for an area this size is 874.



Grand County, CO has 1.27 violent crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 3.53 per 1,000 people.



Grand County, CO has 7.25 property crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 19.79 per 1,000 people.

JACKSON COUNTY, COLORADO



Also known as North Park, Jackson County is remote, raw, and tucked deep in Colorado’s rugged Rocky Mountains. Walden is the county seat, and the only incorporated municipality in the county. Holding true to rough and rugged times when native hunters, trappers, prospectors, and early ranchers survived off its lands and forged its history, Jackson County is the real West, where travelers can embrace “what once was”, while happily escaping “what now is”. This basin opens north into Wyoming and is rimmed on the west by the Park Range, on the south by the Rabbit Ears Range and the Never Summer Mountains, and on the east by the Medicine Bow Mountains. Jackson County is home to the headwaters of the North Platte River.

1,389	Population (2020)
-0.4%	Population Change since 2010
1,161	Population Forecast (2050)
-16%	Forecasted Population Change (2020 to 2050)
\$53,577	Median Household Income
12.6%	Poverty Rate
87.4%	High School Diploma or more (25+)
20.0%	Bachelor's Degree or more (25+)
558	Total Number of Households
1,319	Total Number of Housing Units
36.6%	% Housing Units Vacant for Seas/Rec Use
2.2	Average Household Size
51.6	Median Age
17.4%	% Hispanic
571	Total Employment (Q4 2020)
7	Employment Change (since Q4 2019)
94	Total Establishments (Q4 2020)
5	Change in Establishments (since Q4 2019)
\$44,356	Average Annual Wage
5.4%	Change in Average Annual Wage (since Q4 2019)
892	Total Labor Force (April 2021)
25	Change in Labor Force year over year
4.4%	Unemployment Rate (April 2021)
-3.1	Change in UE Rate year over year

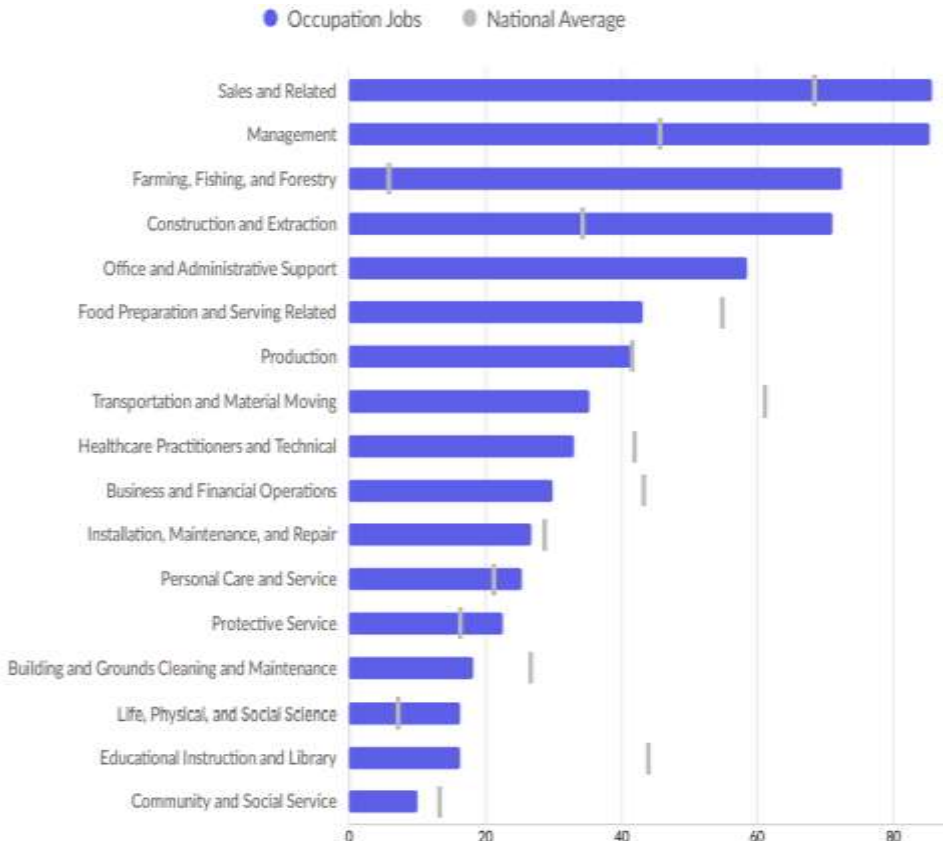
Jackson County Community Assets

- ◆ Jackson County is considered the “Moose Viewing Capital of Colorado”.
- ◆ 65% of Jackson County is comprised of public lands
- ◆ Jackson County offers an abundance of outdoor recreational opportunities including fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, abundant wildlife, and access to five of Colorado’s most rugged and pristine wilderness areas.
- ◆ Schools: North Park School District: Pre-K—12th grade
- ◆ Healthcare: - North Park Medical Center in Walden
- ◆ County seat for Jackson County: Town of Walden

JACKSON COUNTY, COLORADO

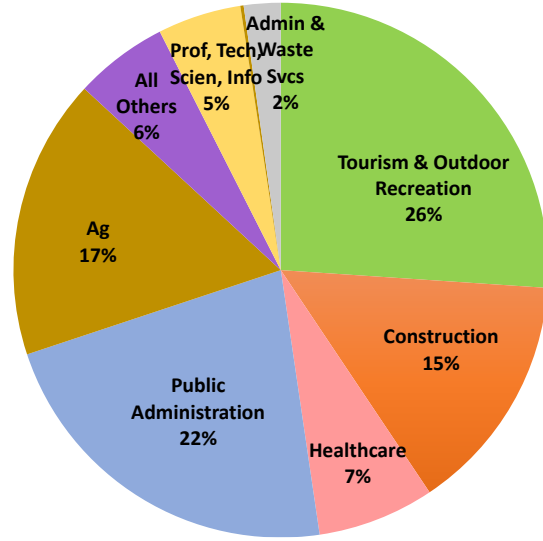
The Jackson County economy is relatively speaking the most diverse of the 5 counties in the NWCCOG Region. Tourism is still the most dominate industry (26%), but is followed closely by Pubic Administration (22%) and Agriculture (17%). The most prevalent occupations in Jackson County are sales, management, and farming, fishing, and forestry.

Largest Occupations

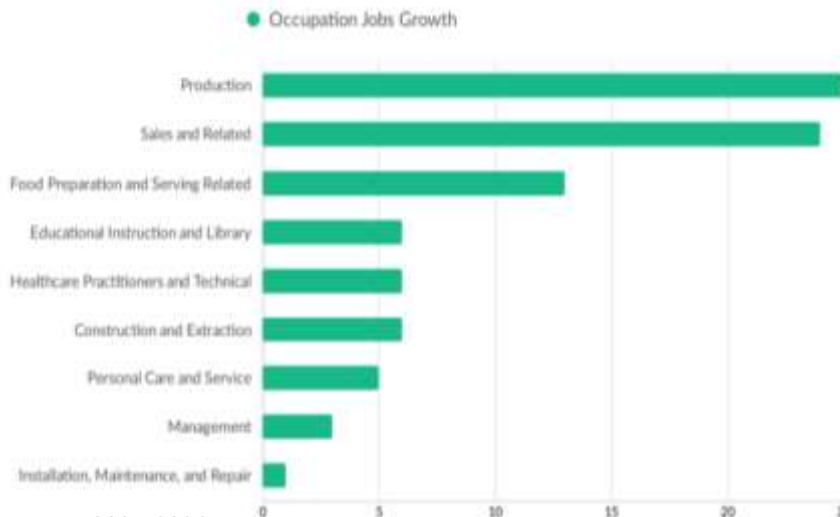


Industry Mix

Total Jobs: 571
Average Annual Wage: \$44,356



Growing Occupations

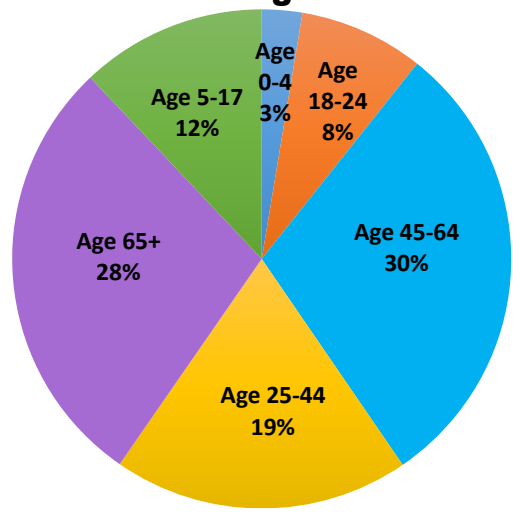


Annual Average Wage by Industry

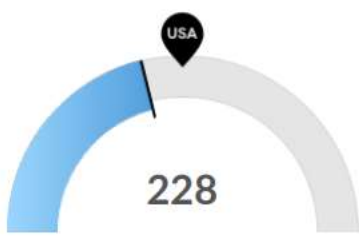
Industry	Average Wage
Total, All Industries	\$ 44,356
Accommodation and Food Services	\$ 25,376
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$ 29,432
Retail Trade	\$ 33,228
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	conf.
Construction	\$ 59,644
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$ 44,720
Professional and Technical Services	\$ 81,328
Public Administration	\$ 39,468
Manufacturing	conf.
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	\$ 43,368
Administrative and Waste Services	\$ 25,428
Educational Services	conf.
Finance and Insurance	conf.
Mining	\$ 114,088
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	conf.
Transportation and Warehousing	\$ 38,688
Utilities	conf.

Population Mix

Total Population: 1,389
Median Age: 51.6

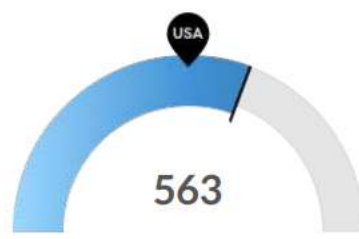


Population Characteristics



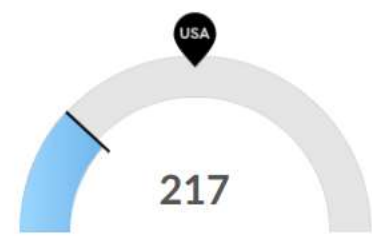
Millennials

Jackson County, CO has 228 millennials (ages 25-39). The national average for an area this size is 287.



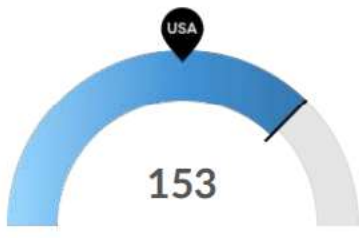
Retiring Soon

Retirement risk is high in Jackson County, CO. The national average for an area this size is 409 people 55 or older, while there are 563 here.



Racial Diversity

Racial diversity is low in Jackson County, CO. The national average for an area this size is 555 racially diverse people, while there are 217 here.



Veterans

Jackson County, CO has 153 veterans. The national average for an area this size is 77.



Violent Crime

No crime information is available in Jackson County, CO.



Property Crime

No crime information is available in Jackson County, CO.

Jackson County Population & Workforce

Jackson County is the “oldest” county in the region, with more than half of the population over the age of 45, and 28% in the 65+ age group. Jackson County has the highest median age of the 5 county region (51.6). It has a higher than average portion of the population retiring soon, and a below average portion of millennials.

PITKIN COUNTY, COLORADO



Pitkin County, Colorado named after former Colorado governor Frederick Pitkin, is located in west-central Colorado, spanning 973 square miles of mountains and the Roaring Fork River valley. It is bordered by Garfield and Eagle Counties to the North, Lake and Chaffee Counties to the east, Gunnison County to the south, and Mesa County to the west. The county is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Rocky Mountains. Aspen, the county seat, was founded during a silver boom during the 1870s and is now a popular ski destination, as well as the cultural hub of the Western Slope.

17,894	Population (2020)
4.4%	Population Change since 2010
18,743	Population Forecast (2050)
+4.7%	Forecasted Population Change (2020 to 2050)
\$92,820	Median Household Income
6.2%	Poverty Rate
96.9%	High School Diploma or more (25+)
60.8%	Bachelor's Degree or more (25+)
7,467	Total Number of Households
14,016	Total Number of Housing Units
34.8%	% Housing Units Vacant for Seas/Rec Use
2.3	Average Household Size
41.8	Median Age
10.1%	% Hispanic
14,811	Total Employment (Q4 2020)
-1,399	Employment Change (since Q4 2019)
1,952	Total Establishments (Q4 2020)
+63	Change in Establishments (since Q4 2019)
\$69,732	Average Annual Wage
+16.6%	Change in Average Annual Wage (since Q4 2019)
11,193	Total Labor Force (April 2021)
+52	Change in Labor Force year over year
6.8%	Unemployment Rate (April 2021)
-16.9%	Change in UE Rate year over year

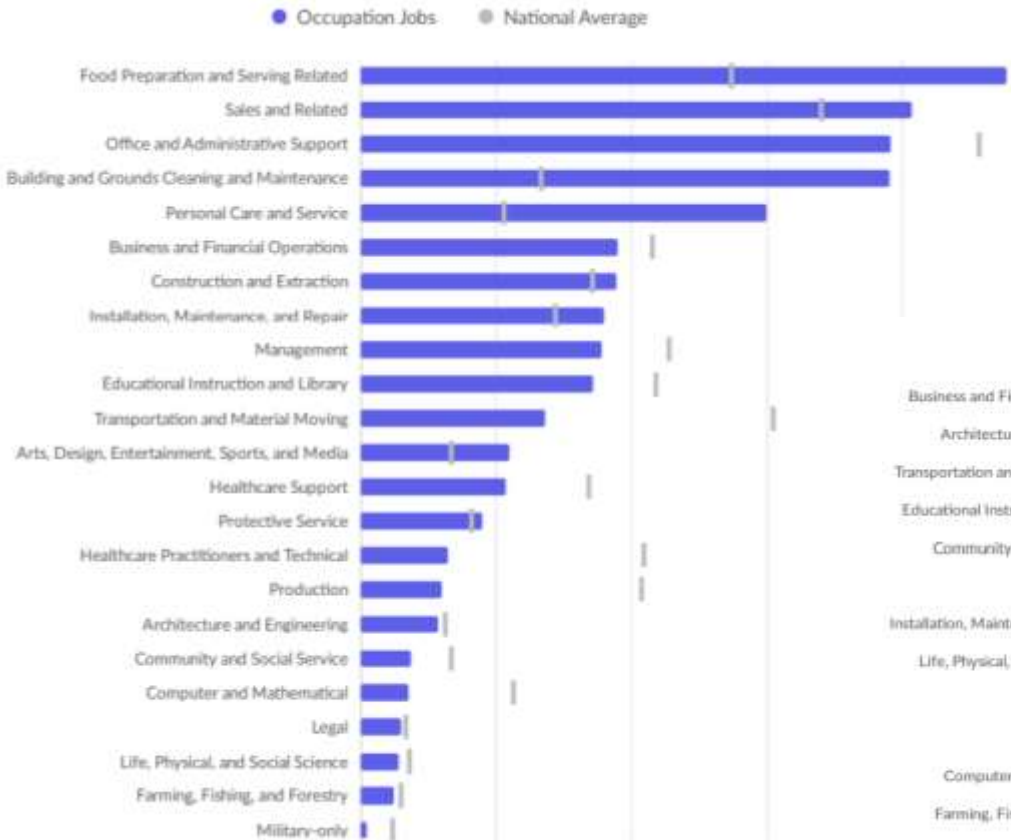
Pitkin County Community Assets

- ◆ Pitkin County is home to six of Colorado's Fourteeners, mountains standing 14,000 feet or higher: Pyramid Peak (14,025), Snowmass Peak (14,099), Capitol Peak (14,137), Castle Peak (14,279), and the Maroon Bells—Maroon Peak (14,163) and North Maroon Peak (14,019).
- ◆ The White River National Forest occupies most of the southern portion of Pitkin County.
- ◆ Home to internationally-known ski resorts of Aspen Mountain, Aspen Highlands, Buttermilk, and Snowmass
- ◆ Colorado Mountain College has a campus in Aspen
- ◆ Aspen/Pitkin County Airport
- ◆ Schools: Aspen School District (Aspen Elementary, Aspen Middle School, Aspen High School); Roaring Fork School District: (Basalt Elementary, Basalt Middle School, Basalt High School)
- ◆ Healthcare: Aspen Valley Hospital
- ◆ County seat for Pitkin County: City of Aspen

PITKIN COUNTY, COLORADO

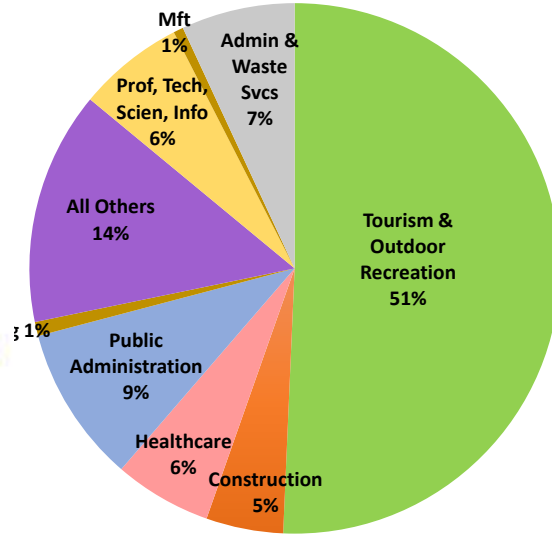
The Pitkin County Economy is dominated by the Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Industry, which comprises 51% of all jobs. Subsectors in this key industry include Accommodations and Food Services, Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; Real Estate Rental and Leasing; and Retail Trade. The top four occupations are in food preparation and serving; sales; office and administrative support; and building and grounds cleaning and maintenance. These tend to be lower-paying jobs. There is projected growth in higher paying jobs such as in business and financial operations, and architecture and engineering, which tend to be higher paying jobs.

Largest Occupations

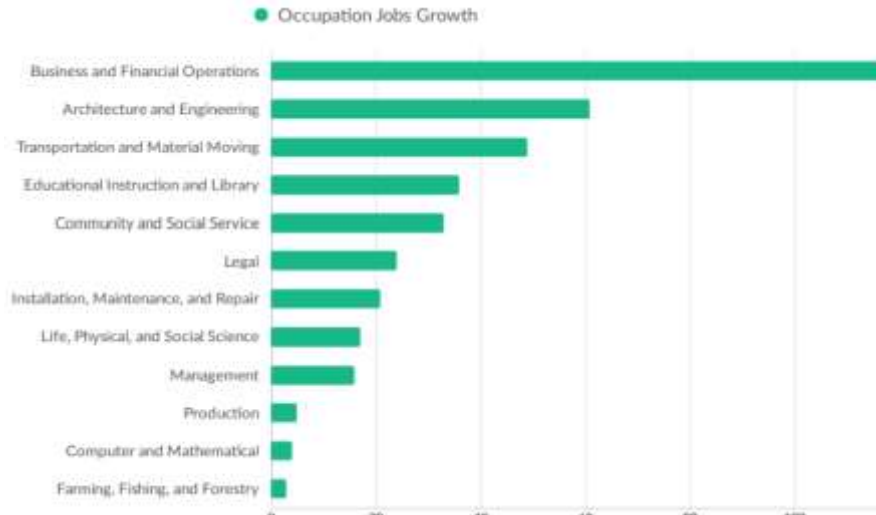


Industry Mix

Total Jobs: 14,811
Average Annual Wage: \$69,732



Growing Occupations

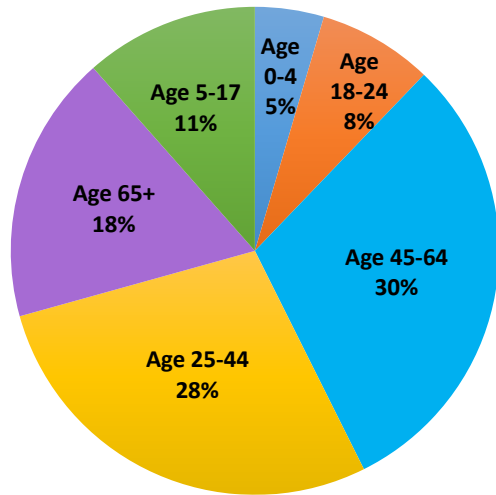


Annual Average Wage by Industry

Industry	Annual Wage
Total, All Industries	\$ 69,732
Accommodation and Food Services	\$ 43,888
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$ 47,216
Retail Trade	\$ 56,004
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$ 106,184
Construction	\$ 88,660
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$ 86,008
Professional and Technical Services	\$ 123,500
Information	\$ 75,400
Public Administration	\$ 75,348
Manufacturing	\$ 49,920
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	\$ 50,076
Administrative and Waste Services	\$ 47,008
Educational Services	\$ 62,608
Finance and Insurance	\$ 166,192
Management of Companies and Enterprises	\$ 392,132
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	\$ 60,372
Transportation and Warehousing	\$ 50,128
Utilities	\$ 71,656
Wholesale Trade	\$ 118,352

Population Mix

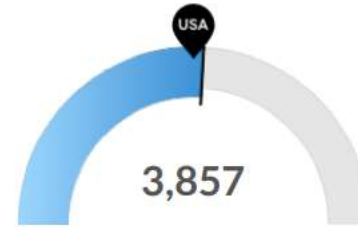
Total Population: 17,894
Median Age: 41.8



Pitkin County Population & Workforce

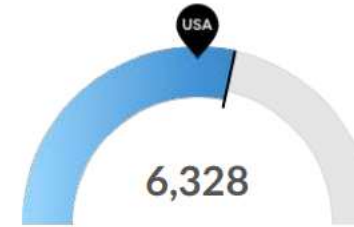
The largest portion of the population in Pitkin County is in the 45-64 age group (30%). This age group tends to be wealthier with more disposable income, thereby contributing wealth to the county's economy. Pitkin County is also very attractive to the 25-44 year old age group given its abundant outdoor recreation opportunities and quality of life. The area has also been an attractive area for second homes and retirees. The county has an above average number of the population retiring soon.

Population Characteristics



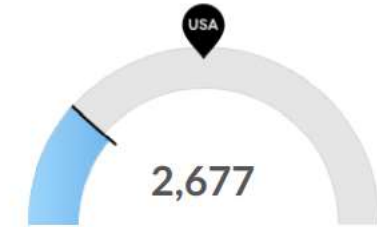
Millennials

Pitkin County, CO has 3,857 millennials (ages 25-39). The national average for an area this size is 3,663.



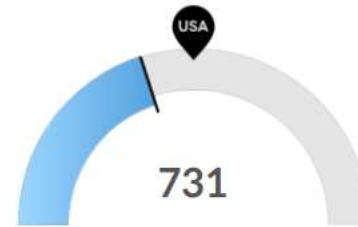
Retiring Soon

Retirement risk is high in Pitkin County, CO. The national average for an area this size is 5,224 people 55 or older, while there are 6,328 here.



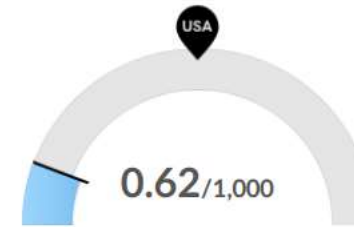
Racial Diversity

Racial diversity is low in Pitkin County, CO. The national average for an area this size is 7,087 racially diverse people, while there are 2,677 here.



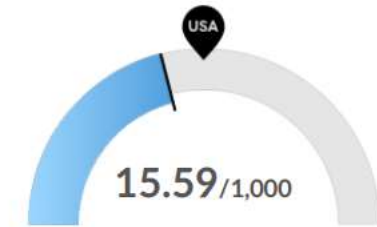
Veterans

Pitkin County, CO has 731 veterans. The national average for an area this size is 987.



Violent Crime

Pitkin County, CO has 0.62 violent crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 3.53 per 1,000 people.



Property Crime

Pitkin County, CO has 15.59 property crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 19.79 per 1,000 people.

SUMMIT COUNTY, COLORADO



Summit County, Colorado is centrally located in the State of Colorado among the high peaks of the Rocky Mountains. The county is located immediately west of the Continental Divide. The county seat of Breckenridge is 80 miles west of downtown Denver via Interstate 70, the state’s main east-west transportation corridor.

Included within the county are six municipalities (Blue River, Breckenridge, Dillon, Frisco, Montezuma, and Silverthorne), four major ski areas (Arapahoe Basin, Breckenridge, Copper Mountain, and Keystone), portions of the White River National Forest, some Bureau of Land Management lands, and two Congressionally designated wilderness areas (Eagles Nest and Ptarmigan Peak). About 80% of the land in the county is federal public land. Summit County’s dry, high-alpine climate yields long, snowy winters conducive to winter sports, and pleasantly warm summers that are ideal for hiking, biking, fishing, backpacking, kayaking and other forms of recreation. Thus, the county’s main industry is Tourism & Outdoor Recreation.

30,631	Population (2020)
9.4%	Population Change since 2010
42,298	Population Forecast (2050)
+38.1%	Forecasted Population Change (2020 to 2050)
\$86,570	Median Household Income
6.4%	Poverty Rate
92.9%	High School Diploma or more (25+)
52.4%	Bachelor's Degree or more (25+)
10,641	Total Number of Households
31,220	Total Number of Housing Units
63.7%	% Housing Units Used for Seas/Rec Use
2.8	Average Household Size
39.1	Median Age
14.3%	% Hispanic
20,174	Total Employment (Q4 2020)
-2,284	Employment Change (since Q4 2019)
2,429	Total Establishments (Q4 2020)
+45	Change in Establishments (since Q4 2019)
\$51,792	Average Annual Wage
+19.4%	Change in Average Annual Wage (since Q4 2019)
17,675	Total Labor Force (April 2021)
-1,232	Change in Labor Force year over year
6.6%	Unemployment Rate (April 2021)
-19.6%	Change in UE Rate year over year

Summit County Community Assets

- 80% Public Lands
- White River National Forest
- Dillon Reservoir
- Four World-Class Ski Areas: Breckenridge, Keystone, Copper Mountain, Arapahoe Basin
- Silverthorne Performing Arts Center
- Riverwalk Center
- St. Anthony’s Summit Medical Center
- Access to airports: 90 miles from Denver International Airport; 70 miles from Eagle County Regional Airport
- Summit Stage Free Public Transit System
- Abundant outdoor recreational opportunities including skiing, hiking, biking, fishing, hunting, sailing, wildlife viewing

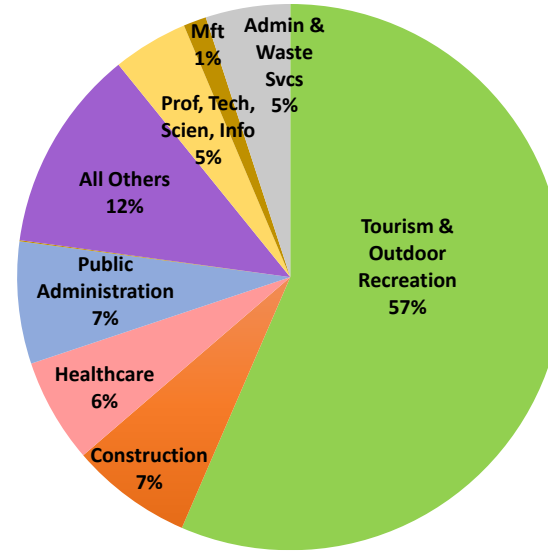
SUMMIT COUNTY, COLORADO

The Summit County Economy is dominated by the Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Industry, which comprises 57% of all jobs. Subsectors in this key industry include Accommodations and Food Services, Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; Real Estate Rental and Leasing; and Retail Trade. The top four occupations are in food preparation and serving; sales; office and administrative support; and building and grounds cleaning and maintenance. These tend to be lower-paying jobs. There is projected growth in higher paying jobs such as in the construction, financial, and architecture and engineering sectors, which tend to be higher paying jobs.

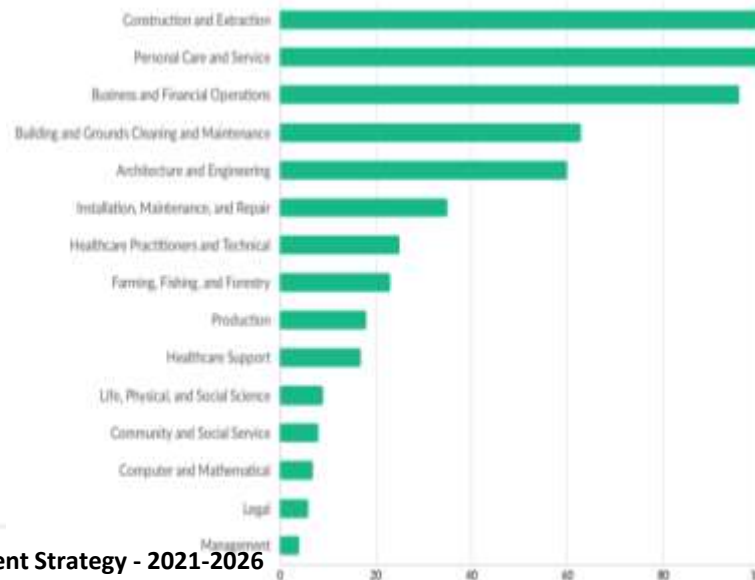
Largest Occupations



Industry Mix Total Jobs: 20,174 Average Annual Wage: \$51,792



Growing Occupations

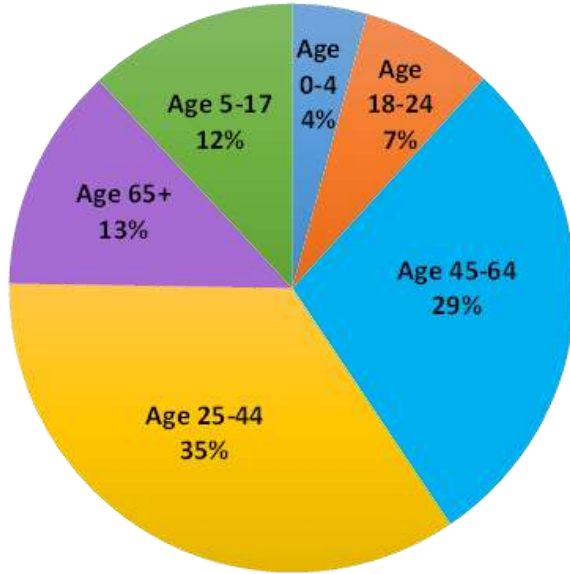


Annual Average Wage by Industry

Industry	Annual Wage
Total, All Industries	\$ 51,792
Accommodation and Food Services	\$ 34,840
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$ 26,260
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$ 84,292
Retail Trade	\$ 37,908
Construction	\$ 78,832
Healthcare	\$ 65,052
Professional and Technical Services	\$ 96,928
Information	\$ 72,280
Public Administration	\$ 64,064
Administrative and Waste Services	\$ 45,188
Manufacturing	\$ 52,260
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	\$ 40,768
Educational Services	\$ 51,168
Finance and Insurance	\$ 116,376
Management of Companies and Enterprises	\$ 202,488
Mining	<i>conf</i>
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	\$ 47,424
Transportation and Warehousing	\$ 55,848
Utilities	\$ 103,792
Wholesale Trade	\$ 101,348

Population Mix

Total Population: 30,631
Median Age: 39.1



Summit County Population & Workforce

The largest portion of the population in Summit County is in the 25-44 age group (35%). Summit County has historically attracted young people to the area, due to its outdoor recreation assets, outdoor lifestyle, and quality of life. The area has also been an attractive area for second homes and retirees. Thus the county has a robust portion of the population available for the workforce. The fastest growing segment of the population is the 65+ population, which is expected to grow 12% over the next 20 years.

Population Characteristics



Summit County, CO has 8,731 millennials (ages 25-39). The national average for an area this size is 6,394.



Retirement risk is about average in Summit County, CO. The national average for an area this size is 9,118 people 55 or older, while there are 8,719 here.



Racial diversity is low in Summit County, CO. The national average for an area this size is 12,370 racially diverse people, while there are 5,749 here.



Summit County, CO has 1,265 veterans. The national average for an area this size is 1,722.



Summit County, CO has 2.19 violent crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 3.53 per 1,000 people.



Summit County, CO has 20.19 property crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 19.79 per 1,000 people.

Key Industries



Tourism & Outdoor Recreation



The NWCCOG Region is an international hub of tourism and outdoor recreation, supported by its world class ski resorts, large amounts of public lands, lakes and rivers, and breathtaking landscapes. The tourism and outdoor recreation industry includes a variety of subsectors ranging from accommodation and attractions to entertainment and heritage tourism. Specifically, the tourism and outdoor recreation industry includes ski resorts, providers of recreation both outdoor and indoor; companies that produce, promote or participate in live performances, sporting events or exhibits. Additionally, companies in this industry operate facilities or provide services that enable patrons to participate in recreational activities or pursue amusement, hobby and leisure-time interests, such as amphitheaters, golf courses, fitness and recreation centers and other amusement and recreation-related services. Companies that provide customers with accommodations and food services are also included.

Jobs: 36,062
% of all Jobs: 50%
Total Establishments: 3,290
5-Year Job Growth: -10.5%

Accommodations & Food Services

- **Jobs: 16,479 (23% of all jobs)**
- **Establishments: 869 (10% of all establishments)**
- **Average Annual Wage: \$34,746**

Arts, Entertainment, Recreation

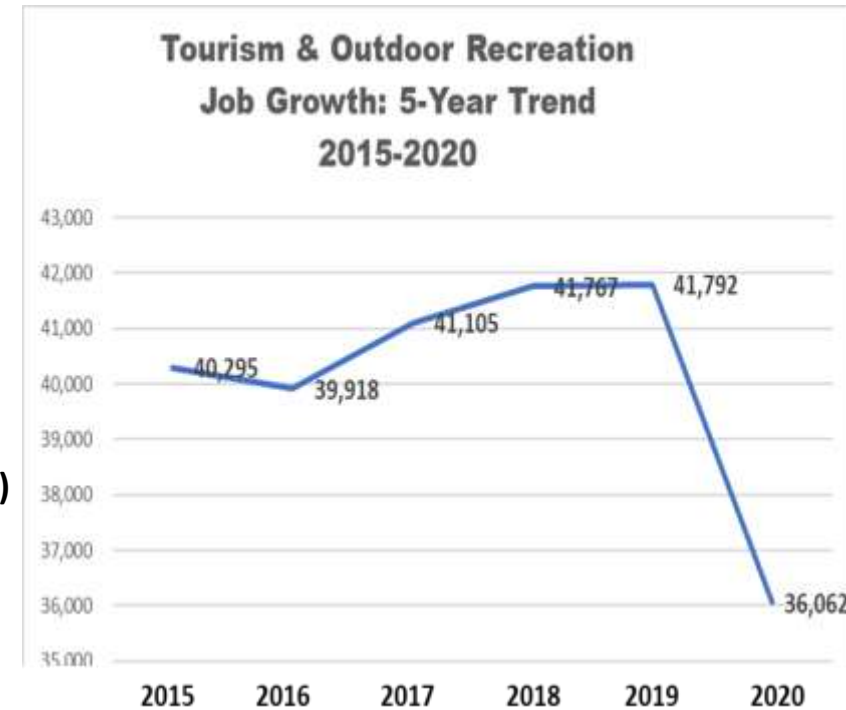
- **Jobs: 6,620 (9% of all jobs)**
- **Establishments: 257 (3% of all establishments)**
- **Average Annual Wage: \$33,790**

Retail

- **Jobs: 8,509 (12% of all jobs)**
- **Establishments: 991 (11% of all establishments)**
- **Average Annual Wage: \$43,243**

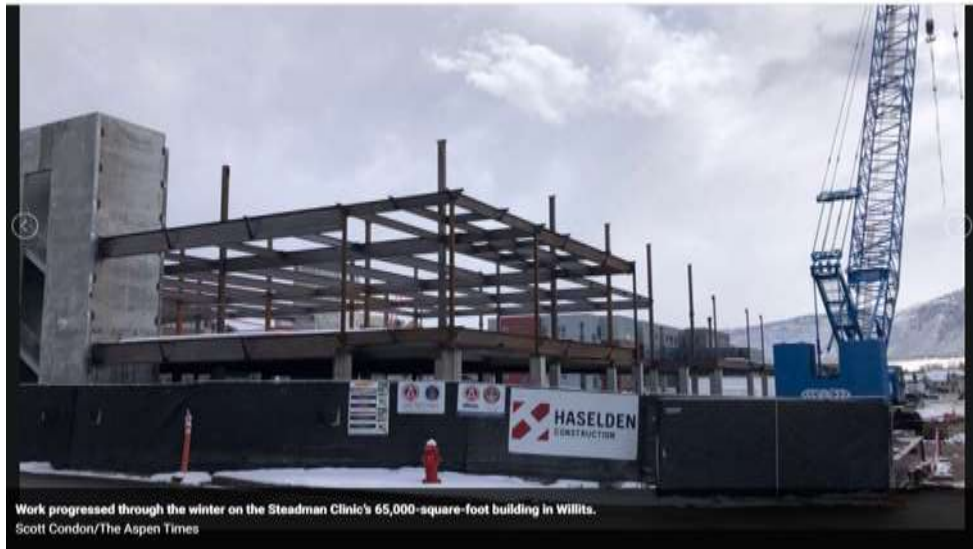
Real Estate Rental & Leasing

- **Jobs: 4,454 (6% of all jobs)**
- **Establishments: 1,173 (13% of all establishments)**
- **Average Annual Wage: \$65,540**



Major Employers

- **Vail Resorts**
- **Winter Park Ski Area**
- **Aspen Skiing Company**
- **Breckenridge Grand Vacations**
- **Wilderness Property Management**
- **Keystone Resort Property Management**

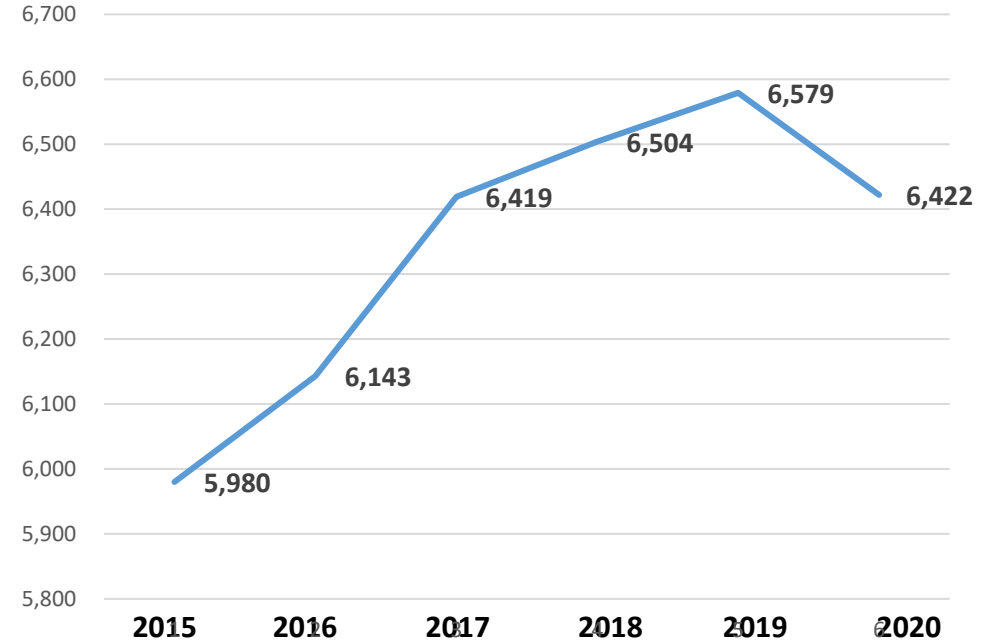


- **# Jobs: 6,422**
- **% of all Jobs: 9%**
- **Total Establishments: 1,352**
- **5-Year Job Growth: 7.3%**
- **Average Annual Salary: \$71,625**

Major Employers

- **RA Nelson & Associates**
- **Gallegos Corporation**
- **Pinnacle Mountain Homes**
- **Peak Materials, LLC.**

**Construction Jobs: 5-Year Trend
2015-2020**



The construction industry includes businesses that provide a full spectrum of planning, design, development, operations and maintenance of critical structures, machinery, equipment and other systems. These businesses provide engineering services for all types of industries ranging from construction and transportation to manufacturing and energy. Specifically, the industry includes businesses that construct buildings and civil engineering projects ranging from utility, water and solid waste systems to highways, streets and bridges. Contractors specializing in steel and concrete, site preparation, installing and servicing building equipment, and other specialized trades are also included. Companies in the infrastructure engineering industry manufacture asphalt, coating materials, brick, cement, concrete, and machinery and wholesale, rent, and lease construction and mining machinery and equipment. Infrastructure engineering companies implement complex projects from initial concept to delivery and operation, which includes consultancy services and building services ranging from architectural, drafting, mapping and surveying to inspection, evaluation, testing, remediation and related services during the construction or installation phase of engineering projects.

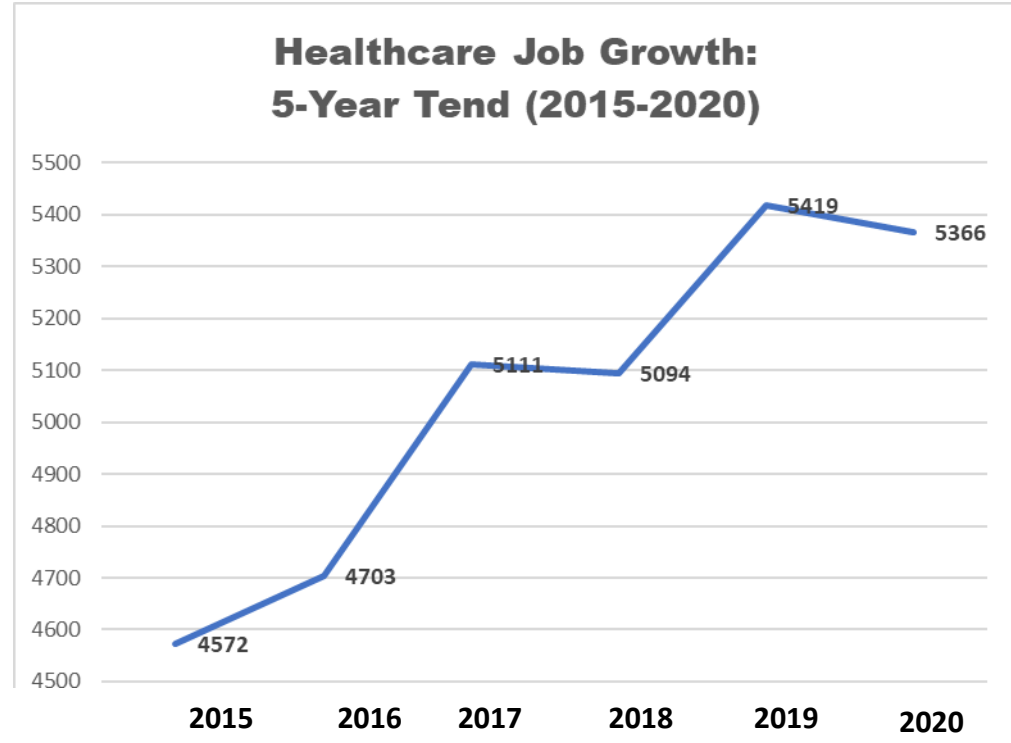


Businesses in the healthcare industry includes the offices of physicians, dentists, chiropractors, optometrists, mental health practitioners, physical and speech therapists, podiatrists and other health practitioners. The industry includes hospitals ranging from general medical, surgical and psychiatric to substance abuse and specialty care, and includes centers focused on family planning, outpatient mental health and substance abuse, kidney dialysis, diagnostic imaging and emergency care. Businesses focused on nursing care, assisted living and long-term care, and businesses that provide services for individuals, families and the elderly, are also included. The industry includes home health equipment rental, fitness and recreation facilities, diet and weight reducing services, and massage and yoga services. Companies that manufacture ophthalmic goods, and retailers engaged in vitamins and nutrition supplements, are also included.

- **# Jobs: 5,366**
- **% of all Jobs: 9%**
- **Total Establishments: 450**
- **5-Year Job Growth: 17.4%**
- **Average Annual Salary: \$70,772**

Major Employers

- Vail Health Hospital
- St. Anthony's Summit Medical Center
- Aspen Valley Hospital
- Middle Park Medical Center
- Steadman Clinic
- Vail-Summit Orthopedics



Professional, Technical, Scientific, Information



- **# Jobs: 3,867**
- **% of all Jobs: 5.3%**
- **Total Establishments: 450**
- **5-Year Job Growth: 10%**
- **Average Annual Salary: \$92,081**

Major Employers

- Vail Architecture Group
- Beaudin Ganze Consulting Engineers
- SGM Inc.

Technology and information businesses are high-knowledge, human capital-based businesses that are expanding globally. The technology and information industry includes businesses that may develop, produce or provide software, hardware, telecommunications, data management, Internet-based services and other information services. Specifically, companies included in this industry help deliver voice, data and video to end users, and includes landline and wireless telephone communications companies, radio and television communications services, and cable and Internet service providers. Companies in this industry are also involved in activities ranging from the development of off-the-shelf software products to customer computer programming, computer facilities management, computer systems design and data processing services. The technology and information industry also includes companies manufacturing computers, computer storage solutions to manage and protect business information, storage media, and circuit boards. Computer training and electronic and precision equipment repair and maintenance services are also included.





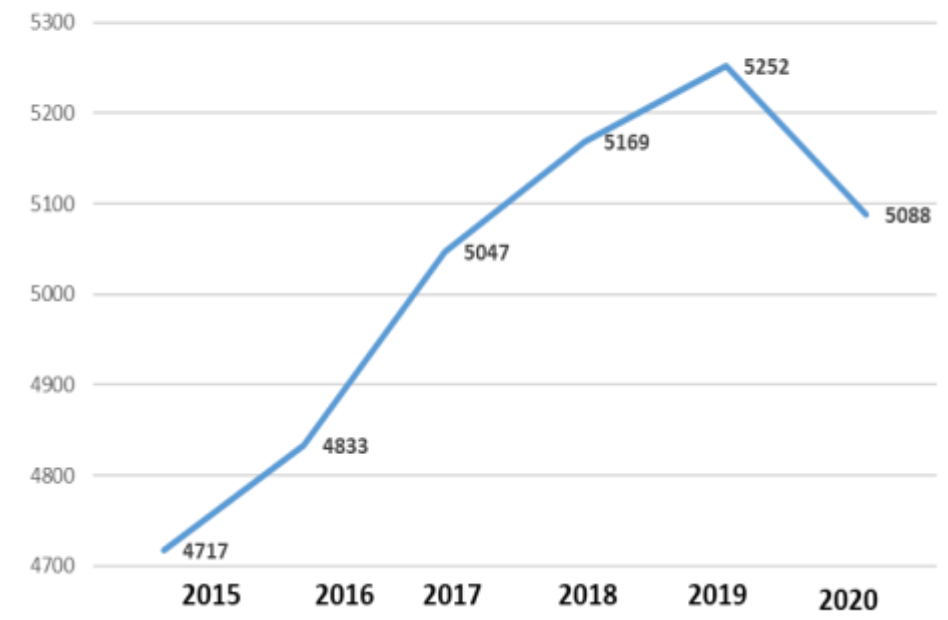
The Public Administration sector consists of establishments of federal, state, and local government agencies that administer, oversee, and manage public programs and have executive, legislative, or judicial authority over other institutions within a given area. These agencies also set policy, create laws, adjudicate civil and criminal legal cases, provide for public safety and for national defense. In general, government establishments in the Public Administration sector oversee governmental programs and activities that are not performed by private establishments. Government establishments also engage in a wide range of productive activities covering not only public goods and services but also individual goods and services similar to those produced in sectors typically identified with private-sector establishments.

- **# Jobs: 5,088**
- **% of all Jobs: 7%**
- **Total Establishments: 99**
- **5-Year Job Growth: 7.9%**
- **Average Annual Salary: \$63,055**

Major Employers

- Eagle County Government
- Grand County Government
- Jackson County Government
- Pitkin County Government
- Summit County Government
- All Town Governments in the region
- US Forest Service
- US Bureau of Land Management
- US Bureau of Reclamation

Public Administration
Job Growth: 5-Yr Trend (2015-2020)



Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting



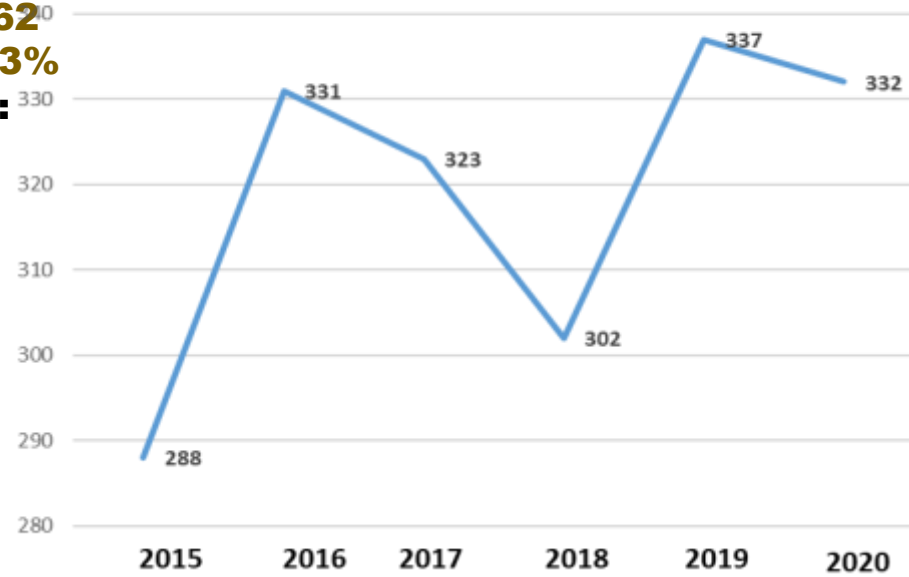
Region

- **# Jobs: 332**
- **% of all Jobs: 1%**
- **Total Establishments: 62⁰**
- **5-Year Job Growth: 15.3%**
- **Average Annual Salary: \$52,135**

Major Employers

- Forest Products Inc.
- Wamsley Cattle Company
- Big Creek Ranch
- Grand Elk Ranch & Club
- US Forest Service
- Colorado State Forest Service

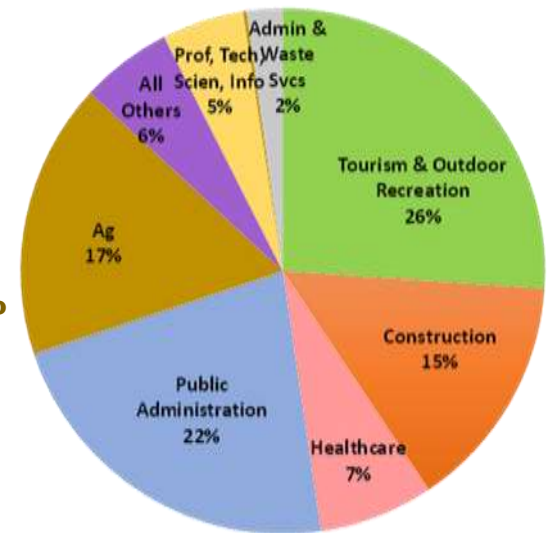
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting
Job Growth: 5 Yr (2015-2020)



The NWCCOG Region has a strong heritage in farming and ranching, as well as great depth in natural and organic foods and craft beverages. Businesses in the agriculture industry include crop production and services, livestock, food processing, agricultural machinery and equipment, agricultural chemical manufacturing, and food and beverage wholesalers, as well as food and agricultural-related transportation, warehousing and storage. The agriculture industry includes all types of food processing businesses encompassing everything from meat packing plants, and tortilla manufacturing to companies that produce cheese, pet food, and baked goods. While the industry only accounts for 1% of all jobs in the whole region, it accounts for 17% of all jobs in Jackson County.

Jackson County:

- **# Jobs: 84**
- **% of all Jobs: 17%**
- **Total Establishments: 15**
- **5-Year Job Growth: -4.5%**



SWOT Analysis



NWCCOG Economic Development District

CEDS 5-Year Update

SWOT – last update 5.13.21

Strengths

Weaknesses

Opportunities

Threats

Informed by:

• Local and State Plans / Local and State planning efforts

- Eagle County Comprehensive Plan Update/ Vista Community Engagement Project (2021)
- Eagle County Economic Development Plan (2016)
- Basalt Strategic Plan (2018)
- Elevate Eagle Comprehensive Plan (2020)
- Gypsum Comprehensive Master Plan (2017)
- Grand County Economic Resurgence & Resiliency Action Implementation Plan (2017)
- Town of Grand Lake Comprehensive Plan (2020)
- Fraser Valley Strategic Economic Development Plan (2015)
- Town of Winter Park Master Plan (2018)
- Jackson County Craft Studio 101 Plan (2019)
- Pitkin County Strategic Plan
- City of Aspen Policy Agenda (2021)
- Town of Snowmass Village Comprehensive Plan (2018)
- Summit Prosperity Initiative Community Assessment (2019)
- Breckenridge Destination Management Plan (2018)
- Town of Frisco Strategic Plan (2020-2021)
- NWCCOG Regional Assessment of Childcare Industry (2021)
- Colorado Resiliency Framework (2020)
- NWCCOG/CAST Mountain Migration Study (June 2021)
- Colorado Rural Economic Blueprint
- Colorado Dept. of Labor & Employment / Office of the Future of Work / A Path Forward

• Community & Stakeholder Engagement

- Summit County REDI Community Survey (2019)
- Summit County Business Impact Surveys
- Vail Valley Partnership Business Retention Survey (March 2021)
- NWCCOG Regional Business Survey (April 2021)
- Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office COVID-19 Impact Survey (April 2020)
- Town of Minturn Community Survey (2020)
- Town of Eagle Community Survey (2021)
- Jackson County Town Hall with State Rep. Amabile and Sen. Rankin – Jan. 27
- Grand County Town Hall with State Rep. Amabile and Sen. Rankin – Jan. 27
- Summit County BOCC Town Halls
- Breckenridge Tourism Office Community Update – Jan. 14
- Mountain Roundtable Town Hall with Senator Michael Bennet – Jan. 8
- Pitkin County Growth Management Plan Public Outreach (ongoing)
- Input from NWCCOG CEDS Strategy Committee (SWOT session 3/25/21)
- Summit County Housing Needs Presentation (4/29/21)

Strengths

- Public lands & open space: amenity for residents and attracts visitors, fuels tourism (National Forests; BLM Land; Rocky Mountain National Park; State Parks)
- Abundant outdoor recreation opportunities and amenities
- Mountain towns are attractive places to live for location neutral workers
- Natural beauty
- Natural Resources (timber; oil and gas)
- Agriculture
- World-class, internationally known ski areas that offer year-round recreational opportunities
- Strong tourism sector
- Sense of Community
- Small Town Character
- Easily accessible from the more urban Colorado Front Range cities
- Safe Communities
- Educated workforce
- Proximity to metro area/population center (Denver, Colorado Springs)
- Quality of place: desirable place to live; attracts talent, visitors, wealth
- Local government commitment to invest in workforce housing
- Quaint, historic downtowns
- Healthcare (hospitals, cancer treatment center, surgery centers, orthopedic care)
- Cultural amenities (theaters, events)
- Broadband (Project THOR)
- Airports (Eagle County Regional Airport; Aspen/Pitkin County Airport; DIA)
- Social services support infrastructure
- Numerous and diverse local non-profit organizations
- Small businesses; entrepreneurial spirit
- Higher Education: Colorado Mountain College (3 campuses in the region)
- Private investment in communities

Weaknesses

- Region's economy dominated by a single, low-paying sector (tourism)
- High cost of living: housing, healthcare, childcare
- Infrastructure for a growing region: Inadequate transportation systems create congestion; safety issues (I70); lack of adequate parking in towns
- Infrastructure and support for entrepreneurs
- Infrastructure for businesses: broadband; utilities
- Lack of mental health and substance abuse services
- Lack of career pathways for much of the workforce; lack of professional careers (esp. for women)
- Home ownership out of reach for many families looking to put down roots in the region
- Poor forest health may lead to wildfire
- Social/wealth inequity
- Draw for new business
- Differing opinions on what is just big enough
- Deed-restricted workforce housing prevents local families to build equity to move up to the next level
- Inadequate services to address increasingly culturally-diverse population
- Lack of strong support system typically found in economies with dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystems; access to capital is an especially key issue
- Lodging shortage (Jackson County)
- Three counties in one valley (Pitkin County)
- Lack of an economic development group in either town or county (Jackson County)
- Inadequate water resources/infrastructure
- Lack of indoor recreation offerings
- Lack of young adult age group (25-34) in some of the region's communities

Opportunities

- In-migration driven by remote work, urban exodus
- Rising interest from location neutral workers to relocate to the mountain communities has the potential to bring more economic diversification
- Growth in location neutral opportunities; “Zoom” towns
- More wealth moving in
- Move away from tourism/large events = diversification
- Visitors may always anchor the resort economy, but as these communities add year-round residents, tourism may become a less dominant economic driver.
- The new wave of incoming locals provides a more stable local economy by broadening the base of employing industries
- Cancellation of large events provides opportunity to recalibrate size and purpose of events
- Growth in new sectors (Healthcare, Professional/Technical)
- New residents are taking advantage of flexible work schedules to ski and recreate midweek which creates a smoother, more consistent business cycle.
- Surge in development inquires in “sleepy” towns like Walden, Hot Sulphur Springs, Grand Lake
- Thoughtful growth
- Entrepreneurship
- Job growth in higher paying sectors (Healthcare; Professional/Technical)
- Responsible tourism measures put into place during pandemic may continue
- Increased recreation usage on public lands, a major economic driver in the NWCCOG Region
- “Structurally Unemployed”- automation leads to reduced need for low wage workers, opportunity for retraining into higher paying job sectors
- Continuing to grow relationships between local Chambers of Commerce
- Immigration policy – creation of quest worker program could be an opportunity
- Increased air service at airports in the region as well as new airport development – leveraging distribution opportunities with airports
- New recreational opportunities in some communities (Bluebird Backcountry in Jackson and Grand Counties); Opportunity to commercialized new recreational opportunities
- Affordable land (in some of region’s communities like Jackson and Grand counties)
- Community support for growth
- Labor shortage OR “Great Reassessment of Work”?

Threats

- Pandemic: continued economic effects; long term recovery from; possibility of more in the future
- Finding employees to fill resident and visitor service jobs necessary to maintain a community will likely become even more challenging
- Incoming location-neutral workers will not be filling local jobs and will outcompete local workers for housing. This hurts the ability for local businesses to find, keep, and attract employees, lowering the level and quality of services they can provide to residents and visitors alike
- Housing: in migration driving up housing prices; Impacts of increase in short-term rentals (loss of workforce housing); We are seeing the effects of gentrification, as most (people) with the flexibility to work remotely are in higher income brackets. A new local can often out-compete a longtime local for a place to live.
- Loss of workforce due to pandemic
- Rising cost of living
- Rising construction costs
- Small businesses closing their doors due to inability to survive the pandemic
- Possible surge in permanent, year-round population due to pandemic (driven by remote work; remote school, internet connectivity) – could lead to increased demand in public services
- Overcrowding on public lands
- Climate Change
- Shift in environmental conditions and effects on travel demand and occupancy management
- Continued uncertainty impacts travel demand, especially international travel
- Ongoing inability of our service businesses and tourist economy to accommodate professionally and in a timely manner the demands of the ever-increasing number of tourist and second homeowners.
- Growth in wealth/permanent population creates more demand for low-paying service jobs to support growing permanent population (i.e. restaurant, recreation services, retail jobs)
- Continued capacity limits on large gatherings negatively impacting events which bring visitors which fuel tourism-based economy
- Drought; Wildfires and subsequent threat of mudslides, flooding
- Mental health and substance abuse
- “Structurally Unemployed” – some low wage jobs will not come back due to automation; may lead to chronically unemployed portion of the workforce
- Differing visions for the community
- Immigration policy and its affect on the ability to get worker visas
- Federal & State legislation affecting some key industries in the region (SB19-181 affects oil and gas industry), PAUSE Act (Protect Animals from Unnecessary Suffering and Exploitation affects ranching industry); wolf reintroduction (affects hunting and ranching); Fed 30x30 Initiative (affects AG/cattle ranching industry)
- Declining/stagnant population in some remote communities in the region
- Dependence on oil & gas revenues

Strategic Direction/Regional Action Plan



VISION:

NWCCOG Economic Development District is a regional leader, working cooperatively with its partners and stakeholders to enhance the economic conditions and cultivate resilience and vitality to position the region for a prosperous future.





NWCCOG Economic Development District Goals & Objectives

Workforce

Goal: Support our workforce such that their needs are met, and the workforce needs of businesses are met

Objectives:

- Increase the availability of affordable and attainable housing for the workforce
- Build capacity in and support the needs of our workforce
- Attract and develop a well-trained workforce to meet current and future employment demands

Economy

Goal: Cultivate a diversified, stable, balanced, sustainable, vibrant economy

Objectives:

- Build capacity in our existing businesses in all sectors
- Support a thriving tourism & outdoor recreation industry while maintaining quality of life and experience for residents and visitors
- Foster the creation of high-quality jobs with career pathways

Community

Goal: Enhance the region's quality of life and unique community character

Objectives:

- Promote a wide range of attainable housing opportunities for all facets of the community
- Strive to establish a minimum standard of living for all and increase the standard over time
- Support the development and enhancement of community assets and infrastructure
- Practice good stewardship of the region's natural environment and natural assets

Resiliency

Goal: Bolster the long-term economic durability of the region

Objectives:

- Foster a regional economy that has the capacity to recover from, withstand, and avoid adverse conditions
- Prepare for and develop recovery strategies for natural disasters, economic shocks, and their aftermaths

Goal: Support our workforce such that their needs are met, and the workforce needs of businesses are met

Objective: Increase the availability of affordable and attainable housing for the workforce

Strategies	Lead & Stakeholders	TF	Actions	Status
Support the region’s programs, policies, and incentives which aim to increase the availability and affordability of housing for the workforce	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Board Stakeholders: Towns and Counties in the NWCCOG and neighboring region	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist towns and counties navigate and utilize new funding sources now available via recent legislation passed. To name a few: HB 1271 and/or HB 1329, which allocates \$550 million from the American Rescue Plan Act to create the affordable housing and home ownership case fund at the State Treasury; HB 1271 builds a menu of offerings that provides more opportunities for affordable housing builders and reduces costs associated with development; HB 1028 creates a transparent report for tracking new and current investments to increase affordable housing options, helping to ensure that state and federal investments are going to the entire housing continuum. Continue to monitor state, federal and local legislation as it pertains to affordable and attainable housing 	
Provide information to stakeholders regarding programs, funding opportunities, success stories and best practices in affordable workforce housing	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: Stakeholders: Towns and Counties in the NWCCOG and surrounding region	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Regional Workforce Housing Report – 2022 Update Explore solutions to Short-term rentals and their effect on the availability of affordable workforce housing 	
Collaborate with community partners to expand the reach of the region’s workforce housing efforts.	Lead: NWCCOG EDD; NWCCOG Stakeholders: Towns and Counties in the NWCCOG and neighboring region	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene regional think tanks on key issues like housing, workforce Bring attention to the unique needs of our region; advocate for designated funds for the NWCCOG Region 	

Priority Area: **WORKFORCE**

Goal: Support our workforce such that their needs are met, and the workforce needs of businesses are met

Objective: Build capacity in and support the needs of our workforce

Strategies	Lead & Stakeholders	TF	Actions	Status
Support efforts that seek to provide affordable health insurance options as well as other benefits such as retirement for individual wealth building	Lead: Chambers of Commerce Stakeholders: workforce, businesses	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assist towns and counties navigate funding sources and new programs which seek to connect the workforce with benefits such as affordable health insurance and retirement plans	
Support efforts to develop and improve workforce needs and services including broadband, transportation, childcare, education, training, healthcare, and mental health services	Lead: NWCCOG EDD; NWCCOG Stakeholders: workforce, businesses	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support actions in NWCCOG Regional Assessment of Child Care Industry Report (Feb. 2021)Continue Project THOR to improve broadband in the regionProvide information on funding sources for improvements to workforce needs such as broadband, childcare, healthcare, mental health services, transportation, education and training	

Priority Area: **WORKFORCE**

Goal: Support our workforce such that their needs are met, and the workforce needs of businesses are met

Objective: Attract and develop a well-trained workforce to meet current and future employment demands

Strategies	Lead & Stakeholders	TF	Actions	Status
Network, support and partner with other organizations on workforce development efforts	Lead: CDLE; Workforce Centers; CMC; K-12 Stakeholders: businesses, workforce	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local and regional and statewide workforce development efforts which seek to providing training, education, and career pathways Work with partner organizations to provide small business development training and education throughout the region 	
Cultivate career pathways in the trades	Lead: CDLE; Workforce Centers; K-12; CMC Stakeholders: businesses, workforce	LT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage K-12, CMC, CDLE, Workforce Centers on resources – mapping career pathway opportunities; promote these programs Explore regional training programs for the trades Promote on the job training programs within businesses in the region 	

Goal: Cultivate a diversified, stable, balanced, sustainable, vibrant economy

Objective: Build capacity in our existing businesses in all sectors

Strategies	Lead & Stakeholders	TF	Actions	Status
Support, strengthen, build capacity in our region’s key industries and existing businesses	Lead: SBDC; NWCCOG EDD; Chambers; CDLE Stakeholders: businesses; workforce	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NWCCOG EDD Resources Bulletin NWCCOG EDD website: nwccog.org/edd Establish Regional Business Retention and Expansion program/position – to support existing businesses and all key industries in the region Provide access to capital for existing businesses Provide education and workshops on succession planning and exit planning for businesses 	
Connect economic development stakeholders with resources and information	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: Towns, counties, businesses, workforce	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NWCCOG EDD Resources Bulletin NWCCOG EDD Website 	
Partner with other organizations to provide business training opportunities	Lead: NWCCOG EDD, Chambers, CDLE, SBDC Stakeholders: businesses; workforce	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide business training program 	

Priority Area: **ECONOMY**

Goal: Cultivate a diversified, stable, balanced, sustainable, vibrant economy

Objective: Support a thriving tourism & outdoor recreation industry while maintaining quality of life and experience for residents and visitors

Strategies	Lead & Stakeholders	TF	Actions	Status
Tell the region's success stories through newsletters, website, and other modes of communication to promote a positive vision for the region	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: the region's communities	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NWCCOG EDD Resources Bulletin• NWCCOG EDD website• CEDS	
Support our communities' efforts towards responsible tourism	Lead: Towns and Chambers Stakeholders: the region's communities; visitors and residents	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support local strategies outlined in local destination management plans and other plans dealing with responsible tourism (e.g. Breckenridge Destination Management Plan; Aspen Chamber Resort Association's responsible tourism campaign; Vail Destination Stewardship Plan [coming 2022], etc.)	

Goal: Cultivate a diversified, stable, balanced, sustainable, vibrant economy

Objective: Foster the creation of high-quality jobs with career pathways

Strategies	Lead & Stakeholders	TF	Actions	Status
Advocate for efforts that enable existing and new businesses to pay a wage on par with the region’s cost of living	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: Workforce, Businesses	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop entrepreneurial resources in the region including mentorship programs, investors, venture capital, angel investment networks, accelerators incubators, events, cowork spaces, training programs 	
Support the development of an entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: Entrepreneurs; Businesses	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Regional Entrepreneur Resource Center- website, quarterly workshops, work with SBDC, develop a regional angel investment network with West Slope Angels, possibly create a position for this (i.e. not just a website) Monthly call on workforce, sbdc, cmc, business support community, chambers; organizations working on entrepreneurship 	
Encourage the development of higher-paying jobs outside of the tourism industry	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: Residents, businesses	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Digital Workforce Development program currently underway in Grand County (pending EDA funding) 	

Priority Area: **COMMUNITY**

Goal: Enhance the region’s quality of life and unique community character

Objective: Promote a wide range of attainable housing opportunities for all facets of the community
Objective: Strive to establish a minimum standard of living for all and increase the standard over time

Strategies	Lead & Stakeholders	TF	Actions	Status
Serve as a resource for best practices, solutions, efforts, initiatives, and funding for attainable workforce housing	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: Towns and Counties	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NWCCOG EDD Resources Bulletin Research on attainable and affordable housing strategies 	
Support our communities’ attainable housing efforts	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: Towns and Counties	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor federal, state, and local land use policies and legislation pertaining to workforce housing 	
Ensure the region stays knowledgeable about the cost of living in the region	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: Towns and Counties	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate and present information in the Colorado Self-Sufficiency Standard; Colorado Legislative Council Cost of Living Study (every other year); have more participation in the development process so that the numbers accurately reflect the conditions in our region; make data readily available and as useful as possible to be used as a benchmark Host economic summit to evaluate common data sources and best practices; sharing knowledge and insights 	

Priority Area: **COMMUNITY**

Goal: Enhance the region’s quality of life and unique community character

Objective: Support the development and enhancement of community assets and infrastructure

Strategies	Lead & Stakeholders	TF	Actions	Status
Cultivate placemaking creating desirable places to live, visit, and recreate	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: Towns and counties in the NWCCOG Region	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with organizations to offer resources on placemaking 	
Support efforts to strengthen community infrastructure including broadband, transportation systems, healthcare facilities, mental health services, educational opportunities, and community amenities	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: towns, counties, businesses, workforce	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help communities navigate and take full advantage of new funding available (Federal – American Rescue Plan; State - HB 21-1271 Innovative Affordable Housing Strategies; HB 21-1253 Renewable and Clean Energy Infrastructure; HB 21-1289 Broadband Development.) NWCCOG Project THOR; Support efforts to strengthen high-speed internet in the region Provide letters of support, grant writing and technical assistance as requested 	
Serve as a community development and planning resource to our region	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: Towns and counties in NWCCOG region and neighboring communities	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide data, research, and other resources to inform policymaking and planning Develop and maintain a regional data clearinghouse on the EDD website Disseminate regional economic and demographic data on a regular basis Respond to data requests Conduct studies and prepare reports on topics of regional interest and value Collect, present, analyze, and disseminate regional data for use in policy making and business development (Qtrly Economic Updates; community profiles; website) 	

Priority Area: **COMMUNITY**

Goal: Enhance the region's quality of life and unique community character

Objective: Practice good stewardship of the region's natural environment and natural assets

Strategies	Lead & Stakeholders	TF	Actions	Status
Promote and encourage sustainable resource use and production	Lead: Stakeholders: All communities in NWCCOG Region	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitor and disseminate information on new legislation and funding sources to fund sustainable resource use and production	
Encourage installation of renewable energy technologies	Lead: Stakeholders: All communities in NWCCOG Region	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitor and disseminate information on new legislation and funding sources to fund renewable energy technologies• Create a clearinghouse of plans in the region which encourage use of energy efficiency technologies and share best practices (such as Summit County Climate Action Plan and Sustainable Building Code)	

Priority Area: RESILIENCY

Goal: Bolster the long-term economic durability of the region

Objective: Foster a regional economy that has the capacity to recover from, withstand, and avoid adverse conditions

Strategies	Lead & Stakeholders	TF	Actions	Status
Encourage diversity in industry and jobs	Lead: CDLE; Chambers; NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: region's workforce; businesses	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support efforts to grow new industries not tourism-related Support workforce development and training programs which seek to train the workforce in in-demand skills for higher paying jobs in new industries 	
Cultivate entrepreneurship as a strategy towards economic recovery and long-term resilience	Lead: Organizations working to build entrepreneurial ecosystems; SBDC Stakeholders: entrepreneurs	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide access to capital for startups Provide equitable access to opportunity 	
Maintain strong partnerships between regional stakeholders to share problems, data, stories, and solutions	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: towns, counties, businesses, workforce, visitors, residents, state and federal agency partners	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain frequent communication between federal, state, regional, and local partners 	
Provide a forum for regional communication, collaboration, and information sharing	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: towns, counties, businesses, workforce, visitors, residents, state and federal agency partners	OG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EDD Board of Directors meetings (in conjunction with NWCCOG Council meetings) Regional Economic Forum – bring back Spring 2022 Conduct studies/surveys/prepare reports on economic development topics of regional interest and value 	

Goal: Bolster the long-term economic durability of the region

Objective: Prepare for and develop recovery strategies for natural disasters, economic shocks, and their aftermaths

Strategies	Lead & Stakeholders	TF	Actions	Status
Collaborate with the region’s counties on economic recovery and resiliency plan development	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: towns and counties in the region	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with counties on DOLA Regional Resiliency Roadmaps (Eagle, Grand, Pitkin, Summit – all submitted applications) Carry out all projects/activities/deliverables of the EDA CARES Act grant (\$400,000) - report out on county-level projects; COVID lessons learned/best practices report from RBRC help coordinate best practices for the region on recovery plans 	
Encourage opportunities for community collaboration with respect to wildfire preparedness and mitigation	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: towns and counties in the region	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Change: Gather all county plans together. Convene regional climate change forum Disseminate information on funding opportunities and support local efforts for wildfire mitigation and forest health management Explore working with Colorado Climate Corps, which will work in 55 of the 64 counties in Colorado to clear trees and ground cover in wildfire mitigation projects as well as clear and contour land to avoid floods and mudslides. 	
Utilize the work of the Mountain Migration Project - strategies	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: towns and counties in the region	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present strategies and identify those the region’s stakeholders want to focus on which will bolster the long-term economic durability of the region 	

Resilience



Resilience: The Region's Key Vulnerabilities



Threats identified in the SWOT fall into four main themes:

Adapting to our changing climate

- Wildfires
- Drought
- Loss of snowpack runoff affects water supply and water-based recreation
- Climate change affect on daily life and tourism: smoky skies from wildfires more prevalent; campfire bans; burned forests; low rivers and lakes; shortened ski season

Understanding risks from natural and other hazards

- Pandemic: continued economic impacts; long-term recovery from; threat of more in the future
- Drought: wildfires and subsequent threat of mudslides and flooding

Addressing social inequities and unique community needs

- Incoming location-neutral workers will not be filling local jobs and will outcompete local workers for housing. This hurts the ability for local businesses to find, keep, and attract employees, lowering the level and quality of services they can provide to residents and visitors alike
- Overcrowding on public lands
- Possible surge in permanent, year-round population due to pandemic (driven by remote work; remote school, internet connectivity) – could lead to increased demand in public services
- Rising cost of living overall
- Declining/stagnant population in some remote communities in the region
- Rising mental health challenges and substance abuse

Pursuing economic diversity and vibrancy

- Housing: in-migration driving up housing prices making it difficult for workforce to afford housing; Impacts of increase in short-term rentals (loss of workforce housing)
- Loss of workforce due to pandemic
- Growth in wealth/permanent population creates more demand for low-paying service jobs to support growing permanent population (i.e. restaurant, recreation services, retail jobs)
- Finding employees to fill resident and visitor service jobs necessary to maintain a community will likely become even more challenging
- Small businesses closing their doors due to inability to survive the pandemic
- Ongoing inability of our service businesses and tourist economy to accommodate professionally and in a timely manner the demands of the ever-increasing number of tourist and second homeowners.
- Dependence on oil and gas revenues in some of the region's counties
- Federal and State legislation negatively affecting some key industries in the region (e.g. hunting and ranching)

Resilience, Recovery and the COVID Pandemic



What is Resilience?

Resilience is the ability of a region or community to anticipate, withstand, and bounce back from any type of shock, disruption, or stressor. These shocks can include natural disasters, hazards, and the impacts of a changing climate, but also man-made economic disruptions such as the closure of a region's large employer, the decline of an important industry, changes in the workforce, and shifts in population trends. The NWCCOG Region experienced all of these over the last 18 months. The power of resilience planning is that it focuses both on emergency response – how to deal with the immediate impact of a disruptive event – as well as how to prepare and organize in advance and rebuild afterwards with a coherent framework.

The Effect of COVID pandemic on the NWCCOG Region

In March 2020, the global COVID pandemic hit the NWCCOG region at the height of the ski season, which is the busiest economic time of the year for our counties. The pandemic caused a huge economic shock: ski areas were mandated to abruptly shut down; lodging facilities were closed to visitors; restaurants were forced to shutter, and retail businesses to shut down as well. This caused several devastating shocks to the NWCCOG Region's economy.

Massive job loss in the tourism sector

Lack of diversity in the region's economy, and reliance on one dominant industry (tourism and outdoor recreation) has always been a challenge for the NWCCOG region. This challenge rose to the level of crisis during the COVID pandemic. Our region's economy depends on visitors traveling to the region from other states and countries for ski vacations, events like concerts and weddings, eating in restaurants, participating in outdoor recreational activities, and enjoying the beautiful Rocky Mountains. The pandemic caused travel to halt, restaurants and hotels to close, and ski areas to shut down. Once things started to open up, businesses still had to operate at reduced capacity. This resulted in massive job loss in the tourism and outdoor recreation sector, which includes the Accommodations and Food Services, Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Retail sectors. In the first quarter of 2019, when COVID wasn't even a thought in the region, there were a total of 88,138 jobs in the region, 44,000 of those in the tourism and outdoor recreation sector. In contrast, in Q1 2021, there were 81,637 total jobs, 40,000 of which are in the tourism sector. This illustrates what a dominate driving factor tourism jobs are in the region.

Loss of Workforce

With the shutdown of tourism and related businesses, thousands of workers in the region were without employment. The loss of jobs, along with the rapidly escalating cost of housing, caused many workers to leave the areas. While many industries continued to operate via remote work, the tourism sector had no choice to shut down given the fact that the industry involves face to face contact provided by service workers. In February 2020 (pre-pandemic), which is the time of year the ski season is at its peak in terms of visitors, total labor force was 87,000. In February 2021, it was 84,500. This is a loss of 2,500 from the workforce. This loss of workforce is having a detrimental effect on businesses being able to operate, especially as we embark on the ski season, which requires thousands of seasonal workforce to fill jobs.

Escalating Cost of Housing

Some new terms were circulating during the pandemic including "urban exodus", "zoom towns", "mountain migration". All of these terms refer to a trend we saw during the pandemic: the shuttering of businesses leading to remote work, enabling the workforce to "work anywhere" allowed the migration of people from urban areas to high quality of life areas such as the mountain towns encompassing the NWCCOG region. Many workers who have the ability to work remotely have jobs that pay a higher than average salary. These newcomers with wealth sought to purchase homes in this region, and could easily outbid local residents and workforce for housing, which caused a spike in real estate prices. This, along with a growing trend of investors purchasing housing for use as short-term rentals that traditionally had been used as rental housing for the workforce, drastically reduced the housing stock available to the region's workforce, causing a housing crisis.



Resilience, Recovery and the COVID Pandemic



Local Communities Provide Direct Financial Support to Businesses

When the pandemic crisis hit, the local communities in the NWCCOG immediately stepped up by offering emergency assistance grants to the businesses hardest hit by closures and capacity reduction mandates. It is estimated that over \$500,000 of direct financial assistance from local governments was offered to the region's businesses.

Federal and State Financial Assistance

The Federal and State government also stepped up to the plate early and proactively, offering financial assistance to businesses in the way of the Paycheck Protection Program loans (PPP), Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL), enhanced unemployment benefits, Energize Colorado Gap Fund grants and loans. The EDA provided a supplemental award to the NWCCOG EDD through the EDA CARES Act grant to provide additional capacity to the staff for providing loans to businesses through NWCCOG's Northwest Loan Fund. NWCCOG EDD partnered with SBDC, and our local EDOs to disseminate all information about all the various funding programs via EDA, OEDIT, DOLA, CDLE, and other federal and state agencies.

Proactive Actions by Local Communities to address Workforce Housing Crisis

Recognizing that the availability of affordable, attainable housing for the workforce is a vital element in the resiliency of our regional economy, local governments accelerated efforts to increase the availability of affordable housing for the workforce. Some communities declared a "housing crisis" to fast-track projects. Workforce housing became a topic of discussion on almost every local government agenda. Local leaders began to think "outside the box" for solutions, in addition to continuing to build workforce housing. Some of these solutions being developed right now include offering incentives to property owners to convert short-term vacation rental properties into long-term rentals for the local workforce and encouraging the development of accessory dwelling units by waiving development and tap fees. The work continues daily on these efforts to provide affordable housing to our region's workforce.

Resiliency Planning Efforts

Several planning efforts, including the update to the region's CEDS, have been underway to address how our region can work towards being more resilient in the wake of the COVID pandemic.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Resilience is the ultimate goal of the regional action plan outlined in this CEDS. All priority areas contribute to the resilience of our region. If we support our workforce, they will have their basic needs met such as affordable housing, healthcare, childcare, and services to support their mental health. If their basic needs are met, they will be more likely to be happy, healthy, productive, and stay in our region which reduces costly turnover and need to recruit. The regional action plan in this CEDS seeks to foster the development of quality, career-focused jobs that pay wages comparable to cost of living in our region such that basic needs can be met. If we support our economy, we support our key industry of tourism and outdoor recreation, as well as encourage the growth of businesses in new industries through fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem. This increases the diversity in our economy which increases resiliency. If we support our community, we strive to support the needs of all members of the community (full time residents; part time residents; seasonal workforce; visitors); strive to improve quality of place and quality of life by enhancing the community assets that make our region a wonderful place to work, live and play including a variety of housing types for different demographic segments of our region; public spaces such as parks, trails, cultural amenities; and protection and stewardship of our public lands.

Resilience: Planning



Northwest Colorado All Hazards Emergency Management Region

purpose is to allow the NWAHEMR to strengthen the Counties' ability to prepare for, mitigate the impacts of, respond to, and recover from a disaster. After September 11, 2001, FEMA created this grant funding source so all the states could prepare for terrorist attacks, natural weather disasters, and or human-caused incidents. The States were required to establish Regions for distributing grant funds and to enhance regional collaboration. FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security allocate each States SHGP funds to share with the State Regions. NWCCOG acts as the fiscal agent for the grant and employs the Coordinator for the program via contract. A committee provides strategic direction for the program, and votes to approve all projects for funding. The NWAHEMR is an inclusive organization open to bringing in new partners who bring beneficial relationships.

County Emergency Management Departments

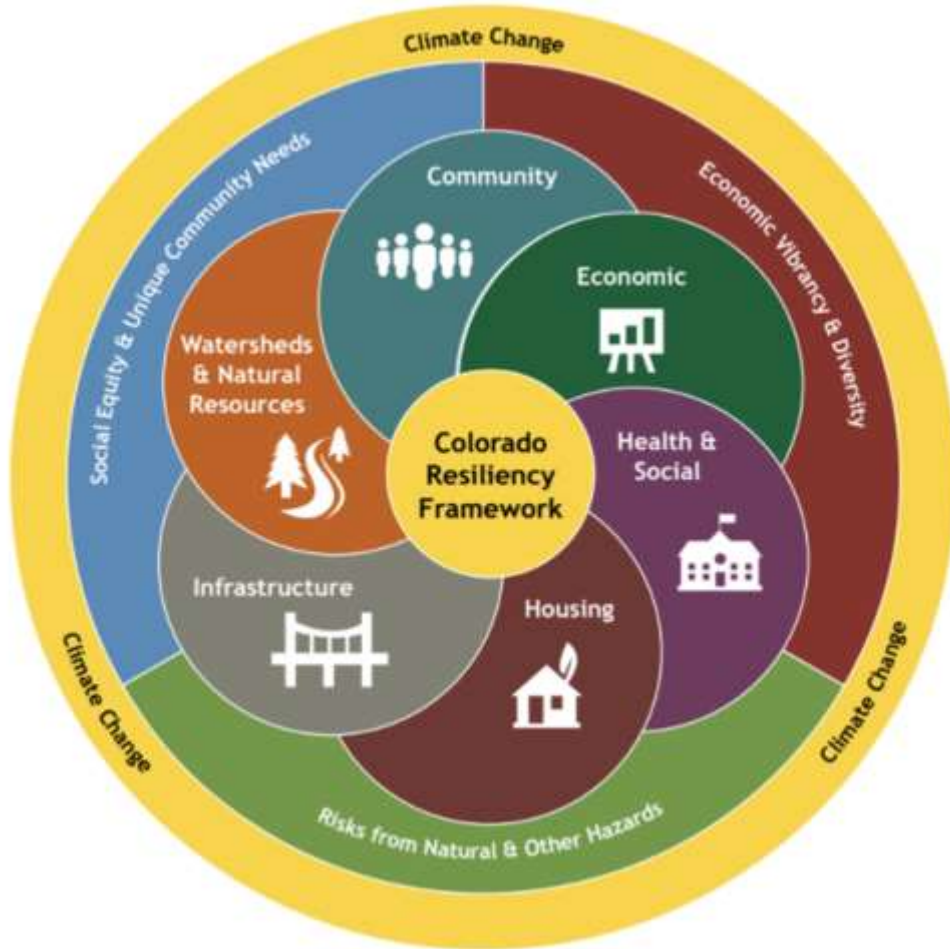
Each County has an Office of Emergency Management accessed through the County's website. These sites have links to sign up for alert notifications, information/checklist on preparing for a disaster, on-going information regarding an active disaster that impacts the community, and other resources. Additionally, the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management has information for citizens to prepare for and recover from a disaster and report suspicious activities. Another resource is the Colorado Red Cross.

DOLA Regional Recovery Roadmaps -COVID-19 represents one of the greatest disruptions of our lifetimes, requiring our communities to partner across jurisdictional boundaries in order to effectively respond to change and elevate community assets to solve shared problems. In response, The Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT), and the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE), along with Community Builders, partnered to provide an opportunity for regional community teams to form to develop their own "Rural Colorado COVID-19 Economic Recovery and Resiliency Roadmap Plan" ("Recovery Roadmap" for short. Four of our region's counties have been awarded technical assistance to complete a two-year economic and regional resiliency planning process (Eagle, Grand, Pitkin, and Summit). The technical assistance award provides paid consulting, along with administrative and data support to each team. At the end of the two-year planning period, the goal is for each team to have an actionable plan to address key issues necessary to diversify and strengthen the region's economy and resiliency. One of the intentions of pursuing this award is to identify and prioritize as a community key areas for possible future funding as it may be made available and leverage the technical assistance for funding analysis and strategy to implement the roadmap. NWCCOG will be an active participant in all these planning efforts, and they will be incorporated into the CEDS.

Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

The vision for DHSEM is A prepared, safe and resilient Colorado; the mission is to lead and support Colorado's effort to prevent, protect, mitigate, respond to and recover from all-hazards events. To that end, DHSEM has created the Colorado DHSEM Strategic Plan (2019-2021) which aims to increase local jurisdiction capability and preparedness.

Resilience: Colorado Resiliency Framework



The Colorado Resiliency Framework - In the wake of the 2012 wildfires and 2013 flooding events, the State of Colorado recognized the need to proactively and holistically address future shock events and stressors to protect lives, property, and livelihoods. The original 2015 Colorado Resiliency Framework showcased Colorado’s ability and determination to build back in a way that moves the State forward from adversity with a resiliency strategy.

The updated [2020 Colorado Resiliency Framework](#) (Framework) serves as the State’s roadmap to a more resilient future. It lays out the State’s resiliency vision and goals and explores risks and vulnerabilities across four themes: adapting to our changing climate, understanding risks from natural and other hazards, addressing social inequities and unique community needs, and pursuing economic diversity and vibrancy. The Framework provides 29 strategies across six priority focus areas that the State will implement to reduce risk and vulnerabilities and be adaptive to changing environmental, social, and economic conditions.

Throughout the Framework, risks and vulnerabilities are analyzed and specific strategies are identified that will strengthen the State’s capacity to adapt and support local communities on their path toward resiliency. Two overarching strategies — establishing a statewide resilient and sustainable community/regional program and attracting and leveraging resiliency funding opportunities — are foundational activities that will connect and strengthen all the resiliency priorities. NWCCOG will align our resilience section with this framework as a way to be in line with the state’s resiliency goals.

Resilience: Goal in NWCCOG CEDS



Priority Area: RESILIENCY

Goal: Bolster the long-term economic durability of the region

Objective: Foster a regional economy that has the capacity to recover from, withstand, and avoid adverse conditions

Objective: Encourage diversity in industry and jobs

Strategies	Lead & Stakeholders	TF	Actions	Status
Cultivate entrepreneurship as a strategy towards economic recovery and long-term resilience	Lead: Organizations working to build entrepreneurial ecosystems; SBDC Stakeholders: entrepreneurs	ST	Provide access to capital for startups Provide equitable access to opportunity	
Maintain strong partnerships between regional stakeholders to share problems, data, stories, and solutions	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: towns, counties, businesses, workforce, visitors, residents, state and federal agency partners	OG	• Maintain frequent communication between federal, state, regional, and local partners	
Provide a forum for regional communication, collaboration, and information sharing	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: towns, counties, businesses, workforce, visitors, residents, state and federal agency partners	OG	EDD Board of Directors meetings (in conjunction with NWCCOG Council meetings) Regional Economic Forum – bring back Spring 2022 Conduct studies/surveys/prepare reports on economic development topics of regional interest and value	

Priority Area: RESILIENCY

Priority/Timeframe: ST: Short-term (Year 1); MT: Medium-term (Year 2-4); LT: Long-term (Year 5); OG: On-going (throughout the 5 year period)

Goal: Bolster the long-term economic durability of the region

Objective: Prepare for and develop recovery strategies for natural disasters, economic shocks, and their aftermaths

Strategies	Lead & Stakeholders	TF	Actions	Status
Collaborate with the region's counties on economic recovery and resiliency plan development	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: towns and counties in the region	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with counties on DOLA Regional Resiliency Roadmaps (Eagle, Grand, Pitkin, Summit – all submitted applications) Carry out all projects/activities/deliverables of the EDA CARES Act grant (\$400,000) - report out on county-level projects; COVID lessons learned/best practices report from RBRC help coordinate best practices for the region on recovery plans 	
Encourage opportunities for community collaboration with respect to wildfire preparedness and mitigation	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: towns and counties in the region	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Change: Gather all county plans together. Convene regional climate change forum 	
Utilize the work of the Mountain Migration Project - strategies	Lead: NWCCOG EDD Stakeholders: towns and counties in the region	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present strategies and identify those the region's stakeholders want to focus on which will bolster the long-term economic durability of the region 	

Evaluation Framework



Evaluation Framework

CEDS Goals	Things to Measure
<p>Workforce Goal: Support our workforce such that their needs are met, and the workforce needs of businesses are met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Average Wage • Workforce housing availability and cost • Healthcare availability and cost • Childcare availability and cost • Mental health services in the region • Unemployment rate • Graduation rates
<p>Economy Goal: Cultivate a diversified, stable, balanced, sustainable, vibrant economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of jobs in tourism industry vs. other industries • Growth in new industries • Number of business loans made • Support for entrepreneurs • Number of jobs created
<p>Community Goal: Enhance the region’s quality of life and unique community character</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor community surveys to determine sentiment of residents and visitors regarding services, visitor experience • The amount and types of funding leveraged • Amount of public and private investment in the region
<p>Resiliency Goal: Bolster the long-term economic durability of the region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of diversity in the region’s economy • Number of disaster preparedness plans in place • Monitor progress on goals in local climate action and sustainability plans • The level and frequency of participation by regional stakeholders in projects, EDD board meetings

Appendices



Appendix A: Board Approval

A Resolution Adopting the
Northwest Colorado Council of Governments
Economic Development District
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 5-Year Update
covering the period October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2026
Resolution # 2021-1

WHEREAS, Economic Development Districts have been established by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the purpose of planning and implementing economic and community development programs; and

WHEREAS, a Northwest Colorado Council of Governments Economic Development District has been designated for the five-county region that includes Eagle, Grand, Jackson, Pitkin, and Summit counties in the State of Colorado; and

WHEREAS, the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments Economic Development District maintains district membership requirements, receives annual planning grants, and carries out responsibilities for the District in accordance with EDA guidelines; and

WHEREAS, Economic Development Districts are required to develop and maintain a CEDS planning process and document as part of their planning responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, EDA guidelines require that districts update their CEDS every five years, guided by a CEDS Strategy Committee made up of the key economic development interests in the region; incorporating broad stakeholder engagement in this planning process, and incorporating local planning efforts; and

WHEREAS, the NWCCOG Economic Development District Board of Directors has been designated the CEDS Strategy Committee, because it does represent the key economic development interests in the region.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The NWCCOG Economic Development District Board of Directors hereby approves and adopts this document as the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (Oct. 1, 2021 – Sept. 30, 2026) for the NWCCOG Economic Development District.



DiAnn Butler, Chair, NWCCOG Economic Development District

9/15/21

Date

Appendix B: Proof of 30-Day Public Comment Period

Posted on NWCCOG.org/EDD website



NWCCOG Economic Development District Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Five Year Update now available for public comment until August 25

DRAFT NWCCOG Economic Development District CEDS (2021-2026)

Please direct comments to rtuyn@nwccog.org

Northwest Colorado Council of Governments became an Economic Development District under the auspices of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) in 2012. NWCCOG EDD is one of six in the State of Colorado, and one of 384 in the United States. The NWCCOG EDD receives funding every year to build capacity in our region to meet our

Published in NWCCOG eNews; this publication goes to every newspaper in the NWCCOG Region

NWCCOG Economic Development District Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Five Year Update now available for public comment until August 25

Northwest Colorado Council of Governments Economic Development District **[DRAFT] Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2021 - 2026**



Eagle, Grand, Jackson, Pitkin, Summit counties in the State of Colorado



Peak One/Summit County

Northwest Colorado Council of Governments became an Economic Development District under the auspices of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) in 2012. NWCCOG EDD is one of six in the State of Colorado, and one of 384 in the United States. The NWCCOG EDD receives funding every year to build capacity in our region to meet our regional economic development goals. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is

the cornerstone of this program. The NWCCOG EDD is responsible for facilitating the development, implementation, and revision of our region's CEDS. A region's CEDS must be updated every 5 years.

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a locally-based, regionally-driven economic development planning process that creates the space for our region to identify its strengths and weaknesses and brings together a diverse set of partners to develop goals and objectives which aim to generate good jobs, diversify the economy, and create economic stability and prosperity. This CEDS planning process has engaged a range of partners, including town and county governments, community leaders, residents, chambers of commerce, the private sector, educational institutions, federal and state partners, and other stakeholders in planning for our region's future. Our CEDS planning process identifies locally-grown strategies that will guide regional economic development, encourage partnerships and collaboration, and improve economic outcomes and overall quality of life in the NWCCOG Region.

The DRAFT CEDS 5-Year update is now available for public comment until August 25 [HERE](#): The final draft of the CEDS will be considered for approval by the NWCCOG EDD Board of Directors at its August 26th meeting. The final CEDS is due to the EDA on September 30th. Please direct all public comment to rtuyn@nwccog.org.

Appendix C: Local Planning Documents



The following planning documents were reviewed and analyzed to inform the CEDS 5-Year Update:

Mountain Migration Report (June 2021)
Colorado School District Cost of Living Study (2019)
Eagle County Comprehensive Plan (2021)
Eagle County Strategic Plan (2015-2020)
Eagle County Economic Development Plan (2016)
Aspen City Council Goal Setting Retreat (7.20.21)
Basalt Master Plan (2020)
Basalt Strategic Plan (2018)
Elevate Eagle Comprehensive Plan (2020)
Gypsum Comprehensive Master Plan (2017)
Grand County Economic Resurgence & Resiliency Action Implementation Plan (2017)
Town of Grand Lake Comprehensive Plan (2020)
Fraser Valley Strategic Economic Development Plan (2015)
Town of Winter Park Master Plan (2018)
Jackson County Craft Studio 101 Plan (2019)
Pitkin County Strategic Plan
City of Aspen Policy Agenda (2021)
Aspen Snowmass Arts & Culture Economic Impact Study (2019)
Town of Snowmass Village Comprehensive Plan (2018)
Summit County Housing Needs Update (2020)
Summit Prosperity Initiative Community Assessment (2019)
Breckenridge Destination Management Plan (2018)
Town of Frisco Strategic Plan (2020-2021)
NWCCOG Regional Assessment of Childcare Industry (2021)
Colorado Resiliency Framework (2020)
Colorado Rural Economic Blueprint
Colorado Dept. of Labor & Employment / Office of the Future of Work / A Path Forward
Colorado Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Management Strategic Plan (2019-2021)

Links to these documents can be found [HERE](http://nwccog.org/edd/data-center/comprehensive-economic-development-strategy/ceds-5-year-update/). (<http://nwccog.org/edd/data-center/comprehensive-economic-development-strategy/ceds-5-year-update/>)

Appendix D: Stakeholder Engagement Meetings and Resources



The following stakeholder engagement meetings and other resources were participated in, reviewed and analyzed to inform the CEDS 5-Year Update:

Breckenridge Tourism Office Resident Sentiment Survey (5/25/21)
Summit County Economic Impact Survey Results (June 2021)
Basalt Public Engagement Survey (2021)
Basalt Forward 2030 Community Engagement Initiative
Aspen Resort Chamber Association – Business Outlook Forum (5/25/21)
Entrepreneurship in the Roaring Fork Valley – Regional Needs Assessment (May 2021)
Small Business Legislative Stakeholder meeting with Sen. Hickenlooper (5/19/21)
Mountain Region Town Hall with Federal and State Legislators (5/17/21)
Mountain Region Town Hall with State Legislators (5/3/21)
Summit County REDI Community Survey (2019)
Summit County Business Impact Survey (Nov. 2020)
Summit County Business Impact Survey (July 2020)
Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office COVID-19 Impact Survey (April 2020)
Town of Avon Community Survey (2021)
Town of Minturn Community Survey (2020)
Jackson County Town Hall – Jan. 27
Grand County Town Hall – Jan. 27
Work in Grand meeting – Jan. 21
Breckenridge Tourism Office Community Update – Jan. 14
Mountain Roundtable Town Hall with Senator Michael Bennet – Jan. 8
Pitkin County Growth Management Plan Pubic Outreach (ongoing)
NWCCOG Member Needs Survey (2021)

Links can be found HERE (<http://nwccog.org/edd/ceds-5-year-update-stakeholder-engagement/>)

Appendix E: Data Sources



Colorado State Demography Office
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, LMI Gateway
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Emsi Q2 2021 Data Set | www.economicmodeling.com
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey
StatsAmerica.com