



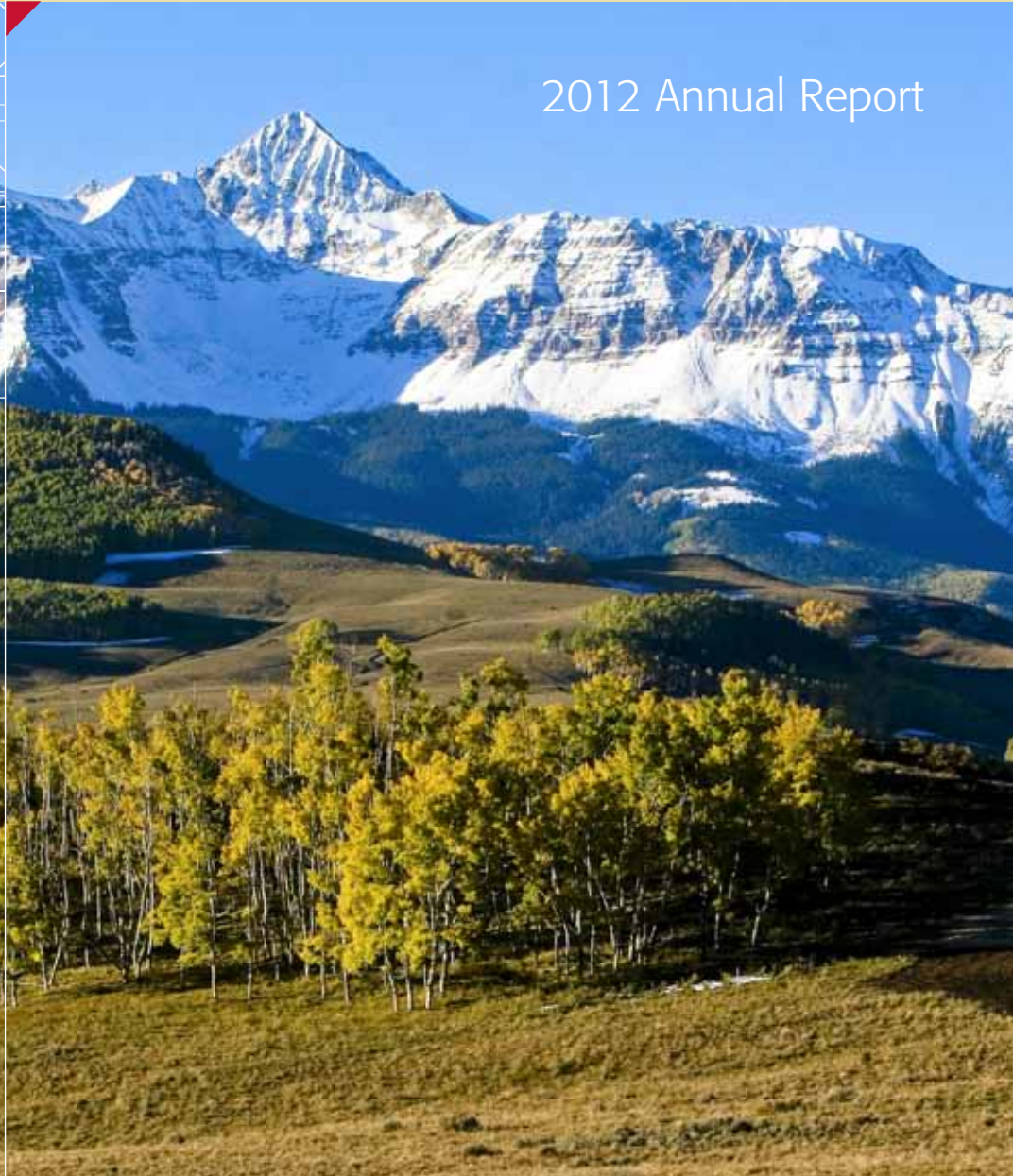
COLORADO BLUEPRINT

A bottom-up approach to economic development

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60

2012 Annual Report



Colorado

Office of Economic
Development and
International
Trade

STATE OF COLORADO

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

To the committed business-people, workers, elected officials, community leaders and people of Colorado,

The Colorado Blueprint is the product of an unprecedented effort to engage every county in Colorado on how best to improve the state's economy. It's a statewide work plan to spur Colorado's economy, help businesses grow and attract new jobs to the state.

We launched the bottom-up process immediately after Inauguration Day in 2011 to ensure people and businesses throughout Colorado could be involved in encouraging growth in their local communities and have a voice on how best to help businesses succeed. With this input, and with the Office of Economic Development and International Trade championing the effort, we turned the traditional economic development effort on its head and created a strategy and plan with real benchmarks, measurable goals and concrete solutions to help every community create jobs and help businesses thrive.

Our first priority was and continues to be job growth and expansion of companies across the state. Over the past year, Colorado has added close to 40,000 jobs. We witnessed significant success with the recruitment of new companies like Arrow Electronics and Hitachi Data Systems to the state, as well as the successful retention and expansion of companies such as TeleTech, Intertech Plastics, Bal-Seal, UE Compressions, PTI Manufacturing, Coleman, TriZetto and many more.

Colorado is a bastion of innovation, and last year we established the Colorado Innovation Network (COIN) and brought together more than 200 of the world's most innovative business and community leaders to discuss how innovation can help create jobs in our state.

We're also improving access to capital through new, creative programs, encouraging broadband internet connections across the state, developing a one-stop-shop for business resources and reducing bureaucratic red tape. Most recently, Colorado PERA announced a designated fund to invest in Colorado companies.

We are proud of all that we have accomplished this year and recognize we must create a mechanism by which the objectives and initiatives of the Colorado Blueprint live on. To that end, we are working on a Colorado Blueprint 2.0 to continue the momentum and enhance growth and prosperity in our key industries and regions. We hope for your continued involvement in the collective effort to create a stronger Colorado economy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John W. Hickenlooper".

John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth W. Lund".

Kenneth W. Lund
Executive Director
Office of Economic Development and International Trade

FROM BOTTOM-UP TO BLUEPRINT TO BUSINESS PLAN

Since the final draft of the Colorado Blueprint was published in October 2011, the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) executed a plan focused on strategic retention and growth in 14 key industries and the alignment of those industries across 14 regions throughout the state. The targeted industries represent almost 60 percent of the state's jobs and an equivalent percentage of the state's economic output. Our approach was simple: the most efficient and effective means of adding jobs is to drive growth in the industries which are already strong within the state.

The key industries were identified using feedback received from the bottom-up process, an inventory of existing industry initiatives, and analysis developed independently by PricewaterhouseCoopers to focus the state's resources on primary drivers of job growth. **They include Advanced Manufacturing, Information & Technology, Electronics, Energy & Natural Resources, Bioscience, Food & Agriculture, Aerospace, Defense & Homeland Security, Health & Wellness, Creative Industries, Tourism & Outdoor Recreation, Transportation & Logistics, Infrastructure Engineering and Financial Services.**

Regions were identified based on the Dept. of Local Affairs Planning and Management regions as they aligned with the existing regional governance structure. They are:

- Region 1:** Northeast CO - Logan, Sedgwick, Morgan, Phillips, Yuma & Washington Counties
- Region 2:** Northern Front Range - Weld & Larimer Counties
- Region 3:** Metro Denver – Denver, Boulder, Arapahoe, Adams, Douglas, Jefferson, Gilpin, Clear Creek & Broomfield Counties
- Region 4:** Pikes Peak Region – El Paso, Teller & Park Counties
- Region 5:** Central Eastern Plains – Cheyenne, Elbert, Lincoln & Kit Carson Counties
- Region 6:** Southeastern CO – Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero & Prowers Counties
- Region 7:** Pueblo Regions – Pueblo County
- Region 8:** San Luis Valley – Saguache, Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Rio Grande & Mineral Counties
- Region 9:** Southwestern CO – Archuleta, La Plata, Montezuma, Dolores & San Juan Counties, and Ute Mountain Ute and Southern Ute Tribes
- Region 10:** Central Western Slope – San Miguel, Ouray, Montrose, Delta, Gunnison & Hinsdale Counties
- Region 11:** North Western Slope – Mesa, Garfield, Rio Blanco, Moffat & Routt Counties
- Region 12:** Central Mountain – Pitkin, Eagle, Summit, Grand & Jackson Counties
- Region 13:** Upper Arkansas Valley – Lake, Chaffee, Fremont & Custer Counties
- Region 14:** Southern Front Range – Huerfano & Las Animas Counties

Key Industries

OEDIT built a strategic framework for convening business leaders and stakeholders in each of the 14 key industries across the state. In 2012, work began in nine key industries including Advanced Manufacturing, Information & Technology, Electronics, Food & Agriculture, Bioscience, Creative Industries, Tourism & Outdoor Recreation, Aerospace and Defense & Homeland Security. More than 500 business leaders have been involved in the process thus far.

Regional Development

OEDIT made a commitment to developing more meaningful relationships with local economic development professionals and business leaders in each of our 14 regions. The team has begun to help in the development of regional business growth plans in every region of the state and the alignment of resources and trainings across such regions, connecting with the 14 key industries and allowing the entire state to access the resources and programs administered by OEDIT.

Core Objectives:

The bottom-up development initiative addressed the needs, priorities, vision, strengths and weaknesses throughout Colorado at a local, regional and statewide level. This input formed the basis for Colorado's six core objectives:

- Build a Business-Friendly Environment
- Retain, Grow and Recruit Businesses
- Increase Access to Capital
- Create and Market a Stronger Colorado Brand
- Educate and Train the Workforce of the Future
- Cultivate Innovation and Technology

We believe effective partnership requires close collaboration, transparency and communication and that these core values are key to Colorado's competitiveness. This report was created to provide the partners, citizens and business leaders who helped create the Colorado Blueprint with an overview of our shared successes, challenges along the way, and opportunities we found for improvement.

2012 SUCCESSES

Colorado had great success in retaining and recruiting companies to the state in 2012 using the industry and regional strategy and through the alignment of resources to better serve clients, customers and economic development partners.

Colorado celebrated five new headquarter announcements.



- Colorado will gain 1,250 jobs over the next five years after landing the headquarters of **Arrow Electronics**, a Fortune 200 company with \$18.7 billion in revenues.



- **Blockbuster/DISH** announced they will move their Blockbuster headquarters to Colorado, bringing 150 executive level jobs.



- **Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth (SCL) Health System** announced that it is moving its headquarters from Kansas to the greater Denver area, creating 750 full-time, permanent jobs in the region.



- **TriZetto Group Inc.** is moving the \$500 million healthcare software firm's headquarters to Greenwood Village, bringing 750 jobs, 500 construction jobs and more than \$40 million in capital investment.



- **National Bank Holdings Corporation**, which operates a network of more than 100 full-service banking centers including Bank Midwest, Community Banks of Colorado and Hillcrest Bank, relocated its headquarters from Boston, MA to Colorado.



Colorado supported the recruitment and retention of a variety of industries and businesses across the state. A few include:

- **Covidien**, an \$11.6 billion provider of innovative healthcare products, chose Boulder for their new innovation center, bringing 125 jobs and \$7 million in capital investment.
- **PTI Manufacturing**, a subsidiary of Oil States International, opened its US manufacturing plant in Johnstown, bringing 300 manufacturing jobs to the area.
- **Cummins Rocky Mountain, Precast Concepts** and **UE Compression** chose to remain and expand in Adams County rather than move facilities to Phoenix, AZ and Oklahoma City, OK or Houston, TX, respectively. Together, the companies will create over 350 jobs.
- The expansion of **TeleTech**'s new customer management delivery center in Greeley will bring more than 500 new jobs to the area.
- **Halliburton Co.** will build sand storage facilities in Windsor, which will support more than 500 employees and serve energy production demand.
- **Bal-Seal Engineering Inc.** will embark on a multi-million dollar expansion of its Colorado Springs operation, which will double the company's workforce. Bal-Seal expects to create 200 jobs by 2015.
- **Hitachi Data Systems** announced they will open a new hub in Douglas County, creating hundreds of jobs over the next five years.
- **Connexions**, a leading technology and business services partner to the healthcare industry and part of UnitedHealth Group's Optum health services business, brought 550 jobs to Centennial when it opened a new solution center this summer.
- **Xerox** opened a customer care call center in Greeley that will create 1000 jobs by the end of 2012.
- **The Coleman Co.**, known for its array of camping products, moved its headquarters to Golden, adding up to 70 jobs in the area.
- Austrian company **pewag** announced it will open its first North American plant in Pueblo. This expansion will create 55 jobs and is a \$10 million capital investment.



CREATE A BUSINESS-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

Coloradans deserve a government that is responsive to their concerns and priorities, is frugal with their tax dollars and promotes economic development. That means knowing when to regulate, how to regulate, and when to get out of the way. To this end, the Hickenlooper Administration is focused on the Three E's of good government: efficiency, effectiveness and elegance.

Every state agency is engaged in identifying and eliminating red tape and unreasonable barriers to doing business. Change will not come overnight, but the state is committed to laying a foundation for changing the culture of government.

Cutting Red Tape in Government

Throughout the bottom-up process, Gov. Hickenlooper heard from business owners and others that state government was often an impediment to business development and job creation, and that there was too much bureaucratic red tape. In response, a series of Pits and Peeves Roundtable Discussions were held across the state, led by the Dept. of Regulatory Agencies, to identify the specifics of these red tape issues. Representatives from approximately 100 business organizations, local governments, and advocacy and community groups attended to share their experiences involving red tape and governmental inefficiencies, as well as about ideas on how to resolve them. Proposed suggestions ranged from simple solutions for how to improve communications with citizens to more sophisticated ideas for how to reform the way agencies make decisions. The *Cutting Red Tape in Government* report was produced to help guide state government towards improvements as they continue their efforts to meet the Three E's: effectiveness, efficiency and elegance in state government.

CREATE A BUSINESS-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

	ACTION	GOAL	DETAILS	COMPLETED TACTICS & MEASURABLE OUTCOMES	TIMELINE
	Change culture of issuing unfunded mandates to local governments	CO to be seen as the most effective state in the country in its state and government relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue an executive order concerning unfunded mandates • Implement process for engaging local governments regarding new rules and regulations • Engage local governments for feedback on rules and regulations through an online system • Assemble a working group to advise the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issued Executive Order D 2011-005 concerning unfunded mandates • DOLA successfully launched an online, paperless system to enhance communication • Ongoing monitoring of reduction in intergovernmental issues regarding new rules and regulations 	Completed
	Increase level of customer service and responsiveness of state government	Build trust in government and adopt a culture of urgency and empathy in serving the people, companies and communities of CO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead a cross-agency roundtable on improving online presence • Agencies conduct internal evaluation to identify inefficiencies • DORA to establish a regulatory help line to increase customer service • Create inefficiency identification group, Pits & Peeves • Senior Executive Service classification employees re-interview for their jobs • Survey state employees to identify opportunities to improve customer service • Design a more customer-friendly Colorado.gov portal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each agency evaluated and announced redundancies and efficiencies • OIT and SIPA hosted a Web User Conference; 11 agencies improved web presence • State employees surveyed on customer service and report published • Pits & Peeves roundtables completed; report published • SES interviews resulted in new executive talent • Colorado.gov portal redesigned 	Completed
	Work closely with local governments to create a more uniform tax and fee procedure	Address the lack of uniformity in how sales and use tax are collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather input on tax inefficiencies through Pits & Peeves roundtables • Establish a working group to improve filing process • Review previous studies of sales and use tax collection in CO • Identify best practices in the national Streamlined Sales Tax Project • Develop tax collection recommendations • Create a more efficient, effective and uniform tax filing system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathered input and data, reviewed previous studies and created tax working group; analyzed ideas for uniform process • Developing recommendations for creation of new uniform tax filing system that reduces redundancy with tax collection across jurisdictions (to be completed Jan. 2013) 	Completed/Ongoing
	Pursue legislative changes that improve efficiency and effectiveness in government	Use legislation, executive orders and internal rule-making to reduce red tape and increase government efficiency and effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunity to design and implement rule review mechanism for all agencies • Work with the legislature on additional rule review reforms • Partnership of OIT, CDHS, HCPF, counties, etc., to make the human services system more efficient and accountable • Identify opportunities for legislative and administrative fixes necessary to increase efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgraded functionality of CO Benefit Management System and creation of work plan to improve the delivery of health care services and benefits • Implemented rule review mechanism, issued Executive Order D requiring agencies to review their rules • Completed Pits & Peeves Roundtables and completed "Cutting Red Tape in CO State Government" and "Rule Review by State Agencies"; Approx. 7,580 rules reviewed, 50% of which will be modified or repealed • Streamlined cost benefit analysis process by establishing a new governance model 	Completed
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RETAIN, GROW & RECRUIT BUSINESSES

Colorado is a great place to grow a business with its superb quality of life, unparalleled opportunities for recreation, and a highly-educated and competitive workforce. These are key attributes for retaining and growing existing Colorado companies, as well as recruiting new companies. Through a more analytical understanding of and focus on our key industries, as well as increased coordination within the economic development community, Colorado is poised for economic growth. It is also important to focus on aligning infrastructure improvements (transportation, energy, telecommunications and resource management) with economic development priorities to ensure economic vitality in communities throughout Colorado.

Colorado's companies, suppliers and institutions are concentrated in a diversity of industries, defining a number of competitive clusters. Supporting these companies and their workforce is an important goal in Colorado's growth and retention strategy. A focus on innovation-driven emerging and re-emerging clusters is also paramount.

Key Industry and Regional Development Strategy

Key industry and regional development programs grew out of the Blueprint's bottom-up process, calling for collaborative, asset-based economic development efforts to advance the key industries in every region of Colorado. Focusing our resources on aligning the state with key industries and regions is the fastest and most effective way to drive job growth and economic recovery. We identified 14 key industries in Colorado that represent almost 60 percent of the state's jobs and an equivalent percentage of the state's economic output. Groups of related businesses and organizations in each industry are organizing around issues that will grow jobs in their industry. We also identified 14 regions throughout the state. Stakeholders from each region are collaborating and creating strategic plans to grow regional jobs.

RETAIN, GROW & RECRUIT BUSINESSES

ACTION	Retain and grow existing CO companies and industries and recruit domestic and international companies	Develop statewide procedures for attracting and handling new company prospects	Define and pursue industry clusters key to economic growth across CO	Focus and coordinate development of local infrastructure
	GOAL	GOAL	GOAL	GOAL
DETAILS	Support the health and growth of existing CO companies and industries and attract growing companies to CO	Better alignment across the state in order to be more successful in recruiting companies	Have a data-driven process that identifies core industry clusters and provides strategic guidance to create jobs and grow the CO economy	Aid and assist in strengthening infrastructure of local communities across CO in order to promote economic and job growth
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement procedures for retention and growth of existing companies in coordination with local economic development organizations Enhance the CO Companies To Watch program Create a culture for looking to local CO suppliers first Identify companies to target, with the goal of supplementing existing industry clusters Arrange domestic and international prospecting and trade missions Design a one-stop shop for company resources to assist in retention, growth and recruitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop greater communication between state, regional and local communities Enhance business development resources to the economic development community Conduct post-process interviews with prospects that are not converted to learn from mistakes Create and use a statewide "code of ethics" for prospecting companies Outline the role of each agency in company prospecting and retention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify industry clusters key to statewide, regional and local economies Create a state cluster strategy task force Assemble working groups to develop business plans for growing the economy in key industry clusters Develop consistent messaging regarding the key industry clusters Partner with existing cluster-based initiatives in workforce regions Evaluate need for a business advisory board to help drive overall cluster strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build upon DOLA's main street development program with a competitive selection process Convene regional development teams to identify opportunities for economic growth and development Leverage expertise of state agencies, nonprofit organizations and community partners to fulfill recommendations and support local development and job creation Promote Creative Districts Identify main streets that are state highways and managed by CDOT
COMPLETED TACTICS & MEASURABLE OUTCOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created key industry strategy; CDLE reported 37,300 new jobs (Sept. 2011- Sept. 2012), and more than 70 new prospects identified; connected with 500+ C-level & mid-level executives Created new online marketing presence; additional collateral to be created Q1 2013 Organized & participated in missions (CA, Colombia, Germany, Mexico, Canada, Asia); non-stop flights to Mexico, Iceland and Japan announced Defined online business resource based on business life cycle, to be completed Q1 2013 Celebrated a CO Companies to Watch company each week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created cross-agency integrated company prospecting model Created statewide "code of ethics" for prospecting companies - in progress Initiated OEDIT seminar program; completed 6 seminars Created post-process interview program Building online tool to provide regular prospect status updates to eco-devo community through new online tool (Q1 2013) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created key industries task force; identified 14 key industries Completed or commenced business plans for nine key industries: advanced mfg, information & tech., food & ag, bioscience, creative industries, electronics, tourism & outdoor rec., aerospace, defense and homeland security. Remaining to be completed in 2013 CDLE reported 37,300 new jobs (Sept. 2011 - Sept. 2012); private sector payroll jobs, mostly in professional and business services, construction, education and health increased 34,400 while government increased 2,900; connected with 500+ C-level & mid-level executives Partnered with Senior Executive Advisor to help drive key industry strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CO Main Street program identified 5 new communities to focus on downtown revitalization (Cliffs Commercial District, Fruita, Montrose, Ridgway, Victor) Established regional development teams; regional statements to be developed into regional strategic plan summaries by Dec. 2012 Formalized Creative Districts initiative; established 2 new Creative Districts, as well as emerging and prospective districts (Salida, Santa Fe Arts District)
TIMELINE	Completed	Completed/Ongoing	Completed/Ongoing	Completed
				8



INCREASE ACCESS TO CAPITAL

As Colorado's economy recovers from the recession, capital markets are only just beginning to thaw. Every county and region expressed the need for capital formation and increased access to capital in the form of debt financing, equity investment or access to grants—and often all three. The opportunities for making an impact include strengthening relationships with the banking community, administering federal grant money effectively, exploring innovative tax and revenue policies, and building a Colorado-based venture capital fund. We are committed to making a best effort to increase capital formation in the near term, while recognizing that there are many systemic challenges beyond our control.

State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI)

Colorado has more than 570,000 entrepreneurs and small businesses that fuel our state's economic recovery. Throughout the bottom-up process, we heard from communities about the importance of access to capital. Two new programs this year - Colorado Capital Access and Cash Collateral Support - made millions of dollars available to small businesses to hire more employees, grow product lines and expand. In October 2011, Colorado received \$17.2 million through the Small Business Credit Initiative Program, which was designed to assist states in implementing capital access programs. \$2 million will be used for the Colorado Capital Access program, and \$15.2 million for the Cash Collateral Support program.

INCREASE ACCESS TO CAPITAL

	ACTION	GOAL	DETAILS	COMPLETED TACTICS & MEASURABLE OUTCOMES	TIMELINE
	Enhance access to capital and debt financing for small business	Support access to capital for small companies by strengthening state programs that support lending to small businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval to receive federal State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) Anticipate using SSBCI grant to fund the CO Credit Reserve (CCR) Program Use SSBCI grant to create a new Cash Collateral Support Program Examine opportunity for an increase in the budget for EDC incentives CO SBDC Network to offer training to help small businesses obtain financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CO awarded \$17.2M in SSBCI funds, creating the potential to leverage private capital of \$172,334,890 by 2016 (10:1 leverage ratio), including the CCR and Cash Collateral Support Program The Legislature approved an additional \$5M in Strategic Fund job incentives to be deployed over the year The CO SBDC Network identified a capital counseling program for small businesses; July 2011-June 2012, created 1,819 jobs, retained 3,472 small biz jobs, increased small biz sales by \$38M+ and had over \$105M in capital formation 	Completed/Ongoing
	Stimulate private investment with expanded venture and angel capital programs	Increase equity investment in CO start-up companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue investing in CO companies through the Venture Capital Authority's CO Fund I, L.P. and CO Fund II, L.P. Venture Capital Investment Advisory Committee evaluating a new venture capital program Explore opportunities to fund the CO Innovation Investment Tax Credit (CIITC) Program CO Innovation Network to focus on capital and funding issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Venture Capital Authority (VCA) funding is available through mid-2015 with continued availability of investment funds in CO Fund I, L.P. and CO Fund II, L.P.; OEDIT Business Finance worked with federal government to explore feasibility of CIITC program as SSBCI eligible VC Advisory Committee evaluated number of angel/venture capital access models and worked with PERA to encourage consistent investment in CO companies 	Completed/Ongoing
	Promote increased communication between banking and business communities	Improve understanding of the current lending climate in CO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring together the banking and business communities Survey lenders on what government programs need improvement Survey companies to identify the areas of greatest need in the capital market CAGGL to share best practices in lending through government programs OEDIT and CO SBDC hosted conferences that include lender panels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Lender Summit held July 2011 with 130+ banks in attendance; survey from lending and business communities resulted in www.smallbizlending.org; worked with CO banking community to develop lending matrix under small business portal OEDIT & BF&I participated in two marketing webinars with CHFA and IBC 	Completed
	Provide financial vehicle for tourism projects to increase out-of-state tourism	Approve up to two Regional Tourism Act projects to help finance large-scale regional tourism projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local governments apply independently or partner across jurisdictions within a region The EDC may approve up to two projects in 2012, with additional projects approved in subsequent years The total sales tax revenue dedication to all projects combined can be up to \$50M a year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received RTA applications and EDC approved awards for the City of Pueblo and the City of Aurora based on the recipients' furnishing reliable data demonstrating the increase in out-of-state tourism that will occur and that a significant portion of the sales tax revenue will be generated by transactions with nonresidents of the zone Next process begins Q1 2013 	Completed/Ongoing
					10



CREATE AND MARKET A STRONGER COLORADO BRAND

Colorado is one of the best states to work, live, play and conduct business. Together, people across Colorado can define a vision for how we preserve and enhance our way of life. A common brand and vision for all of Colorado will provide a strong foundation for increasing Colorado's market-share in direct investment, overnight visitors and relocating companies—both on a national and global level.

Almost every county summary and regional statement mentioned tourism as fundamental to local economies throughout Colorado. The Colorado Tourism Office is working closely with the administration and the General Assembly to secure a marketing budget for the State in an effort to penetrate domestic and international markets. The state will develop and promote Colorado tourism and business opportunities more strategically by collaborating with leadership in state agencies, the private sector and all 14 regions.

brandColorado

Based on input received from the key industry process, Colorado is in need of a more cohesive brand; one that encompasses government, tourism and commerce. The state hired a Chief Marketing Officer to **create a powerful place brand**, leveraging Colorado's vibrant ecosystem of people, companies and government. The marketing team is meeting with people throughout Colorado, discussing ideas and discovering what people from all areas of the state think what the Colorado brand should include. Colorado's great quality of life and educated workforce will be reflected in the brand, and we will also entice entrepreneurs to move to the state. The new brand will create a more aligned Colorado, increase market share and penetration among designated market areas, increase revenue from tourists and businesses, and more.



EDUCATE AND TRAIN THE WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE

Two of Colorado's key economic drivers are a highly-educated population and world-class institutions of higher education. Strong education and training systems are necessary to maintain and grow our globally competitive talent pool and meet the needs of the private sector. Workforce training programs, workforce business services, and client service vary greatly across the state. Alignment of these services and programs will provide consistency, while preserving customized approaches to regional activities.

Increased coordination across state agencies, nonprofits, academia and the private sector will reduce redundancy and increase the quality of education and training outcomes for students and workers across Colorado. In the near term, it is crucial to have resources to train and re-train skilled workers quickly based on the needs of growing and emerging companies and industries. In the long term, even in a time of serious budget constraints Coloradans recognize the value of enhancing the whole education pipeline – from early childhood through both the post-secondary and continuing education pathways. The future prosperity of the state will rely on increasing degree and certification completion, leading into meaningful careers for Coloradans.

Partnership with Colorado Workforce Development Council

The Colorado Blueprint has empowered efforts to align workforce development and education with economic development strategies as demonstrated through the key industries and regional development initiative. The Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) intentionally aligned its strategic plan with the Blueprint, dedicating staff to develop goals to *Educate and Train the Workforce of the Future* for each industry. CWDC team members participated in building industry business plans, engaging partners and ensuring that existing strengths are built upon. These partners include but are not limited to K-12 Education, Higher Education, the State Youth Council, the Community College System and CDLE's Workforce Development Programs and Local Workforce Regions all of which are working together to develop strategies to meet industry needs through Career Pathways and Regional Sectors Strategies.



CULTIVATE INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Colorado has a strong spirit of innovation. There are bright, adventurous and creative people making discoveries and working to get new ideas to thrive. The state is home to great entrepreneurs and researchers and Coloradans have always been great at growing their own wealth.

Colorado's vision is to formalize a network of innovators and mobilize stakeholders from business, government, nonprofits and academia to develop and implement strategic action plans that create new jobs and grow the Colorado economy through innovation. A diversity of topics will be explored through the Colorado Innovation Network (COIN), including how to accelerate the commercialization of technologies that emerge from Colorado-based research and development.

The opportunity to fully participate in the global economy is often dependent on the exchange of information and ideas. The information exchange increasingly takes place online with the assistance of telecommunications, especially outside major metropolitan centers. Nearly every region and county want improved access to communications technologies, including broadband, as a foundation of economic development and innovation.

Colorado Innovation Network and Innovation Index

The Colorado Innovation Network (COIN) was established this year to be a catalyst for innovation within Colorado. The inaugural COIN Summit brought together over 200 of the nation's leading innovators to develop actionable ideas and programs to spur job growth in Colorado. At the Summit, COIN released the first-ever Colorado Innovation Index, which evaluated innovation in Colorado across four categories — ideas, talent, capital and entrepreneurship. Across all four, Colorado performed strongly. The Index will be an annual report that takes a comprehensive look at how Colorado is creating an environment in which innovation, entrepreneurship, and job creation can thrive.

Colorado National Rankings

Colorado consistently receives top rankings nationally as a place to live and start and succeed in business.

8th Top State for Job Growth

Arizona State Univ. W. P. Carey School of Business study, 2012

2nd Top Entrepreneurship and Innovation State

US Chamber of Commerce, 2012

8th Top State for Business

CNBC, 2012

5th Best State for Business and Careers

Forbes, 2011

5th Best State to Make a Living

MoneyRates.com, 2012

8th Top State for "Talent Pipeline"

US Chamber of Commerce, 2012

1st for Growth in the Startup job Sector

StartUpHire, 2012

5th Best State To Do Business

CNBC, 2012

3rd Best State for Economic Competitiveness

Beacon Hill Institute, 2012

2nd Top State for High-Tech Business

TechAmerica 2012

A Very Special Thank You

Thank you to the many partners of the Colorado Blueprint for providing invaluable insight, time, creative ideas and resources. This unprecedented collaboration between public sector, private citizens, businesses and academia was key to the success of this year's implementation efforts and will remain an important part of Colorado's continued economic growth.

Thanks to all of the residents of Colorado, state, local and federal agencies for their participation as well as our international partners and academic, economic development and business communities who provided invaluable input at each step.

In celebrating this year's accomplishments, Colorado is already looking to the future and remains committed to a collaborative approach to economic development.



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