



Greetings Investors and Community Stakeholders

With the new year moving forward full speed ahead, your Economic Development and Workforce Council (EDWC) is excited to implement this year's operating plan. Our pillars of focus include a robust offering of business education classes, business case working, workforce training and development and fostering relationships and expanding resources through regional partners. The BASE program 2024/2025 is in full swing and we have a great lineup of additional offerings throughout the year. Through administration of the Town of Estes Park's construction relief grant, the Chamber and EDWC learned that our business community share collective interest in marketing education. As a result, we're thrilled to offer a two-part marketing workshop, starting in February.

Colleen and I attended the Northern Colorado Economic Forecast luncheon in mid-January - an annual event packed with data and insights on upcoming economic trends. A few nuggets of note include projections for increased visitation to Colorado's public lands, specifically Rocky Mountain National Park, in 2025.

While Colorado has led the national average in population growth in years past, 2025 expectation for state job growth 1.2%. With Colorado leading home value appreciation over the past 15 years, cost of living has become a barrier to entry in our State and community, compressing the level of growth we've experienced in years past. On the job front, Colorado is #1 in job openings rate, #3 in workforce shortage ratio and has the 4th highest labor force participation rate in the U.S., a participation rate more than 6% higher than the national average. These statistics are statewide measures and coupled together are a staggering explanation of our challenges with workforce recruitment and retention in Estes Park which are often exacerbated over state metrics.

Thank you for your support of economic development efforts and workforce in the Estes Valley. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me or Colleen or council members with questions, feedback, or input on our activities.

We appreciate your partnership.

Sincerely,
Christina Kraft
EDWC Chair

Our Top Story: Upcoming Marketing Workshops Hosted by Estes Chamber of Commerce, SBDC, and EDWC



Marketing as a small business can feel overwhelming, but this two-part series provides a solid foundation for long-term marketing success and a plan for effective, results-driven marketing. In both sessions, you'll also learn time-saving tips and AI tricks that will simplify your marketing efforts.

Session 1: Building your brand and marketing strategy

February 12, 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

By focusing on your brand and marketing strategy first, you'll ensure that your marketing resonates with your target audience, creates consistency and drives breakthrough results. Plus, it allows you to measure and refine your efforts over time to continuously improve your outcomes. In this first session, you'll learn how to create a marketing strategy tailored to your business. Key topics include setting clear objectives, identifying your target audience, prioritizing messages, and more. You will leave with a marketing strategy template in hand to create your own marketing strategy and plan.

Session 2: Moving from strategy to "what's my plan?"

March 26, 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

With your foundation in place, it's time to move into building your execution plan. We'll start by seeing what questions you had while developing your marketing strategy from session one. Key topics in this session include the customer journey, content strategy, growth priorities and identifying marketing tactics for your execution calendar. *Note: you must attend session 1 to attend session 2*

[Register: Session 1](#)

[Register: Session 2](#)

Larimer County & Northern Colorado Latest



**NoCo Foundation
Lunch & Learns**



Join NoCo Works' Community of Practice: Communication & Team Building

Tuesday, January 28, from 12:00–1:00 PM (MT)

You can expect to gain insights and best practices from industry experts across diverse fields. All participants will leave with tangible resources you can apply immediately to your professional environment.

This engaging session is held online and is always free to attend!

* While the session is facilitated in English, Spanish closed captioning is available

[Register Here](#)



Register Today for Spring Nonprofit Leadership Academy Classes offered by Continuing Education at Aims Community

This program is for professionals who want to take on a role in the nonprofit sector or for those who are already in the nonprofit sector looking to develop their skills.

Essentials Certificate

Nonprofit Finance Essentials
Beyond the Bake Sale: Diversified and Sustainable Fundraising Techniques

The NoCo Foundation was established 50 years ago, in 1975, to help generous community leaders connect to issues that matter most to them. Over the last four years, the NoCo Foundation has implemented new regional initiatives that are shaping the future of Northern Colorado.

The business community is invited to attend one of four **2025 President Lunch and Learns** to hear about their current and future work, hosted by the President of the NoCo Foundation, Kristin Todd. Discover how they support corporate giving, client philanthropy, and turn business assets into community impact.

Register below for complimentary lunches:

- March 5
- May 15
- August 5
- November 5

All lunches will be from 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m., at the NoCo Foundation office at 4745 Wheaton Drive, Fort Collins, CO 80525.

[Register Here](#)



Mastering Handshake: Empower Your Recruitment Strategies - Online Session

Join this free event that can significantly enhance your recruiting efforts for part-time and full-time positions, and connect you with top-notch talent! Northern Colorado's higher education institutions are coming together to help you with the ins and outs of Handshake, the premier online job board that simplifies the hiring process and connects

Leadership Certificate

Building and Leading Teams as a
Nonprofit Executive
Strategic Planning for Nonprofit
Leaders
Nonprofit Human Resources: Building
High-Impact Teams
Marketing and Communication Plan

Board Training

Developing a Successful Board

Other Offerings

Grant Readiness and Grant Writing
Intensive

[Learn More & Register for
Remote & In-Person Courses](#)

employers with a diverse pool of
exceptional talent from our region.

Please join us to:

- Get Started: Learn how to post job opportunities and utilize advanced features.
- Best Practices: Learn how to maximize Handshake's potential to find the perfect candidates for your business.
- Q & A: Get the answers to your questions about using Handshake effectively.

This will be a working session to build and maximize your profile and postings to widen your talent pool with the help of the Aims, CSU, FRCC and UNC Handshake experts.

Thursday, February 27th · 9:00am - 10:30am MST Online

[Register Here](#)

Colorado State Updates



2024 Talent Pipeline Report Now Available

This annual report dives into the key issues influencing the supply and demand for talent across key industries in Colorado, offering insights for workforce and economic development, education and training, business, and program and policy developers.

[Read & Download a Copy](#)

Colorado Chamber Releases 2025 Legislative Agenda

The agenda lays out both short-term and long-term goals that will put Colorado in a position to tackle ever-evolving economic challenges now and into the future.

The Chamber's priorities for the 2025 session are outlined below:

- Regulatory Climate
- Protecting & Building Colorado's Workforce
- Cost of Living & Competitiveness
- Tech Innovation & Economic Growth

[Learn More](#)



The Sum & Substance

The Sum & Substance (TSS) is an online news site published by the Colorado Chamber of Commerce giving readers an insider's perspective on the politics and policies impacting Colorado's economic climate. TSS breaks down what matters to Colorado business, cutting through the noise to provide fact-based, engaging content Coloradans can trust.

Interested in receiving a newsletter directly pertaining to Colorado business owner interests?

[Subscribe](#)



Colorado Chamber Releases 2025 Legislative Agenda

This webinar provides an in-depth overview of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and the Federal Bonding Program (FBP), highlighting how these programs can benefit employers and streamline hiring processes. Attendees will learn about the financial incentives for hiring from specific target groups, as well as the steps required to access these programs. The session also explores the Federal Bonding Program, which offers peace of mind through fidelity bonds, protecting employers from risks associated with hiring certain employees.

[Learn More](#)



OEDIT: Colorado Business Support Programs

There are many financial credit, loan, and grant programs exclusively for Colorado businesses. Learn more about these and other OEDIT programs:

- **The Advanced Industry Investment Tax Credit (AIRC)**
- **Employee Ownership Tax Credit Open and Accepted on a Rolling Basis**
- **Innovate Onwards / CLIMBER Loan Fund**
- **Colorado Revolving Loan Fund**
- **Cash Collateral Support Program**

[Learn More](#)

Colorado Clean Air Program Grants

Clean Air Program (CAP) Grants
The **Clean Air Program (CAP)** is a competitive grant program administered by CEO, with a total funding amount not to exceed \$25 million over the program's six-year duration, sunseting June 30, 2028.

[Learn More](#)



Advising and assessments for commercial properties

Efficiency Works Business can identify potential energy efficiency opportunities and rebates so you or your tenants can save money on utility bills. Our energy advisors are available to complete facility assessments, review project bids, plan future projects and install qualifying efficiency items.

This free, no obligation advising and assessment service is available to commercial utility customers of Estes Park Power and Communications, Fort Collins Utilities, Longmont Power & Communications or Loveland Water and Power.

EDWC Council Members

Christina Kraft, Bank of Colorado, Market President Estes Park, EDWC Chair

Diane Muno, White Orchid, Owner, EDWC Secretary

Bill Brown, Estes Park Town Trustee

Jason Damweber, Estes Park, Deputy Town Administrator

Adam Crowe, Larimer County, Economic Development Manager

Rebecca D. Gelsinger, Visit Estes Park, Director of Operations



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