



Economic Development & Workforce Council Newsletter

2025| October

Our Top Story: BASE 2.0 Applications Closing Soon



Applications Close October 29th

BASE 2.0 is a locally-driven business accelerator program produced by the Estes Chamber of Commerce and its Economic Development & Workforce Council. The program is focused on helping Estes Park entrepreneurs build stronger, more sustainable businesses.

BASE 2.0 is a 10-session commitment. Each session begins with a morning Community Coffee Roundtable followed by a strategic working period and guest presentations. The afternoon portion of each session includes working time to build Operating Plan components, work through issues, run thought experiments as a group, and discuss best practices and learnings.

[Apply Now](#)

Upcoming Events



Book Club: "Dare to Lead" Discussion Sessions Planned for November

This fall, we're diving into Brené Brown's *Dare to Lead* — a powerful exploration of what it really means to lead with courage, connection, and heart.

Brown challenges us to rethink leadership not as titles or power, but as the ability to **step up, be**

Don't worry if you haven't read the book - a summary will be provided and the discussion is more about topics than the book itself...it's an 'Un' Book Club!

Discussion sessions will be:

Coffee & Books at InkWell & Brew: November 13th from 8:30am -10:00am

Books & Brews at RockCut Brewery: November 19th from 5:30pm - 7:00pm

brave, and foster trust. Through stories, research, and practical tools, she shows how vulnerability is not a weakness, but the path to stronger teams, deeper relationships, and lasting impact.

If you've ever wondered how to lead with authenticity (at work, in your community, or even at home), this book offers inspiration and actionable steps. Come ready to reflect, share, and maybe even get a little uncomfortable — because that's where growth begins.

Colorado State Updates



Maximizing your holiday markets - for artists and creatives

**Wednesday, October 15, 2024
4:30 PM to 6:00 PM**

Are you fully prepared for your holiday markets? Are you maximizing your branding and customer potential at your markets?

- This free business session will help you learn more about email marketing, personal outreach and relationship development and partner maximization.
- Learn more about effective displays
- Good customer service /engagement /networking techniques

Join us for role playing and evaluations of good and poor displays

This event is a collaboration between the Downtown Fort Collins Creative District and the SBDC serving Larimer County

Building a brand identity & marketing plan blueprint

**Thursday, October 16, 2024
1:00 PM to 3:30 PM**

Marketing as a small business can feel overwhelming, but this course provides a solid foundation for long-term marketing success. By focusing on your brand identity 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 session, you'll begin by understanding what brand identity is, why it matters, and the essential components that make up your brand "DNA." Once you have clarity on your brand, we'll dive into creating a marketing strategy tailored to your business. Key topics include

[Learn More](#)

18th Annual Veterans Small Business Conference

**Friday, November 7, 2025
7:00 AM - 4:30 PM**

The 18th Annual Veterans Small Business Conference is your chance to connect, learn, and level up! Dive into expert-led sessions, explore business growth strategies and discover government contracting opportunities.

This year, veteran-owned businesses can also sign up for a vendor table to showcase and sell products!

Network with national speakers, visit targeted exhibitors and get real-world advice from roundtable experts ready to support your success.

[Learn More](#)

Register for Spring Nonprofit Leadership Academy Classes

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. Classes can be taken as a certificate or taken a la carte. Students who would like to take the full certificate will receive a discount of 10%.

Essentials Certificate

Fundamentals of Nonprofit Management starts Jan 22nd

Nonprofit Finance Essentials starts Feb 8th

[Learn More](#)

Leading Edge Strategic Planning - Health & Wellness 7-weeks, Virtual

Starts Tuesday, January 21, 2025 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM

The LEADING EDGE™ Entrepreneurship Series is a hands-on, step-by-step strategic business planning session and for the first time this one is focused on healthcare and wellness business owners. Through this 7-weeks Cohort Series—with expert help all along the way—you can test the feasibility of positioning your company for growth, solidify your business model and build a road map in LivePlan. You can finish the series with an actionable, strategic business plan to access potential financing or to use as a blueprint to manage your business.

[Learn More](#)

RAP 101 Info Session for Businesses (virtual)

2nd Thursday of the month @ 10-11am - through 2025

Is your business looking for a way to build a skilled workforce?

Join us for Registered Apprenticeship 101 - a monthly info session designed to help businesses explore the benefits of Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) and the steps to get started

What you'll learn:

- The benefits of apprenticeship for businesses

Beyond the Bake Sale: Diversified and Sustainable Fundraising Techniques starts March 26th

Leadership Certificate

Fundamentals of Nonprofit Management starts Jan 22nd

Building and Leading Teams as a Nonprofit Executive starts Jan 28th

Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Leaders starts Feb 6th

Nonprofit Human Resources: Building High-Impact Teams starts Mar 25th

Marketing and Communication Plan starts Mar 31st

[Learn More](#)

- How to determine if a RAP is right for your organization
- Steps to develop or connect to a RAP
- Resources available to support your success

[Learn More](#)

CO Apprenticeship Incentive Grant

The Colorado Apprenticeship Hub will be awarding \$3 million in competitive grants to support and expand Registered Apprenticeship Programs and Pre-Apprenticeship programs across Colorado. Grants of up to \$150K per grantee will be awarded.

[Learn More](#)



COLORADO
Department of Local Affairs
State Demography Office

[Learn More](#)

Colorado's Housing Shortfall: An Estimate and Review of Existing Studies

By Neal Marquez and Greg Totten, Colorado State Demography Office

Key Takeaways

- The housing shortfall for 2023 is estimated to be 106,000 units.
- The shortage peaked in 2019 at 140,000 units.
- Based on the latest population projections, 34,100 units would need to be added each year to maintain the existing shortage over the next ten years.
- Despite recent decreases in the housing shortfall, housing affordability reached a record low in 2023.



**Green Business
Network
COLORADO**

Join the Go-Tober Challenge this October

This fall, companies can join the Go-Tober Challenge for the chance to earn public recognition! During October, employers across the region rise up the leaderboard ranks when employees

PFAS Destruction by a Hazardous Waste Incinerator

Register for this presentation on October 15th starting at 1:00 pm, where they will cover the development of Appendix A of EPA's 2024 Interim Guidance on the Destruction and

track non-solo driving trips. Join the challenge to support employee wellness, reduce traffic, and show your community leadership!

[Learn More](#)

2025 Colorado Resiliency Framework

Register for the third Virtual Resiliency Summit on November 13th, 2025, from 1:00-3:00 pm or 5:30-7:00 pm, and register for one session to provide feedback on the draft CRF strategies.

[Learn More](#)

Disposal of PFAS and Materials Containing PFAS and its use to evaluate thermal treatment technologies.

[Learn More](#)

CGBN Workshop Schedule

Embedding Sustainability Across Operations

Learn how organizations successfully engage employees and leadership to embed sustainability into everyday operations on Tuesday, October 14th from 1-2 pm on Zoom.

Waste Less, Save More: A Food Waste Playbook

Discover practical strategies and real-world examples to design and implement an effective food waste reduction and diversion program on Wednesday, November 12th from 1-2 pm on Zoom.

State Program Updates and Review

Get the latest updates on funding and support opportunities from the Colorado Energy Office, Colorado Circular Communities, and the Colorado Diversity Supplier Program on Wednesday, January 14th, 2026 from 1-2:30 pm.

[Learn More](#)

National Updates



U.S. Chamber of Commerce

U.S. Chamber of Commerce: Unlock Big Beautiful Savings

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce rolled out a new guide to help small businesses unlock savings under the recently enacted One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

Why It Matters: The guide breaks down key provisions of the law, including permanent deductions, enhanced



Hiring Contractors vs Employees

Date: October 21, 2025
Time: 11:00 am to 12:00 pm MT
via Zoom
Fee: Free!

We'll provide participants with a practical understanding of the key differences between the two by discussing the different legal standards and classification tests, the legal and financial implications of misclassification,

credits, and expanded eligibility criteria—giving small businesses the tools they need to thrive.

Start Now: Small business owners can start claiming these tax breaks now, even for expenses dating back to January 20, 2025.

[Learn More](#)

best practices for documenting the employee or independent contractor relationship and walk through some real-world scenarios. This workshop is designed for attorneys, business owners—especially those who do not have a human resources background, and advisors to provide actionable best practices.

[Learn More](#)

EDWC Council Members

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

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

Nick Smith, Lumpy Ridge Brewing, Owner



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