

RESILIENCY PLAN

SILVERTON & SAN JUAN COUNTY, COLORADO



2020

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INTRODUCTION

This report came about through funding from the Economic Development Administration for the Recovery Coordinator position in San Juan County. The goal was to help fund resiliency planning as a result of the Gold King Mine Spill in 2015. However, due to multiple man-made and natural disasters in the 5 years that followed, it is important to include a history of each incident in this report as they have all led to different outcomes and learning experiences for our community and economy in regards to resiliency. The following pages describes our community and it's remote, austere mountain environment which helps depict a clear picture of our exposure to certain disasters and our resources to cope with them.

In the last five years Silverton has had some unique economic challenges related to these primarily manmade and natural disasters. In 2015 we experienced the Gold King Mine Spill and subsequent Superfund status which received national attention. The winter of 2017/18 brought extreme drought to our region with very little snowfall. This decimated our winter recreation economy. The following summer of 2018 we saw the 416 Fire that shut down, for five weeks the Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad that brings hundreds of visitors to town each day in summer by train. The highway was also closed and then when opened, was restricted to police escorts, one-way traffic, and fire operations.

Subsequent mudslides later that season further affected travel into town as a result of slides in the burn scar that compromised the highway. The following winter of 2018/19 we had late season snowfall that resulted in a historic avalanche cycle in March, which, combined with tree debris and a large snowpack, kept our high country shut down well into the summer of 2019. Not being able to safely plow county roads and get them cleared for both motorized and non-motorized traffic compromised the start of our typically strong summer economy. The downed timber in the avalanches created further clearance issues on both our roads and hiking trails once the snow had gone in late July. We then had high flooding from snow melt in the form of runoff into our rivers and streams. This resulted in two drownings in the spring of 2019. Fortunately for Silverton summers are strong and gains have been made to grow shoulder and winter recreation seasons when we are not experiencing disasters. Back to back disasters over several years have compounded our economic weaknesses and undermined our resiliency as the community tries to diversify.

Living in an austere mountain environment is not for everyone, and it demands innovative ideas and strength of character to make it in this beautiful but demanding landscape. Our emergency response efforts to these events have improved and been refined along the way and our Office of Emergency Management, Public Health, Government, and other Economic Recovery Resources are more experienced and well trained than ever before. However, being a small rural town with a limited population base, limited expertise and volunteer numbers are a big factor in adequate response for emergencies. High turnover and burnout remain a problem for these organizations. Factor in that response is often conducted in a high alpine environment with additional risk factors and skill sets needed, and it makes response capabilities even more challenging. Our closest interagency response

is 30-60 minutes away (south and north) with high mountain passes and often snow packed roads to take into consideration.

During the 416 Fire San Juan Development Association (SJDA), the county-level economic development group, spearheaded the recovery effort for businesses and residents who lost income by developing a list of available resources locally and regionally for people in need. SJDA initiated two emergency Disaster Declarations through the Small Business Administration to help free up resources for businesses and residents. These declarations also helped our neighboring counties. SJDA continues to be the organization that connects government and business during economic disaster recovery in the community and works closely with our Office of Emergency Management to do so when needed.

The different natural and manmade disasters taught us how vulnerable we are and what we need to do to survive further emergencies economically. We need to continue grow our population, develop, and diversify our business community along with our preparedness for emergencies. Obviously, this report is being finalized during the COVID outbreak and the impact cannot yet be addressed but the practices included in this document are relevant.



HISTORY OF SILVERTON, SAN JUAN COUNTY

San Juan County is one of 64 Counties in Colorado. As of the 2010 Census, the population was 699, making it the least populous county in Colorado. The county seat and the only incorporated municipality in the county is Silverton. With a mean elevation of 11,240 feet (3426 meters), San Juan County is the highest county in the United States and one of the most isolated.

Silverton is a former silver mining camp, most or all of which is now included in a federally designated National Historic Landmark District, the Silverton Historic District.

Located in southwest Colorado near the Four Corners region (the junction of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado) San Juan County is near three distinct physiographic regions, the Rocky Mountains, the Colorado Plateau, and the San Juan's. The closest towns are Durango, which is 50

miles to the south (an hour of drive time), and Ouray which is 28 miles (30 high stress minutes to non-locals) to the north of us. We are isolated geographically from both these towns by two high mountain passes to the south, and one to the north. However, our highways are maintained well and in winter frequent plowing and avalanche control work means that, in normal circumstances, they are rarely closed for more than a few hours at a time. Further around on the San Juan Skyway loop is the town of Telluride which is 73 miles away. Albuquerque is 263 miles to the south, and Denver is 324 miles to the north. Silverton is located at 9,318' in a stunning mountain setting. There are two regional airports nearby in Durango and Montrose.



ECONOMIC HISTORY

Silverton is a historic mining town established in 1874 in Baker's Park in the heart of the San Juan Mountains. After the Denver & Rio Grande Railway (now the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad) reached the town in 1882, the surrounding region experienced a mining boom that lasted until the 1910s. The narrow-gauge lines branching out from Silverton began to consolidate and close, with all three gone by 1941. Outlying mining camps gradually emptied, leaving Silverton as the only town in the county. Perhaps the clearest sign of a shift was the organization of the Silverton Commercial Club in 1913 to promote recreation and tourism in the region. Mining continued in the area for most of the twentieth century, but after 1920 it was clearly in decline.

After World War II, tourism began to take hold as people visited the town for its scenery and history. Silverton was named a National Historic Landmark in 1961. In 1991 the Sunnyside Mine closed for good and laid off 137 of its 148 workers--or 37% of San Juan County's work force. The overall population declined from 951 in 1984 to 554 by 1994, marking the end of major mining operations around Silverton. Tourism then became Silverton's main industry. Silverton now has a population of 701. The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad (as the line was renamed in 1981) became just as vital to the town's success as it had been a century before—only now it brings in tourists instead of hauling away ore.

<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1991-08-08-vw-101-story.html>

Visitors are attracted to Silverton's history and its natural environment. The San Juan County Historical Society became a leader in preserving and promoting Silverton's many historic sites. Silverton Mountain opened to extreme skiers and ATVs were allowed to utilize town streets. However, amid the tourist growth is the realization that San Juan County traded one industry; mining for another: tourism. This plan is an attempt to find a future in which the boom and bust of a single industry will not impact the entire future of a community.

Timeline of San Juan County Disasters

1873 ● Brunot Treaty gives up more than 4 million acres of the San Juan Mountains, previously held as a Ute reservation, to white settlers

1893 ● The Panic of 1893 wrecks the mining industry

1918 ● 10% of Silverton's population is lost to The Spanish Influenza



1978 ● Emma Lake collapses into the Sunnyside Mine, down through the connecting mine shafts and into the Animas River. Miraculously, this occurred on a Sunday – the one day of the week nobody was in the mine. This event is now commemorated on the Christ of the Mines shrine on a hill above Silverton

1991 ● The last active mine, Sunnyside Mine, closes; Silverton loses 50% of its population



2015 ● Gold King Mine Spill



2018 ● 416 Fire rages from June 1 - July 31, closing Hwy 550 and halting the summer train and tourism season



2018 ● Mudslides create havoc in the aftermath of the 416 Fire



March 2019 ● Historic avalanche cycle closes Red Mountain Pass, trails and roads



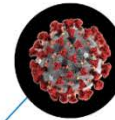
2019 ● Spring melt floods the San Juan Mountains throughout May and June

July 2019 ● Red Mountain Pass rock slide closes Hwy 550

Aug 2019 ● Fiber-optic outages cut off Silverton from phone and internet services



Dec 2019 ● Great Divide Fire



2020 ● COVID-19 pandemic causes shelter in place order, closes Silverton to non-residents

This report primarily focuses on the timeline of the EDA Recovery Coordinator work in San Juan County.

Gold King Mine Spill 2015

The 2015 Gold King Mine waste water spill was an environmental disaster that began at the Gold King Mine near Silverton, Colorado. The Environmental Protection Agency personnel, along with workers for Environmental Restoration LLC, caused the release of toxic waste water into the Animas River watershed. The location was eight miles north of Silverton on County Road 110, and the spill dumped the wastewater into Cement Creek, which passes through the town of Silverton and then drains into the Upper Animas on the south east side of town. Cement Creek is a tributary of the Animas River and part of the San Juan River and Colorado River watershed. The accident impacted three States and the Navajo Nation.



The EPA were attempting to drain ponded water near the entrance of the mine on August 5th. After the spill, the Silverton Board of Trustees and the San Juan County Commissioners approved a joint resolution seeking Superfund money.

Contractors accidentally destroyed the plug holding water trapped inside the mine, which caused an overflow of the pond, spilling three million gallons of mine waste water and tailings, including heavy metals such as cadmium and lead, and other toxic elements. The EPA was criticized for not warning Colorado and New Mexico about the operation until the day after the wastewater spilled.

The event drew national attention to toxic drainage from many similar abandoned mines throughout the country. Governor of Colorado John Hickenlooper declared the affected area a disaster zone.



Immediate Response:

Because the EPA had not notified residents of the spill until 24 hours after it occurred, local response was somewhat chaotic as there was limited experience in the community on how to handle such an incident. Multiple municipalities and jurisdictions along the course of the river, including the Navajo Nation, stopped drawing drinking water, and ceased use of it for farming because of heavy metal contamination.

It was not until weeks after the Gold King Mine Spill that the water was considered clean enough for human consumption. During the time immediately following the spill, the EPA initially underestimated the amount of contaminated water drained into the Animas River. The local Office of Emergency Management did their best with response. At the time no one was formally trained as a Public Information Officer and as a result, media reporting and communication with EPA was reactive rather than proactive.

Following the spill, the local governments of Silverton and San Juan County decided to accept Superfund money to fully remediate the mine.

Recovery Coordinator Response

Although there was concern that the Gold King Mine Spill and subsequent Superfund status would affect the economy of Silverton and San Juan County, it did not result in major impacts. Real estate continued to thrive and visitation to the area from tourism saw very little decline. The main economic effects locally were felt around water-based recreation on the Animas River both adjacent to Silverton and downstream in Durango. In 2015 the Economic Development Administration helped Region 9 to fund a Recovery Coordinator position to continue resiliency and economic development efforts in San Juan County.

This EDA investment supported Region 9 Economic Development District (Region 9) with a Disaster Recovery Coordinator to develop a resiliency plan for existing businesses and identify opportunities for economic diversification in Silverton, Colorado. There was also a strong desire to bring the San Juan Development Association economic development organization out of dormancy. Specifically, in the wake of the Gold King, the Recovery Coordinator worked on:

- Business surveys of businesses (post Gold King Mine spill in 2015).
- Attended Animas River Stakeholder meetings – a consortium of agencies and organizations working to minimize impacts and educate the public around water quality and the Super Fund.
- Distributed monthly updates from EPA on work being conducted for the Bonita Peak Mining District Super Fund and attended EPA meetings.
- Started bi-monthly Stakeholder meetings of Silverton residents, businesses and organizations to encourage collaboration, updates on activities and communication.
- Worked as staff for San Juan Development Association to revitalize local economic development efforts.
- Worked with the Four Corners Film Office around several Silverton productions.

- Communication and collaboration with local and regional government, non-profits, and community members to progress our efforts of economic development in the community.
- The Recover Coordinator also recently got accepted on the Resource Advisory Committee as a RAC representative for the Rocky Mountain chapter for the BLM to advise on land uses.

The funding initially intended to help the community navigate Super fund status in the wake of the Gold King Mine spill and the EDA grant was extended to assist with 416 Fire in 2018 which further impacted our economy.

<http://www.silvertonstandard.com/news.php?id=860>

<https://durangoherald.com/tags/gold-king-mine-spill>

<http://www.silvertonstandard.com/system/news/pdf/standard8-20-2015.pdf>

Winter Drought 2017-18

Lift accessed ski areas, backcountry skiing, snowboarding, ice climbing, snowmobiling, cross country skiing and snowshoeing make up most of San Juan County's winter sports and economy. The winter economy has very small visitation numbers compared to the summer season. Silverton has Silverton Mountain, a (mostly) guided only extreme ski area eight miles north of town, and the Town operated Kendall Mountain Ski Area for beginner skiers. The Silverton Avalanche School brings visitors by conducting up to 50 avalanche courses a season, and a handful of winter sports events. Most tourist shops and many of our restaurants are closed in winter because visitation is still very limited compared to summer.

In the winter of 2017/2018, San Juan County experienced a very dry winter with little precipitation/snow. The businesses that were open suffered immensely, and employees were laid off. Silverton Avalanche School had to cancel all their courses for the first two months of winter (December & January) due to not even enough snow to skin on, even at higher elevations. There were 15-20 courses that were fully booked with 12 students per piece and 2 instructors that would be coming into town to stay and eat. The Silverton Avalanche School lost approximately \$50,000 in revenue which is well over 50% of their annual finances according to the school's Director. Silverton Mountain Ski Area had a significantly delayed start to their season of 4-6 weeks until they were fully operational, and Purgatory Ski Resort had very limited terrain open for the first 2 months of their regular operations. By mid-February there was increased snowfall and an uptick in business, but many of the early season bookings had already been affected due to almost no snow in the first half of the winter.

<http://www.coemergency.com/2018/05/sba-offers-disaster-assistance-to.html>

<https://snowstudies.org/winter-storm-data-2017-2018/>

Recovery Coordinator Response

Entering the winter of 2017, there was recognition that the economy needed to be diversified from Tourism. However, a first step was to diversify tourism to even out the seasons by focusing on expanding winter and shoulder season activities. The goal was to grow the San Juan economy

beyond a four-month summer tourist season through promotion of recreation and events. Specifically, SJDA with the Town of Silverton was awarded a Colorado Blueprint 2:0 grant for Grow Your Recreation Industry which aimed to expand the winter and shoulder seasons. This resulted in:

- Created a winter recreation map.
- Supported, created new and brought back old events (Silverton Ski Joring, Silverton Whiteout, Cajun Food Festival). Fundraised \$15,000 to support key winter events such as Ski Joring and Silverton Whiteout.
- Helped SJDA become an Enterprise Zone Contribution Project in order to provide tax credits for donations.
- Helped work on the new Silverton Area Trails Plan for development of more non-motorized trails in San Juan County.
- Community visioning was undertaken to develop an expanded Master Plan for Kendall Mountain Community Recreation Center.
- Created educational offerings for business owners to make businesses more sustainable.
- Explored ice climbing park options: Efforts were made to investigate potential locations for an ice climbing park similar to Ouray's. There was no suitable location identified.
- Surveyed businesses around the impacts of the low snow winter in the Spring/Summer of 2018 and after the 416 Fire. Results and summaries are in the **Appendices**.
- Worked closely with office of Emergency Management and Local Emergency Planning Committee to address issues such as limited water storage and supply.

416 Fire

The 416 and Burro Fire were two wildfires that burned in southwestern Colorado in 2018. The fires burned predominantly within San Juan National Forest, 13 miles north of Durango (and 14 miles south of Rico). The 416 Fire started on June 1, 2018, and the Burro Fire followed on June 8. Federal officials allege that embers emitted from a coal locomotive used by the Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad started the blaze, and have filed a lawsuit against the railroad seeking recoupment of \$25 million in firefighting costs, penalties, and legal expenses. The fires burned a combined total of over 57,000 acres and have cost more than \$43 million to contain.

The 416 Fire was another hit to Silverton and had major impacts on tourism and commerce. By the morning of June 2nd, the fire had expanded into the San Juan National Forest and had burned an estimated 1,100 acres. The highway was closed between Durango and Silverton for public safety and to allow firefighters to keep the fire from crossing the highway. Evacuation orders were put in place for residents along the route 825 structures were threatened.

Over 1300 homes and businesses were forced to evacuate due to the fire. Many of these people were evacuated north to San Juan County where they either drove on to Ouray or sheltered in Silverton. No structures were destroyed by the fire though businesses suffered economic losses due to closures and the impact on tourism. See the attached Study of the impacts of Colorado Wildfires in the **Appendices**.

The fire forced the closure of Purgatory Ski Resort, Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, and for the first time ever, the San Juan National Forest. The town of Silverton had to cancel their popular 4 July Fireworks, which brings thousands of visitors. Railroad tourism regained operation in July with diesel locomotives and steam engine services to Silverton resumed on July 17. Purgatory resumed its summer operations on July 2nd.



The July 4th cancellations and highway, rail, and trail closures was another nail in the coffin for Silverton. The continued smoke from the fires that were left to burn into the National Forest lasted for several weeks, compromising air quality, and further reduced visitation to San Juan County

The impacts can be seen reviewing SJC sales tax from the years 2013-2019 and noting that 2018 is significantly lower through the months of June and July as seen below.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
June	7,115.81	10,018.62	13,765.96	11,781.46	13,949.50	6,568.03	13,486.95
July	12,297.03	12,420.34	14,908.46	15,042.34	21,634.93	9,579.78	22,429.05

The 416 Fire was declared fully contained on July 31, 2018 after burning 52,778 acres (21,358 ha) over 61 days. <http://www.silvertonstandard.com/system/news/pdf/standard8-20-2015.pdf>

Recovery Coordinator Response

- Conducted another survey of business owner’s in summer 2018 to document the 416 Fire impacts. **The results are in the Appendices.**
- Developed a Community Food Drive and put together a food bank for those in need due to loss of employment.
- Outreached regional organizations to help identify and communicate resources to residents and businesses. Comprehensive recovery efforts and information sharing took place.
- Collaborated with the Chamber of Commerce to create a short-term marketing campaign to encourage regional visitation and shopping in Silverton in the second half of the summer. This was very successful.
- Collaborated with the Chamber of Commerce and Town of Silverton to successfully apply and implement a comprehensive fall, spring and summer marketing campaign with \$28,000 grant from the local Tourism Board. Involved building a digital media library, targeted print and digital ads in outdoor magazines and a winter recreation trails map.

SJDA received designation as a Certified Business Community from the State in November 2018 to develop a co-working space, and offer a variety of business one-on-one counseling and workshops. As a result we were funded to develop a Co-working space opened in the basement of the Grand Imperial Hotel and started to identify needed courses and offerings. Immediately after the 416 Fire we were able to hold 2 the first two consulting days for Business Recovery and Diversification, prior to getting a grant to expand on this program offerings.

- Supported 10 business owners with one-on-one consulting
- 1 two-day artisan business workshop
- 1 Excel consulting appointment day
- Identified the need to promote high speed fiber and remote worker relocation programs which was followed up in 2019.

Mudslides 2018

Once rainfall came to Southwest Colorado with the monsoon season, there were mudslides on the burn scars that impacted travel on Highway 550 for several days in the months that followed the 416 fire. There was significant damage to several businesses and homes when heavy rains triggered slides in the burn areas north of the Hermosa Valley. The Durango-Silverton Narrow-Gauge Railroad train tracks and highway 550 to Silverton also suffered significant damage and delayed roads opening due to clearance activities that needed to take place. The Train had to purchase land to be able to go in and fix the damaged track which delayed their operation another 5 weeks, after the initial delays caused by the 416 Fire. There were also closures to highway 550 north on Red Mountain Pass due to rock fall from the monsoons. Attached in the [appendix](#) is a CDOT report showing total days of impact to roads during this time. The total number of days in fall was 10 days for response and ongoing operations from July through December 2018.

Recovery Coordinator Response

The efforts around mudslide response from were a direct continuation of the efforts around the 416 Fire. There was communication with CDOT on road closure signage and the accuracy of those, along with advocating for as many one-way traffic options



as possible versus complete closures of roads. When full closures did happen, we actively communicated travel hours for our residents and visitors so they could plan ahead and not be significantly delayed. With more impacts to tourism, the Recovery Coordinator and SJDA Board identified step two in the diversification plan. Work would continue to expand winter and shoulder season recreation and tourism, but efforts would utilize reaching out to visitors about relocating and moving their businesses into Silverton. We

continued to hold the aforementioned workshops and consulting days through our CSBC grant throughout the year.

Historic Avalanches March 2019

The 2018-19 winter itself was not necessarily record breaking in terms of snowfall, but it was unprecedented in its destruction across Colorado.

The trouble began, as mid-winter snowpack trouble often does, in October. Early snow conditions resulted in the dreaded persistent weak layer. Fast forward to late February: each storm until that point had delivered just enough but not too much snow to poke at that weak bottom layer. The first big avalanche cycle that significantly compromised roads and lead to closures started Feb into March 3rd, where conditions were steadily getting worse. The snow was coming in wetter and heavier and the Colorado Avalanche Information Center (CAIC) issued major avalanche warnings in 6 of the 10 zones in Colorado which included the Northern and Southern San Juan's, where Silverton sits adjacent to both (San Juan County straddles both these zones). A car collided with avalanche debris on Red Mountain Pass.

Red Mountain Pass became a verified firing range with D3 and 4 slides (scale of destructive force from 1-5) continually breaking loose. CDOT closed Highway 550 at 9 p.m. on March 3. Due to avalanche danger and debris, it did not open again for 18 days. With the road from the north into Silverton being closed, one of two access point to Silverton was shut down to our winter recreationalists and all travel.

The snow kept falling and by March 11-14 marked the days when according to CAIC Deputy Director Brian Lazar, "the San Juan's completely fell apart." A State of Emergency was declared for the region as D4 slides rumbled across the mountains. In Lake City, an avalanche swallowed the sheriff's home while he and his daughters were sleeping. One daughter was buried. Miraculously, they all survived.

The snow and avalanche cycles were so big that it effectively closed our winter recreation. Access into Silverton was compromised, the avalanche danger was extreme, and people were unable to travel into the backcountry safely. County roads in and around Silverton were also covered in huge amounts of avalanche debris resulting in Silverton Mountain having to helicopter clients over debris paths on County Road 110 to their ski area.

The results lasted long into the spring and summer of 2019. The high country was inaccessible to summer motorized and non-motorized recreationalists due to a deep snowpack and roads that took until early July to be cleared. This compromised our short 4-



month summer economy and resulted in significant flooding in late spring. Attached in the appendix is a CDOT report showing total days of impact to roads during this time, including the 18-day period that Red Mountain Pass was closed.

Recovery Coordinator Response



The focus for response was very much based on safety and shelter in place. All roads in and out of Silverton were extremely dangerous to drive and most were closed for multiple days during this time in response to avalanche control and mitigation. During and after the immediate danger had passed, SJDA worked closely with the local business community to help communicate and share information on the situation and worked on campaigning to our regional neighbors and skiing community that we were back open for business.

However, the positive economic impacts of too much snow was not felt until the following fall and winter when all skiing and winter-based recreation bookings were up across the board. This included Silverton Avalanche School, Silverton Mountain, lodging reservations and snowmobile operations. In April and May of 2019, with high country access still buried in snow and avalanches, Silverton Stakeholders collaborate to promote some sightseeing of the historic avalanches as a point of interest. However, it was a challenging time. SJDA did increase its offerings for business consulting and workshops at this time. During the spring of 2019, the following courses and consulting days were offered.

- 3 Non-profit workshops
- 2 Business Recovery and Diversification Consulting days
- 3 Non-profit workshops

Flooding Spring 2019

The huge snowpack, avalanche debris and spring runoff of the 2018/19 winter compromised the start to our late spring and summer recreation season, resulting in compromised tourist visitation numbers in May, June, and July. Too much snow was the problem this year, as opposed to the drought winter of 2017/18. This resulted in massive spring run-off, 2 deaths by drowning in swollen rivers, and limited access to backcountry recreation due to avalanche debris, deep snowpack, and compromised river crossings where the snow was cleared. It also caused cancellation of some back-country events that help drive our economy, including the Hardrock 100 Trail run.



<https://kdvr.com/news/local/woman-swept-away-in-southwest-colorado-steam-found-dead/>
<https://coloradosun.com/2019/06/06/colorado-snow-avalanche-summer-economy/>.

Recovery Coordinator Response

The spring flood efforts were directly tied into the same efforts the SJDA initiated for the Historic Avalanche Cycle. The timelines were closely intertwined from March through May. In June there was an active public relations campaign between SJDA, Town of Silverton and the Chamber to help promote what roads were open, and what activities were currently available in the county. This included a renewal of our joint collaborative marketing grant between the three entities to use funds from the Tourism Board to help promote visitation to the area and give insight as to what was open. Heritage Tourism was also promoted along with some recreation for motorized and non-motorized.

Fiber Outages 2019

Silverton has great fiber bandwidth but no fiber redundancy in and out of the town. In 2019, there were two fiber and cellular outages in Silverton that cut off communication channels. The first was August 9th, 2019, when a resident south of Durango dug the fiber line up accidentally in his back yard. The second incident occurred on December 23rd late at night, when the Great Divide shop on Greene Street caught on fire and destroyed the fiber line running through the alley way at the back of the building.

Both instances rendered the entire community without cell service during a downtown fire and cut off from emergency help. The community was without cellular service and internet for approximately 36 hours each time. Our Office of Emergency Management had to relocate to Durango both times to manage the incident there so they could access all forms of communication needed. Interagency responses from other communities had trouble communicating with us when trying to assist. This identifies a huge public safety weakness in our rural, isolated community. The incidents also impacted businesses who were not able to process credit cards over those two days.

Recovery Coordinator Response

In response to the two fiber outages SJDA attended the Local Emergency Planning Committee task force meetings. SJDA initiated communications with San Miguel Power Association (SMPA) and discovered their plan to run fiber and power from Ouray, over Red Mountain Pass to the Burro Bridge Station a few miles north of Silverton. Subsequent meetings initiated by SJDA with SMPA, County Commissioners and the Southwest Colorado Council of Governments (SWCCOG) helped develop teamwork to try to bring the fiber further into town to connect with the current dead-end fiber and create redundancy. This effort is still currently underway, although delayed somewhat by the COVID 19 pandemic. SJDA was also awarded a grant by SMPA to work on



a Relocation and Growth initiative to target remote workers to our community by promoting our high-speed internet. <https://www.denverpost.com/2019/12/23/silverton-fire-power-outage/>

COVID 19

The 2019–20 coronavirus pandemic was confirmed to have reached Colorado on March 5, 2020. As of April 12, 2020, the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE) confirmed 7,303 positive cases of COVID-19 in the state, along with 290 deaths as a result of the disease. We know this data is changing daily and to-date no San Juan County residents have tested positive.

From a Public Health standpoint, Silverton has isolation and a low-density population working in its favor when it comes to community transmission. However local healthcare resources and support are limited with only Emergency Medical Services response from Ambulances and no set clinic hours or hospital. The Office of Emergency management has acted quickly and been aggressive with Public Health Orders and sheltering in place. At this time, any person who has been out of the community for over 24 hours must self-quarantine for two weeks.

Summer businesses and second homeowners have been discouraged to come into town. At this time, the community and businesses have been shut down or severely reduced hours resulting in huge economic disruption and loss of jobs. Because the full extent of the pandemic is unknown at this time, and because Southwest Colorado may be one of the last communities to be affected by the virus itself, it is hard to put any kind of timeline on the economy coming back. Discussion is currently around letting summer business owners back into the town to start setting up for summer operations and how that will look over the April, May and June time period.

Recovery Coordinator Response

Silverton enacted resource response plans quickly with SJDA establishing a community food bank and volunteer database for community help and medics. SJDA raised \$14,000 in 2 weeks in food donations to reactivate the Community Food Bank. After our experience with the 416 Fire, we knew to move quickly on getting connected with local, regional, state, and federal resources to assist with this effort. The difference with this disaster was that it was global, with supply lines and food resources strained across the country. At the time of writing (April 13th), it is still uncertain how the pandemic will play out. This is one disaster where our isolation works in our favor regarding limiting spread. If people do start to get sick in our community, and we have limited resources in neighboring communities, then we can set up emergency shelters to help isolate sick patients and limit the spread. This is where our lack of resources would be our weakness, as would our location at high altitude in relation to surviving the respiratory, oxygen compromised illness.

SJDA has also worked to secure volunteers and to-date, we have recruited and processed close to 20 volunteers for general and medical volunteer efforts.

<https://sanjuancounty.colorado.gov/>

LESSONS LEARNT

San Juan County understands the need to diversify its economy, though steps to move forward have taken a back seat to the various natural and man-made disasters that continue to occur. Below is a SWOT assessment of the county developed by San Juan County stakeholders. There is strength in:

- The small rural population whose resiliency through common shared hardships, community collaboration in times of duress and ingenuity when dealing with limited resources when responding continue to occur.
- The positive and strong leadership at the Office of Emergency Management and dealing with five years of consecutive disasters has created a more experienced, cohesive, well-trained and strong team at this level of operation.
- Being able to isolate the town further from community spread of COVID-19.
- San Juan County's ability to respond and recover well from disasters depends almost completely on the people it has in decision making positions. Currently, there is a mix of more established long-term personnel in key positions and newer, younger, and less experienced staff and elected officials also contributing. It makes for a variety of ideas, skill sets, and energy and if encouraged and developed, could become a strength of the community.
- The community has recognized the importance of collaboration and full community buy in with economic development ideas. The importance of communication, eliminating redundancy, not working in isolated silos and transparency of efforts along with keeping politics to a minimum are all concepts that Silverton is working to embrace.
- Silverton's remoteness, geographical location, nature, and beauty are a strength we can exploit for good reason. The abundance of backcountry recreation and the ability to "get away from it all" and visit or live in a small community can be desirable for many people and promoted through the recreation industry, relocation of remote workers and tourist visitation.



STRENGTHS, OPPORTUNITIES, WEAKNESSES AND THREATS -SWOT

Strengths

- Natural beauty of surrounding landscape
- Public lands, resources & recreation
- Remote location devoid of high-density impacts such as traffic, noise & pollution
- Potential raw materials & natural resources
- Authentic community that preserves & embraces historic attributes
- Numerous tourism assets & attractions
- Quality school system
- Strong community volunteerism
- Government is accessible & transparent
- Exceptional Emergency Services
- Fiber optic broadband connectivity
- Pro strategic growth policy

Opportunities

- Revitalization of San Juan Development Association
- Strong community involvement in accomplishing community initiatives
- Revitalization of historic structures & cultural amenities
- Foster heritage tourism.
- Expand the economy to grow shoulder & winter seasons
- Utilization of the school to promote community vitality & population growth.
- Revitalization of mining industries
- Development of mountain research facilities & field campus
- Development of location-neutral businesses
- Avalanche/backcountry education opportunities
- Marijuana industry
- Expand year-round economy

Weaknesses

- Isolation from major marketing, interstates & rail lines
- Geographic proximity from State & federal agencies
- Lack of redundant telecommunications infrastructure
- Affordable/workforce housing in short supply
- Lack of economic diversification -reliance on summer tourism
- Access to local capital
- Aging central service infrastructure
- Lack of continuing education & job training
- Limited Tax base to support infrastructure including schools
- Relationship with some federal agencies
- Lack of certain basic services
- Absentee property/building owners
- Lack of human capital
- Limited financial resources constrain discretionary project funding

Threats

- Non-sustainable natural resource management
- Dependency on Durango & Silverton RR
- Natural & manmade disasters related to austere mountain environment
- Bark Beetle
- Excessive permitting requirements & hostile regulatory environment
- Volatility of business cycle

ECONOMIC RESILIENCY PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Disasters aside, this report's focus and goal is to create more economic resiliency and diversity in order to better return and recover from disasters, that based on history, are likely to continue.

The Team

There are many agencies, jurisdictions, and stakeholders involved in providing infrastructure, public facilities, and utility services. Before and after a disaster, these private and public entities need to establish communication and coordination procedures to ensure that long-term recovery and rebuilding occurs in an efficient and organized manner. Identifying and involving partners at the local, state and possibly federal level to help create economic resiliency and diversity is critical. The key organization for forwarding economic resilience is San Juan Development Association (SJDA). SJDA started a nonprofit in 1991 committed to developing economic resilience and growth in San Juan County. It went dormant in 2008 due to the Recession and limited financial resources. In 2015, after the Gold King Mine spill, the organization was resurrected by the community to help assist with post superfund status recovery efforts, recreation development, business resources, community economic development, micro loans, and investment information. This organization is fundamental to economic development in Silverton.

Other key organizations that need to directly participate in the coordination of economic recovery are the Office of Emergency Management, San Juan County, Town of Silverton, County/Town Planning Commission, Region 9 Economic Development District, the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Southwest Colorado Council of Governments, Southwest Small Business Development Center, Department of Local Affairs, Environmental Protection Agency, utility companies, CDOT and public land agencies. There is a second tier of participants that need to be at the table and are too numerous to count. These participants may not be in a coordination role but are important pieces of the community puzzle. These include Silverton Chamber of Commerce, realtors, nonprofit organizations like the Silverton Creative District, San Juan County Historical Society, recreation-based groups (Silverton Singletrack Society) business owners and residents.

Local officials have authority under their local ordinances, resolutions and Colorado Revised Statutes to take responsible and appropriate actions in the direction and control of disaster recovery activities. If an effective recovery is beyond a local jurisdiction's capability, State assistance may be required. If the situation is beyond State and local capability, the Governor may ask for Federal assistance by requesting a Presidential Declaration of an "emergency" or "major disaster". The declaration triggers the implementation of Federal disaster assistance programs, which are coordinated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in cooperation with the Division of Emergency Management (DEM). Each agency or company should have its own recovery plan; however, all opportunities for comprehensive coordination and communication should be a priority.

Response and recovery operations in both State- and Federally declared disasters will be conducted in accordance with the standards set forth by the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the National Response Framework (NRF).

Understanding the Situation

There are numerous examples of how to assess and respond to any type of disaster so only an outline is provided here. If the Team is broad-based then the situation will be accurately identified, and appropriate actions will be taken. These include the following:

- Assess the nature and magnitude of the disaster.
- Assess the impact on the economy (business, industry sectors, labor market...etc.).
- Assess the impact on transportation and public infrastructure.
- Assess the impact on housing, schools, and health care facilities.
- List and prioritize recovery activities to be performed.
- Identify resources (Federal, state, local, private sector) needed for each activity.
- Determine the level and type of assistance needed.
- Identify roles and responsibilities.
- Determine the timeframe for each recovery activity:
- Establish recovery benchmarks. Long-term recovery and mitigation efforts will be based on a variety of factors and priorities, including public safety, economic development, environmental protection, and preservation of social, cultural, and historical resources:
 - Identify business, economic and entrepreneurial rebuild initiatives.
 - Identify workforce initiatives to employ workers and rebuild the economy.
 - Describe the Federal, state, and local funding programs and management plans to ensure the most effective use of Federal, state, local, and private sector funds.



However, a disaster-impacted community needs to develop a vision for how it will rebuild its devastated local economy. Communities need to take the opportunity to redevelop their economic and social assets in order to not only emerge stronger from a disaster, but also be better prepared for future disasters. A post-disaster strategic plan provides the opportunity to re-evaluate economic objectives in light of vulnerabilities and establish strategies and action steps to make progress toward long-term recovery.



Goals and Objectives

The SWOT analysis (shown previously) has identified several economic opportunities in the County that will help the community recover and thrive. The SWOT analysis was designed to identify a range of possible scenarios that could manifest in the region's future. As a local economic development organization, SJDA, is particularly concerned with restoring the economic base, including lost jobs and increasing employment opportunities. Doing this means that SJDA needs to have staff and be sustainable.

The Silverton community uses their locally developed Comprehensive Plans, including San Juan County's profile in Region 9's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) to identify to identify priority projects, partnerships and action steps that will aid and enhance the recovery process. Region 9 has worked with each county to also develop Community Development Action Plans (CDAPs). The 2018 CDAP has a total of 36 projects/objectives, in a range of categories that were ranked and approved by the County Commissioners. The San Juan County CDAP will be updated in 2021.

Colorado Governor Jared Polis approved a Rural Economic Blueprint, a statewide strategy to spur Colorado's rural economy which identifies priorities at the state level that San Juan County can also align. See **Appendices** for the Rural Economic Blueprint and CDAP.

Implementation

Communities are often unprepared for the chaos that can emerge after a disaster and have difficulty planning for long-term economic recovery when there are pressing humanitarian, cleanup and rebuilding needs to address.

Private/public economic development organizations are uniquely positioned in the community to facilitate a strategic planning process for economic recovery - both before and after a disaster.

Through their established connections with businesses, business organizations and governments, they can coordinate involvement and leverage resources and are likely to take a leadership role in facilitating job recovery and help to stabilize the community's economic base after a disaster.

Pre and Post Disaster Planning for Implementation:

When discussing implementation, we need to address how important pre-planning is as a step towards smooth implementation. If pre-planning is done on the front end, it enables a community to respond more quickly and efficiently in order to help jumpstart the recovery process and limit the disaster's negative impacts. An economic preparedness plan should work in conjunction with a larger, comprehensive community planning framework led by the local government for a disaster situation. Preplanning and post disaster planning can follow many of the same steps outlined below.

Preplanning gives the community a roadmap and post disaster planning can take that roadmap and adapt it to an exact scenario at hand rather than just doing "scenario planning". Some types of disasters or outcomes may not have been anticipated by the community therefore pre-planning may have gaps that post disaster planning can fill.

Step 1: Designate the key economic development organization professional(s) to facilitate planning process. Developing an economic preparedness planning should be led by the economic development organization or department.

This organization will be responsible for galvanizing wide-ranging support from all stakeholders, particularly the local business community. It will help align the resources needed to get the planning process off the ground and serve as an effective liaison and facilitator between all parties.

Step 2: Confirm the Team - all economic recovery stakeholders and hold a kickoff meeting.

Identifying and building consensus among a variety of stakeholders is one of the most important tasks in the planning process. Invite representatives from the public, private, and non-profit sectors as well as elected officials involved in local economic issues. Regional and provincial representatives should also be invited and encouraged to participate, as necessary. Representation from industries that are economic drivers in the community will also be important. Facilitate workshops that involve group participation, brainstorming and evaluating many different scenarios. Be sure to let everyone be comfortable with "having a voice".

Step 3: An inventory of current assets and economic drivers as well will help the community better understand the local economic dynamics as well as the resources to harness in the event of a disaster. Current information for this effort may be available in existing strategic plans and economic data analysis including the SWOT. It will not only serve as the basis for the development of the economic recovery plan, but it can also be helpful in evaluating the impact of the disaster. The assessment should include a strong understanding of:

- Demographics • Key industries and/or clusters
- Key employers and their location

- Labor and workforce characteristics
- Buildings and infrastructure of economic importance
- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis
- Local policy framework.

Step 4 - Conduct Scenario Planning: Not all disasters impact a community in the same way. Different types of responses and resources must be deployed to assist the recovery. Scenario planning can help the community evaluate alternatives, such as redevelopment options, as well as impacts to various types of disasters.

Scenario planning, as the name suggests, allows communities to envision plausible scenarios based on an analysis of internal and external factors and their interactions. A community can then determine how different policies, programs, and resources can be put in place under different scenarios to effectively mitigate negative impacts while improving the chances of positive economic outcomes.

Steps to Scenario Planning

1: Define the Context: Where is the community on the path to sustainability? >> What is the principal concern?

2: Identify the External Forces: What external forces (social, political, environmental, economic, and technological) are assumed to take place? >> What are the primary external uncertainties?

3: Evaluate Internal Dynamics: How might local assets interact with external forces? >> What local assets are most sensitive to internal and external forces?

4: Identify Spectrum of Plausible Futures: Where do external forces and internal dynamics meet? >> What storylines outline the array of possible futures?

Step 5 - Action Plan: Based on different scenarios and the highlighted vulnerabilities in the community, an action plan should be developed with strategies, resources and identified responsible agencies. Develop action strategies and steps. Having an action plan with set timelines that outline key activities will increase efficiencies once a disaster strikes and help stakeholders make smart post disaster recovery decisions.

Step 6 – Communications Plan: Communication challenges are one of the primary issues that communities face during the economic recovery period. Physical disruptions to the telecommunications network and the lack of clear and timely news and information leads to the spread of false rumors and misinformation. A communications plan will enable local and regional economic development organizations to remain in contact with their constituents, their peer organizations, and other groups that are critical to the community’s economic recovery.

Step 7 – Funding Sources: Potential funding sources for disaster recovery and redevelopment should be identified, including local, provincial, and federal sources. Although a variety of resources

are available for humanitarian relief and housing, resources for business recovery can sometimes be scarce. It will be necessary for economic development organizations to creatively utilize available resources and leverage public, non-profit and private funds.

Step 7 - Adopt the Plan: Take the following steps to ensure that the community adopts the economic preparedness plan and that collaborations remain active.

Evaluate and Update Plan

After any plan implementation, there needs to be an evaluation of its impact and success. This is **Step 8** to what is mentioned above. This can be done mid-plan so adjustments can be made. For San Juan County, there is always consideration for continuing, halting or slowing down of all project implementation. Changing the scope mid-stream has never been a problem. Sometimes, there are other items to consider such as newer, more important needs that have arisen to the top as a result of a disaster, or lack of personal resources to push the effort forward that cause a reevaluation or update to the plan. A post-disaster plan should be developed to guide the community in reassessing its economic objectives in light of disaster risks and other vulnerabilities.

Step 1: Conduct a post-disaster economic impact study.

Step 2: Identify a lead economic development organization to initiate a post-disaster economic recovery planning process.

Step 3: Create a plan with action strategies.

Step 4: Produce a complete economic analysis

For economic resiliency, we measure:

- Job growth
- New capital investment
- Increase in local tax revenues
- Diversification in industry base
- Meeting community goals

Some of the San Juan County Economic Initiatives currently moving forward include:

Stanley Placer Project: In 2017, the Silverton School District purchased the Stanley Placer, a 2.38-acre parcel of undeveloped land, as an ideal location to develop a multipurpose conference center as well as a separate recreational facility. As the last large undeveloped parcel of land within town limits, the Stanley Placer is centrally located within one of the town's residential neighborhoods and sits near Silverton Family Learning Center. Large enough to support the development of both a multipurpose conference center and recreational center, Silverton currently has no conference

facilities or Senior Center. The new community conference center would include a professional scientific lab, a commercial kitchen, dormitory space, a performance space, meeting and classroom spaces, a community center space, and/or a Senior Citizen Center. The Stanley Placer Project is a crucial and substantial investment in Silverton's evolution to be a place where people want to live, creating a more resilient future and a diversified economy.

There is also a clear need for an indoor facility that can provide access to exercise, fitness, and recreational activities year-round. Such a facility could house the Silverton Youth Center and senior programs, provide gym equipment, a pool, fitness and dance classes, classroom space for arts programming, and outdoor recreation opportunities like a community garden, skateboard park, and outdoor play spaces. The Silverton Schools is spearheading this project.

Silverton Creative District: is a nonprofit 501 c(3) with a mission to support the growth and sustainability of arts and culture in San Juan County and to foster prosperity for local artists and the community as a whole This initiative is led by local artisans who would like to see more cultural and artistic diversity in the community as a lifestyle enhancement and economic driver for all.

<https://www.facebook.com/silvertoncreativedistrict/>



Anvil Village Housing Project: An affordable, attainable and market rate housing initiative being spearheaded by San Juan County. This project is the result of a Brownfield clean-up and numerous agency collaborations. Located at the west side of the entrance to Silverton, homesites are available.

Blair St Revitalization Project: The Town of Silverton and The Blair St Association are collaborating around beautification efforts on Blair St. This includes lighting, sidewalks and upgrading Columbine Park that is used for farmers markets, Summer Sounds music series and a variety of other small events. This is part of a greater Downtown Revitalization initiative by the Town of Silverton and Downtown Colorado Inc. for both Greene and Blair Streets. Other downtown beautification improvements have also been identified.



Business co-working space: San Juan Development Association developed a community co-working and business space in collaboration with the Grand Imperial Hotel through a grant from the State Office of Economic Development and International Trade. This grant has helped SJDA bring business resources-workshops, meeting space and consulting-into the community. The program to date has been very successful.

Silverton Relocation Initiative: To expand the economy from tourism is a goal of SJDA. Many groups including the Silverton Chamber, and Town of Silverton are working on a Community

Prospectus for those looking at our community, highlight incentives and provide an active recruitment tool.

Silverton Area Trails: A community initiative to develop and market San Juan County trails turned into a Silverton Area Trails Plan in 2019 that has been adopted by San Juan County and the Town of Silverton. It identifies key areas of future trail development and improvement that would lead to enhanced recreation and economic development opportunities. The Bakers Park mountain bike specific trail development planning by the International Mountain Bike Association has been included in response to the growing demand for mountain bike trails as that industry is growing significantly in Colorado. The plans and ongoing efforts are being directed by the Town of Silverton.

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/townofsilverton/community-visioning>.

Kendall Mountain Recreation Area Expansion: Numerous proposed improvements and development of the Town's Kendall Mountain is being explored. This includes looking at opportunities to develop cross country skiing, mountain biking, more lift access skiing, hiking, ice skating, zip line,

white water park and more. The lift accessed skiing could be developed up to tree or ridgeline. There is currently a community driven committee working on this with minutes and potential plans listed on the Town of Silverton website under Community Visioning.

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/townofsilverton/community-visioning>



Community Events: There are a variety of strong, community supported events year-round in San Juan County including the Summer Concert Series, 4th of July Assoc, Skijoring, Silverton Whiteout, Snowscape, Iron Horse Bicycle Classic, Hard Rock 100 and Hard Rocker Holidays, to name a few. The Town, County, Chamber and San Juan Development all actively support these community events and event directors with bringing this layer of vitality to the community.

<https://silvertoncolorado.com/events>.

Regional initiatives: The Million Dollar Highway Experience for Economic & Planning Partnership is a strong regional is looking attract visitors across the region. There is also a regional Cycling Tourism effort spearheaded by the Durango Area Tourism Board to develop multi day cycling itineraries along the San Juan Skyway and to help increase multi town visitations by bike. Includes mountain bike, gravel, and road cycling itineraries.

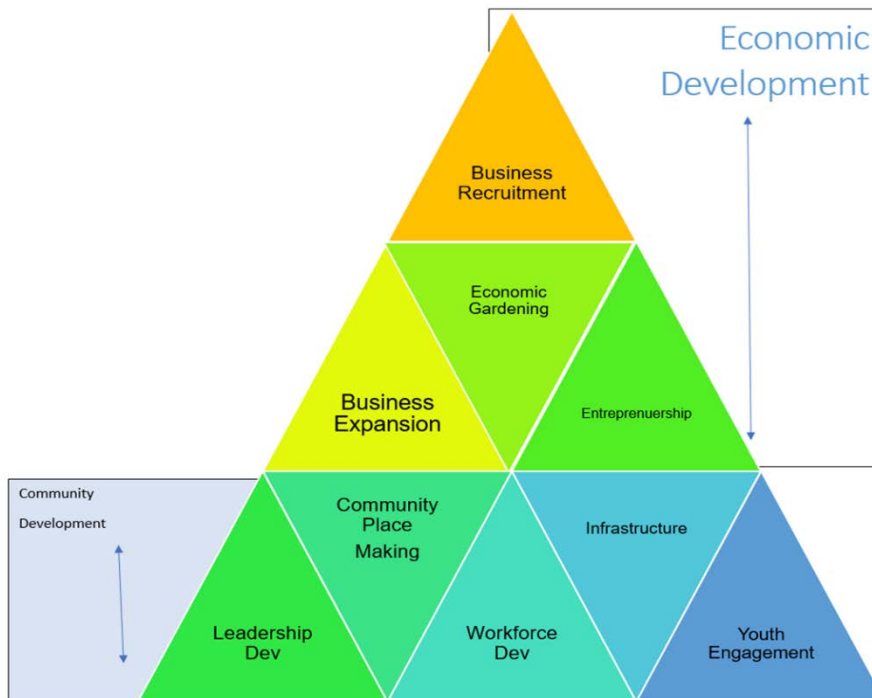
Fiber Redundancy Loop: The community has prioritized creating fiber redundancy. The current lack of redundancy was a weakness exposed twice last year in a period of 6 months when we had two disruptions to our fiber line. SJDA initiated discussions between our County Commissioners, San Miguel Power Association and SWCCOG. At this time there is significant enthusiasm by all parties to collaborate to make this happen.

Recruitment of business: SJDA is working with Region 9 EDD to finalize a community prospectus to market the community to the outside world on a SJDA and OEDIT website. The goal is to recruit families and remote workers who desire a mountain lifestyle. This includes publicizing available business incentives such as:

- Enterprise Zone- State
- Opportunity Zone- Federal
- Certified Small Business Community- State
- Rural Jumpstart County -State
- National Historic Landmark
- Colorado Main Street Affiliate
- Expeditionary Learning School.

SUMMARY OF NEXT STEPS

The next steps for Silverton to develop further resiliency are to fill in the gaps in the “Economic Delta” below. This Delta demonstrates the interaction of various areas of economic development and their interrelationship. When looking at the Economic Delta, San Juan County has areas of strength and weakness throughout this Delta. The diagram also demonstrates that Community Development is foundational to Economic Development efforts. Without a strong foundation, economic development efforts are not successful.



Community Development

Leadership Development: The strongest recommendation from this Resiliency Plan is to support San Juan Development Association at the key organization to keep economic diversification at the forefront. San Juan County has some new faces at the leadership level as a result of recent elections. There is a healthy mix of new and experienced leadership. This will serve the community well into the future. Local government and organizations should invest

in formal professional development more heavily as new leaders become active in the community will little experience.

Community Placemaking: This is a San Juan County strength and much effort has been made marketing the community and surrounding area as a place to visit. There is also recognition about the need to make Silverton a place where families want to live. Examples include promotion of the outdoors, events, the strong school and quality of life and livability activities. There have been many visioning sessions around what “we want the community to look like”. Silverton is unique and that in itself is an attraction. Housing options continue to be limited and an area of weakness in this category.

Youth Engagement: Silverton has a very active and progressive school system that is immersed well in the community. The Economic focus needs to be on “boomeranging” youth to move back to San Juan County after they leave for an education and to see the world. Bringing back those most committed and already part of the community, with new ideas, will create community resiliency.

Workforce Development: This area is still weak in San Juan County due to a small population base, low wages, limited year-round jobs with benefits, four-month seasonal tourist economy, and the limited number and types of businesses. This area will benefit from broadband and the attraction of the remote and location neutral worker...another priority that ties into community placemaking. Make workforce development a priority. Do everything possible to offer training and support for the business community.

Infrastructure: Public infrastructure is aging but this is not unusual compared to other communities and the on-going federal and state funding cuts. Increasing the population base for property and sales tax revenue is a goal as community members inherently understand because a growing population needs good public infrastructure at minimum. Next steps to growing the population to financially support infrastructure improvements is fine tuning local incentives such as waiving fees or streamlining permitting and fast-tracking projects to encourage new investment. Aligning local incentives with the available state programs will create more opportunities.

Economic Development

Building the Entrepreneurial Environment: With high speed fiber, business trainings, access to capital and a co-working space in town, Silverton is well poised to grow the entrepreneurial landscape. Attracting remote workers and new businesses will help feed this, but to do so there is a need for simple well written codes, and guidelines. Regulations and community processes can be daunting areas to navigate for businesses, so having strong support from economic development offices such as SJDA and a strong Chamber is crucial. In today’s changing world, jobs are following people rather than people following jobs. If community placemaking is successful, people will come, and they need the tools to create their own jobs. Make sure you have or can refer businesses to those tools. Many people who want to live and work in San Juan County have to create jobs for themselves in order to stay in the community.

Economic Gardening: Small businesses are more likely than large businesses to either never reopen after a major disaster or fail shortly after reopening. All businesses in San Juan County are considered small by SBA standards. Whether new or existing, businesses need support and education to help them develop and grow. One downfall of communities is they forget to pay attention

to the companies that are already there. Existing businesses are already invested and committed to a community. Growing local jobs creates opportunities for:

- Primary jobs- wealth generation
- Building local tax base
- Diversifying the economy
- Innovation

If existing businesses are not happy, then why would new businesses want to move to a community? Co-working, accelerators, educational and training opportunities are all important as is just recognition and marketing of small successes.

Business Expansion: Every big business was once a small business. San Juan County would see tremendous benefits if every business were able to support one additional employee. Expertise on how to add new products and services, expand into new territories, target new customer markets and tap into new sales and delivery channels is important. Having a local organization that can help connect businesses to local, regional and state expertise is important for the business community. This work has been started by SJDA and needs to continue into the future. Educating the business public to available resources and funding opportunities is critical, especially during and after a disaster or economic recession. Because the population base is small, it means there are many gaps currently in business and service opportunities. There is room for being a big fish in a small pond.

Business Recruitment: This is an area that is definitely a goal in San Juan County but can only be successful when the other foundations in the Economic Delta are successful and working well. If your current businesses are happy, they are your best ambassadors for new businesses looking at a community. If the community has political predictability and leadership, infrastructure and youth involvement, your job will be easier.

San Juan County already is seeing success in several community development areas with leadership and workforce development needing more work. These weak areas need to be prioritized moving forward as they are foundational to the economic development activities that San Juan County needs to develop and growth. There is entrepreneurship and some efforts in place for economic gardening “or growing your own”. Numerous community stakeholders have done a significant amount of work around place based and asset based economic development which works to create a place where people want to live. However, business expansion and recruitment, which are both goals for the community, are not yet happening. Solidifying all areas of this Economic Delta will create economic resiliency for San Juan County,

APPENDICES

Silverton Area Trails Plan -2019

Economic Impacts on Wildfire - 2018

Kendall Mountain Recreation Area Viability Assessment - 2018

416 Fire Survey 2018

San Juan County CDAP - 2018

Project Blueprint 2.0 – Expand Outdoor Recreation – Spring 2018

Low Snow Business Survey 2017-18

Economic Forecast Survey – 2017

San Juan County Economic Profile - CEDS 2016

San Juan Housing Market Study – 2015

Silverton Community Assessment (DCI) - 2012

San Juan Regional Planning Commission Master Plan - 2010