

# EL PASO COUNTY

COLORADO

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## EL PASO BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Re: WIOA Regional Planning Map Proposal

The spirit and intent of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) planning regions initiative is to better align and synchronize workforce and economic development resources to maximize economies of scale. The regional planning requirement is in keeping with the national need to develop a framework for future growth and development in the face of rapid population growth, demographic change and infrastructure needs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A major focus is the emergence of mega-regions – larger networks of regional areas where most of the population growth will take place.

The existing statewide Regional Planning Map as approved by the Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) segments the rural counties and key metropolitan areas into two distinct economic groups. Under the existing regional plan, some of those rural communities located adjacent to a strong Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) will not have the future benefit of inclusively partnering in broad economic development initiatives that will come with an expanded Colorado population and growing economy.

Futurists predict that the proposed South Central Planning Region, consisting of El Paso, Teller, and possibly Pueblo Counties, will be the core of rapid population expansion in the near future. The proposed reconfigured planning region will be better served by forming an alliance tied to the economic epicenter from which the regional growth will spawn.

Regards,

  
Amy Lathen                      12-22-15  
Amy Lathen                      Date

200 S. CASCADE AVENUE, SUITE 100  
OFFICE: (719) 520-7276  
WWW.ELPASOCO.COM



COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80903  
FAX: (719) 520-6397



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## EL PASO BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

December 21, 2015

To: Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC)

Re: request to form the South Central Planning Region

Sent via email: [cwdc@state.co.us](mailto:cwdc@state.co.us)

Dear Governor Hickenlooper and CWDC Executive Board,

This letter serves as an official request by the undersigned local elected officials to form a planning region which modifies the initial map created through the CWDC. The Counties proposed for inclusion in the South Central Planning Region are El Paso, Teller, and possibly Pueblo Counties.

### **Single labor market:**

The Counties generally share a single labor market. Geographic proximity and similar market conditions and economic drivers result in a single labor market for the proposed region.

### **Common economic development area:**

The local areas share common economic development drivers, including aerospace/defense, healthcare, information technology, manufacturing, medical innovation and technology, local business, nonprofits, the sports economy, tourism, mining, and agriculture.

### **Federal and non-Federal resources, including appropriate education and training institutions.**

The local areas are all served by WIOA funds and other Federal resources, efficient use of which will be promoted by coordinated planning across the proposed region. Education and training institutions serving the proposed area include: Pikes Peak Community College, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, Pueblo Community College, Colorado College, Colorado State University Pueblo, and numerous trade, administrative, and medical support training venues.

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**Commuting patterns:**

Significant numbers of workers routinely commute across their home counties and between counties. This is particularly the case for metropolitan areas with direct access to Interstate 25. Coordinated planning within the proposed region is necessary to serve the commuting workforce.

**Industrial composition:**

The proposed region requires a labor market with expertise in common industries, specifically including tourism/hospitality/gaming, industries serving the South Central Planning Region's military installations and their personnel, manufacturing, and mining.

**Location quotients:**

Each local area in the proposed planning region contains similar economic drivers and diverse requirements. The proposed planning region is known as a resort destination with a strong military presence and a growing commercial economy led by varying components, including the high-tech industry. The Rockies to the west provide a broad range of outdoor recreation and other entertainment activities. The proposed planning region will efficiently serve public and private sector demand for skilled employees, as well as the job-seeking public.

**Labor force conditions:**

The proposed planning region will encourage and enable local areas to effectively serve business needs by coordinating demand for existing skilled labor. Further, the job-seeking public in each local area will benefit from education and training activities across the region. The proposed planning region shares a need for labor expertise in healthcare and other skilled positions requiring specific training.

**Geographic boundaries:**

The Colorado population is the fourth fastest growing in the country, driven by the quality of life and strong economic outlook. The local areas within the proposed planning region exemplify this growth and the need for coordination within the region.

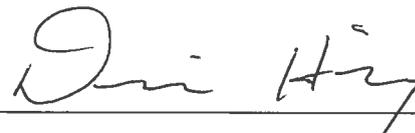




In conclusion, establishing a collaborative planning area consisting of El Paso, Teller, and possibly Pueblo Counties will promote more efficient use of Federal, State, and local resources in addressing labor supply and demand, and provide more effective and efficient service delivery to employers and job seekers in the region.

Respectfully Submitted,

 12-22-15  
Amy Lathen, Commissioner/Chair    Date

 12/21/15  
Dennis Hisey, Commissioner/Vice Chair    Date

