

February 2, 2026

Dear Members of the Selection Committee,

I am writing to express my interest in the board vacancy for the Moffat County Economic Development Advisory Board. As a born and raised resident of Craig, a local entrepreneur, and an economic development professional with more than ten years of experience working in transitioning communities, I care deeply about the future of Moffat County and the thoughtful, strategic use of the resources now available to support it.

Professionally, I currently serve as the Community and Economic Development Manager for the Colorado Office of Just Transition, where my work focuses on supporting coal impacted communities as they navigate economic transition. In that role, I was directly involved in the process that helped secure the funding and advance the broader concept behind this initiative. While my interest in serving on this board would be entirely in my personal capacity and on my own time, that background provides important context and insight into the intent of the funding and the responsibility that comes with stewarding this type of investment.

Beyond my work with the Office of Just Transition, I bring more than a decade of experience in economic development across public, nonprofit, and community based settings. My career has included work in community planning, business support, workforce and entrepreneurship programs, grant development and administration, and economic diversification efforts in rural and single industry communities. Throughout that time, I have worked closely with local governments, state agencies, businesses, lenders, and community stakeholders to design and implement programs that respond to real on the ground needs while remaining accountable to funding requirements and long term outcomes.

Equally important, I bring the perspective of a local business owner who has built, operated, and invested in multiple businesses in Craig. Growing a business in a rural community has given me firsthand experience with the realities of capital access, financing gaps, and the importance of thoughtful capital stacking. I understand how public and private dollars intersect, where infrastructure investments can unlock or constrain growth, and how workforce availability, housing, utilities, and regulatory environments directly affect business viability. That lived experience informs how I think about economic development investments not in theory, but in practice.

Serving on this board would allow me to bring both a strategic and practical lens to project evaluation and decision making. I believe this board plays a critical role in ensuring that economic development efforts in Moffat County are locally grounded, transparent, and focused on long term community benefit. My background allows me to assess opportunities with an understanding of funding structures, implementation risk, and community impact, while keeping local context and business realities front and center.

I also recognize that this board will function as a limited investment body in its first two years as interest accrues. I see this initial period as an important opportunity to focus on building the

foundation of the board itself by establishing clear processes, decision making frameworks, and evaluation criteria, while also advancing early attraction and positioning efforts. Using this time intentionally to align partners, clarify priorities, and prepare a strong project pipeline will be critical to ensuring that future investments are both strategic and impactful. I am particularly interested in contributing to this foundational phase and helping set the board up for long term effectiveness.

Thank you for your consideration. I would welcome the opportunity to further discuss my interest and how I could support the work of the board.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kirstie McPherson".

Kirstie McPherson
kirstie@edeveco.com
970-629-5915
PO Box 334
Craig, Colorado

KIRSTIE MCPHERSON

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CONTACT

📞 970-629-5915

✉ kirstie@edeveco.com

📍 Craig, Colorado

🌐 <https://www.linkedin.com/in/kirstie-mcpherson-15033157/>

Strategic economic development and business development leader with 10+ years of experience driving community revitalization, utility partnerships, and private-sector investment in transitioning energy communities. As a behavioral economist and developer, I bring an uncommon combination of market insight, on-the-ground development experience, and deep fluency in energy transition dynamics. Proven success building cross-sector partnerships, navigating public-private deal structures, and selling complex initiatives across utilities, industrial clients, and rural economies. Known for transforming overlooked markets into thriving investment-ready opportunities.

EDUCATION

2020-2025

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

- Economic Development Institute
- In Progress IEDC CEcD Certification

2017-2019

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

- Masters of Behavioral Economics

2012-2015

MONTANA TECH UNIVERSITY

- Bachelor of Science Business Management
- Bachelor of Science Business Marketing

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

Colorado Office of Just Transition

2021 - PRESENT

Community and Economic Development Manager

Lead state-level economic strategy for communities impacted by coal plant and mine closures across Colorado. Responsible for designing and managing transition efforts that align utility, state, and private-sector goals to replace lost jobs and tax base. Oversee community engagement, developer negotiations, and attraction of industry partners in clean energy, advanced manufacturing, and local entrepreneurship.

- Built and led community revitalization strategies for multiple coal-transition towns (Craig, West End, Morgan County), partnering with utilities and local government on site reuse, infrastructure, and incentive alignment.
- Designed and implemented the state's Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) model and entrepreneur support programs to strengthen energy transition economies.
- Navigated complex utility and local government relationships to advance clean energy redevelopment and site planning on former fossil-fuel sites.
- Collaborated with DOLA, OEDIT, CHFA, and SBDCs on incentives, workforce, and infrastructure deployment.
- Routinely present at statewide and national convening on coal transition, energy policy, and rural revitalization.

Edeveco

2014 - PRESENT

Founder & Principal Consultant

Independent consulting firm helping rural communities, utilities, and developers align economic development with energy transition goals. Provide technical assistance, community engagement strategies, and behavioral economics-informed frameworks for utility and site readiness.

SKILLS

- Utility & Energy Transition Strategy
- Economic & Community Development
- Business Development & Sales Leadership
- Coal-to-Renewables Transition Planning
- Stakeholder & Regulatory Navigation
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Demand-Side Management (DSM) Alignment
- Site Selection & Incentive Structuring
- Developer & Industrial Engagement
- Grant Management & Program Design
- Community-Led Project Implementation
- Western U.S. Regional Expertise

WORK EXPERIENCE CONT.

Entrepreneur & Real Estate Developer 2016 - PRESENT
Multiple Businesses: 518 Wine Bar, The Find, Bad Alibi Distillery, others.

Founded and scaled multiple businesses across rural Northwest Colorado. Managed full lifecycle of site development, permitting, construction, licensing, utility coordination, and operations. Successfully exited key ventures and reinvested in new place-based enterprises.

- Negotiated utility access, permitting, and infrastructure for ground-up developments and adaptive reuse projects.
- Worked directly with city utilities, inspectors, and planning/zoning boards on licensing, interconnection, and approvals.
- Developed site plans aligned with long-term DSM, water/energy usage, and code compliance requirements.
- Achieved 6- and 7-figure growth in real estate portfolio and business assets across multiple sectors.
- Built brands rooted in community culture, tourism, and adaptive reuse.

Itasca Economic Development Corporation 2021- 2022
Economic Recovery & Industry Development Lead (EDA-Funded) | Grand Rapids, MN

Recruited to support economic recovery and industrial transition efforts in the wake of the Boswell Energy Center coal plant closure. Led strategic planning, business retention and expansion (BRE) outreach, and industrial site redevelopment with a focus on new industry attraction and workforce stabilization in Itasca County and surrounding communities.

- Directed BRE outreach across the region, engaging with over 100 businesses to assess challenges, identify expansion opportunities, and connect companies to local/state incentives and support.
 - Spearheaded concept and planning for an industrial maker space and innovation hub, aimed at fostering small-scale advanced manufacturing and supporting displaced energy workers.
 - Collaborated with utility representatives, regional planners, and state agencies to assess infrastructure readiness and market gaps for large-scale industrial attraction.
 - Conducted feasibility analysis for industrial site redevelopment on and near Boswell-adjacent properties, incorporating workforce data, transmission capacity, and potential re-use strategies.
 - Represented IEDC in regional stakeholder sessions to align recovery strategies across public, private, and philanthropic sectors.
 - Supported EDA grant compliance, reporting, and performance measurement related to economic recovery deliverables.
 - Positioned the community for long-term industry diversification by integrating clean tech, light manufacturing, and innovation space planning into broader redevelopment efforts.
-

SERVICE

Craig Chamber of Commerce – Board President - Present

- Guide organizational strategy, membership growth, and economic advocacy.

Craig Concert Association – President / Marketing & Events Lead - Present

- Oversee concert programming, membership development, and community arts engagement.

Yampa Valley Community Foundation – Impact Investment Committee Member - Present

- Provide oversight for community impact investments and grant allocations.

Moffat County College District Board – Present (2019-2024)

- Support higher education accessibility and workforce pipeline development.

Startup Weekend West Slope (Colorado) – Steering Committee Member (2022-2024)

- Mentor entrepreneurs and foster rural innovation ecosystems.

Local Volunteerism

- Organizer of cultural and community events including Welcome to the Neighborhood, and placemaking initiatives.
- Active supporter of regional nonprofits, arts organizations, and small business mentorship programs.

SELECT PROJECT EXPERIENCE

- Business Park Market Research & Feasibility – Led regional assessments and demand studies for new business park concepts across rural communities. Evaluated utility infrastructure, zoning compatibility, incentive layering, and decarbonization potential. Delivered actionable site plans to local governments and developers.
- Site Certification & Community Readiness Training – Designed and facilitated customized site readiness workshops and certification preparation programs for towns across Colorado. Equipped community leaders with tools to evaluate utilities, permitting, incentives, and marketing positioning.
- Immersive Economic Development Site Visits – Developed and hosted multi-day immersion programs for state and local partners to explore industrial site opportunities, coal-to-renewables transitions, and utility-aligned project scoping in communities such as Craig, West End, and Morgan County.
- Behavioral Economics Applied to Economic Development – Created innovative community engagement tools that incorporate behavioral insights into attraction, BRE, and entrepreneurship programs. Integrated nudge strategies into policy recommendations and site investment prioritization.
- Bad Alibi Distillery + Adaptive Reuse – Directed redevelopment of a vacant automotive site into a destination distillery and cocktail lounge. Navigated complex liquor licensing, utility separation, structural upgrades, and regulatory approvals.
- Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) Program Design – Developed and piloted a community-facing CRM and reporting tool for business support efforts. Created custom metrics, engagement workflows, and community branding aligned with long-term utility and economic development goals.
- Public-Private Partnership Facilitation – Supported coordination between municipalities, private developers, and state funding agencies to align infrastructure investments with shovel-ready projects and job creation targets.