

# **Craig Economic Development Manager Reporting – January to June 2024**

## ***Economic Development Advisory Committee***

January – The EDAC was presented with the two articles that were published in Business View Magazine and the GMI Post. The Committee also reviewed and approved the 2024 Vision and Mission Statements as well as the 2024 Goals. Updates were given on the real estate database, the digital awareness marketing campaign and the demolition of the former Moffat County Courthouse. The December 2023 budget was reviewed and discussed. A vacancy on the Committee was discussed and the Committee agreed to move forward with posting an announcement to fill the vacancy.

February – Due to inclement weather, the February meeting was cancelled.

March – Two, new Committee applications were received to fill the 1 vacant position. The lead summary, SEO, web analytics and digital awareness campaign reports were reviewed for the website. An external audience campaign strategy was also reviewed with direction to move forward with the proposed campaign. The January 2024 budget was reviewed and discussed. The Committee agreed, for the time being, to discontinue the quarterly joint meetings with the EDAC, Chamber and LMD Board members as there are representatives from each of those entities that attend the EDAC meetings and can report back to the subsequent Boards. The EDAC also hosted students at the March meeting that are enrolled in the advanced business class at Moffat County High School. There was good discussion and interaction between the Committee and the business students regarding some ideas for the 2024 Business Plan Competition. The Committee also recommended moving forward with both of the submitted Committee applications, and appointing one to replace the current vacancy, and one to serve as an alternate.

April – The March 2024 budget was reviewed and discussed. Both of the Committee applications were approved by City Council to be appointed to the EDAC. The monthly lead summary report, SEO, analytics and digital campaign reports were reviewed. The lead summary report that was generated as a result of the digital awareness campaign was reviewed as well. These leads, as well as other frequent visitors and target business sectors), will be used for the business opportunity attraction campaign that was also discussed and planned to launch in June. An update on the status of the Regional Transportation Authority was given by Randy Looper.

May – The May meeting was cancelled due to the Memorial Day Holiday

## ***CURA***

The two CURA projects for the Bad Alibi Distillery in URA #2 and Ann's Authentic Thai/Unit 301 Sports Bar and Grill in URA #1 are still progressing.

## ***Brownfields Assessment Grant***

April - Shannon Scott, Mike Scholl and Christina Heigel with Ayres and Associates as well as Stacey Ericksen with the EPA spoke as panelists at the Colorado Brownfields Conference held in Arvada about

the 8<sup>th</sup> St. Townhome project and how they were able to utilize the Brownfields assessment grant to help kickstart that project.

May – City Staff received notification that they were not awarded the \$500,000 Brownfields assessment and remediation grant that they had applied for in the fall of 2023. Were told that their application was very strong, but that there were a lot of competitive grants this go round. Were advised to apply for the next round of funding in the fall of 2024.

## ***Housing***

### ***8<sup>th</sup> St. Project***

January – Cornerstone Realty was selected as the preferred real estate broker that the CHA will utilize to sell the townhomes after submitting the best qualified response to the RFP that was issued, and participating in an in-person interview with the selection committee.

April - The box setting event for the 8<sup>th</sup> St. project was held with great attendance and overall reception. Construction is anticipated to be completed mid-August 2024

April – A homebuyer’s education course was held and hosted by The Housing Resources of Western Colorado with the Bank of Colorado as the sponsor. There were 16 attendees, and each earned a certificate of completion after the course that allows them to access down payment assistance programs from Chfa and other housing lending programs.

June – A lunch and learn was held at Memorial Regional Health along with Cornerstone Realty and the Bank of Colorado to talk to the hospital staff about the project.

July – A grand opening will be held sometime in July.

CHA and City Staff also continue to work with Bank of Colorado and Cross-Country Mortgage, LLC as the preferred lenders for the 8<sup>th</sup> St. project.

### ***Woodbury Housing Project***

Mid- 2023 – City/CHA staff began working with a private developer to construct a 96-120 unit, for rent, apartment complex at the Woodbury West site.

February – Mayor Nichols along with Peter Brixius and Shannon Scott travelled to Manitou Springs to present on behalf of the DOLA – More Housing Now Grant that was applied for back in December of 2023 in the amount of \$1,931,283. This grant will cover public infrastructure and a multi-modal transit center at the development.

March – City/CHA staff were notified that we were awarded the full amount of the grant request.

January – April – Numerous public outreach sessions and workshops were held to discuss the project.

May – City/CHA Staff were instructed to pursue other available properties outside of the Woodbury West and Woodbury East sites for the development.

June – The private developer was able to make contact with the current owner of the “Carpenter Leasing” property. An offer was made, and the developer currently has the property under contract.

The City is helping assist with the Phase I assessment and ALTA surveys which are currently underway. A new LOI is being drafted. The City will also help with a Geotechnical survey and Topographic survey. A draft site plan has been submitted and is currently being reviewed for feasibility.

### ***Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)***

March – The final feasibility study was completed. Representatives and elected officials with all the entities involved with the study, (including Hayden, Moffat County, Oak Creek, Yampa) and the original entities, Craig, Steamboat Springs and Routt County, met to discuss the next steps.

March – The Steering Committee and Project Management team handed off the feasibility study and next steps to elected officials representing each of entities to determine public outreach/education efforts, ballot timing etc.

### ***Marketing/Promotion***

#### ***Economic Development Website***

January – Marketing Alliance launched a 3-month, social media awareness campaign to generate traffic and visibility to the website.

May – Marketing Alliance also created a value proposition strategy, and a targeted, business attraction campaign. This audience will be comprised of the most frequent visitors to the website and selected, targeted industries, (i.e., manufacturing, agriculture, aerospace, outdoor recreation and tourism, and retail and entrepreneurship).

June – The business attraction campaign launched and will run for 3 months. Marketing Alliance will also be running a simultaneous, targeted, Google Ads campaign for the 8<sup>th</sup> St. Townhomes from June until August.

### ***Business Plan Competition***

This will be the second year that the EDAC and the Northwest Colorado Small Business Development Center will host the Craig Business Plan Competition for businesses in Craig and Moffat County. The Competition kickoff event will be July 11<sup>th</sup> from 6-7 p.m. at the Center of Craig. Grant monies were secured from the local marketing district totaling \$30,000 for the winners in the startup category and existing category. This year, the Competition will consist of two phases instead of three. Phase one will be the Business Overview and Draft Business Plan, which will be due on August 12<sup>th</sup>. If selected to move forward, Phase II will be the Final Business Plan and Presentation. The Final Business Plan will be due on September 30<sup>th</sup> and the in-person presentations will be held on October 5<sup>th</sup>. More information along with the guidelines and application documents can be found at <https://discovercraig.com/business-resources/2024-craig-business-plan-competition/>.

### ***Craig Business & Industrial Park***

March – City staff was notified that they were awarded the \$2.5M Congressionally Directed Spending grant that was applied for in the summer of 2023 for horizontal infrastructure buildout at the Park.

April – City staff had a call with OJT to let them know that the CDS grant funding had been awarded and that they had submitted a letter of intent to the current property owner to purchase the land. (OJT told City staff that they were waiting for the CDS grant to be officially awarded and the City to submit a letter of intent or have the property under contract before they would release the \$1,031,000 in grant monies that was applied for). City staff was then notified that a private developer had also put in an offer on the property. Currently, City staff and the private developer are working together in a public/private partnership to acquire the property. OJT has been notified that the City would still like to utilize the \$1,031,000 of funding requested to purchase the property. The private developer is currently working on a survey of the property, as well as the Phase I environmental assessment.

### ***Additional Notes***

January – June – Attended the EDCC Communications Committee, EDCC Membership Committee and monthly EDCC Board of Director meetings. Also attended the yearly EDCC Board of Directors meeting held in Westminster in January.

Attended the monthly Craig/Moffat County/Tri-State Energy Transition meetings with the Great Plains Institute.

Attended the monthly Chamber of Commerce Board meetings.

Attended the monthly NWCDC Board meetings.

Attended the monthly LMD meetings.

January - Helped participate as a member of the selection committee for the Regional Economic Development website lead by the NWCDC.

February – Attended the Moffat County Leadership Training. Helped organize and attend the USDA Let's Talk Shop Event held at the Center of Craig.

April – Attended the Colorado Brownfields conference in Arvada as a panelist speaker to talk about the 8<sup>th</sup> St. Townhome project.