



MANITOU SPRINGS

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

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Approved by:
Board of Directors

25 July 2019

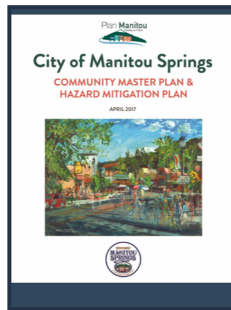
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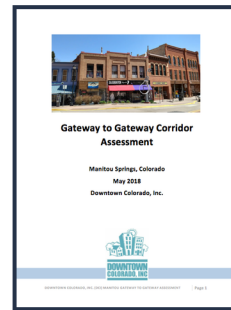
PREVIOUS PLANS:

These existing community plans informed this economic development planning effort..



Plan Manitou (2017):

Our tourism-based economy is evolving to meet current and future needs with a range of active organizations. Plan Manitou actions support the viability of the City's Downtown, and a new and reinvigorated Urban Renewal Area. We are applying tools and resources to assist existing businesses, and to support the evolution of new ventures to meet changing demographic needs and promote a more sustainable and resilient economic base.



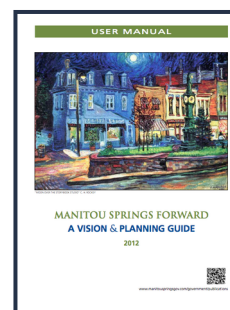
DCI Gateway to Gateway Assessment (2018):

The Chamber of Commerce engaged DCI to conduct an assessment to assist in building stronger partnerships and capacity with successful implementation of the high-quality existing plans within the community. This document builds on Plan Manitou and offers recommendations to the Chamber and other organizations to meet their stated goals.



El Paso County Economic Development Assessment Team Report (2014):

This report presents the findings of a team convened by the Federal Emergency Management and Economic Development Administrations. This document offers suggestions related to disaster recovery and general economic development strategies to be used in future planning and implementation efforts to improve the economy of Manitou Springs.



Manitou Springs Forward: A Vision and Planning Guide (2012)

The introduction to this plan starts out: "Ours is a model collaborative community committed to economic vitality and sustainability. We preserve and protect our heritage and natural beauty and are renowned for our arts, culture, lifelong learning, and well-being."

INTRODUCTION

This plan offers guidance to the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau & Office of Economic Development by creating a two year action-plan for the Chamber in support of the definitions, visions, and plans of the City of Manitou Springs.

Our Economic Development Strategic Plan is the intentional creation of a roadmap to guide future economic growth; support economic, environmental and social sustainability; and assure that the City remains resilient and financially vibrant in the face of current and future challenges, changes, and development. We are using our collaborative resources to plan for our community's economic vitality.

This Plan is supported by the work of others: Plan Manitou, DCI's Gateway to Gateway Assessment, the El Paso County 2014 Economic Development Assessment Team Report with the help of FEMA, and a committee of dedicated volunteers and staff.



MANITOU SPRINGS HAS MANY
UNIQUE ADVANTAGES.

**CLOSE TO NATURAL
WONDERS**



**NATIONAL
HISTORIC DISTRICT**



**MINERAL
DRINKING SPRINGS**



**CERTIFIED
CREATIVE DISTRICT**



**UNIQUE SHOPPING
AND DINING**



**WALKABLE
DOWNTOWN**



History and ECONOMY

The local economy in Manitou Springs is historically tourism dependent and draws heavily upon natural assets. Tourists first arrived from plains communities to the east to take in the mineral springs, fresh air, and mountain scenery. The development of additional attractions such as the Pikes Peak Cog Railway and conveniences such as car lodges along US-24 ushered in a new era of tourism, supplementing the natural amenities.

The modern era saw new developments expanding tourism opportunities. Beginning in the 1970s, a concerted effort began to rebuild Manitou Springs' image as a premiere family-friendly mountain summer destination. Later, the Chamber developed unique special events to draw crowds into the shoulder seasons. In the early 2000s, Colorado pivoted toward outdoor recreation, which saw the development and legalization of the Manitou Incline and increased competition from other Colorado destinations.

What is Economic Development?

Economic Development is conscious planning that supports living, working, and playing in Manitou Springs. It connects us to our art, culture, heritage, businesses, and natural assets. A strong economy that provides quality, year-round jobs requires strategic planning, tools to support our economic endeavors, and coordinated, city-wide efforts.

Current Chamber Projects & Campaigns

VISITOR INFORMATION

- Staff and operate Visitors Bureau.
- Create/disperse visitor and member newsletters.
- Create and distribute annual Visitors Guide and Downtown Map.

MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

Vital to maintaining our current visitation.

- **Construction-free Manitou:** Manitou Ave is open for business and free from construction.
- **Shop Manitou:** Rewarding local shoppers for supporting local businesses in the off-season.
- **Manitou Made:** Highlight locally made goods to drive sales benefiting local shops and talent.

REVOLVING LOAN FUND

- Supports businesses impacted by construction and utility work.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- Increase visitation in shoulder- and off-seasons.
- The Chamber continues to add events, including several in the high-season.

NEW WEBSITE

- To better highlight members, attractions, and events to drive visitation to Manitou Springs.
- To remain a leading source of information for the Manitou Springs area.

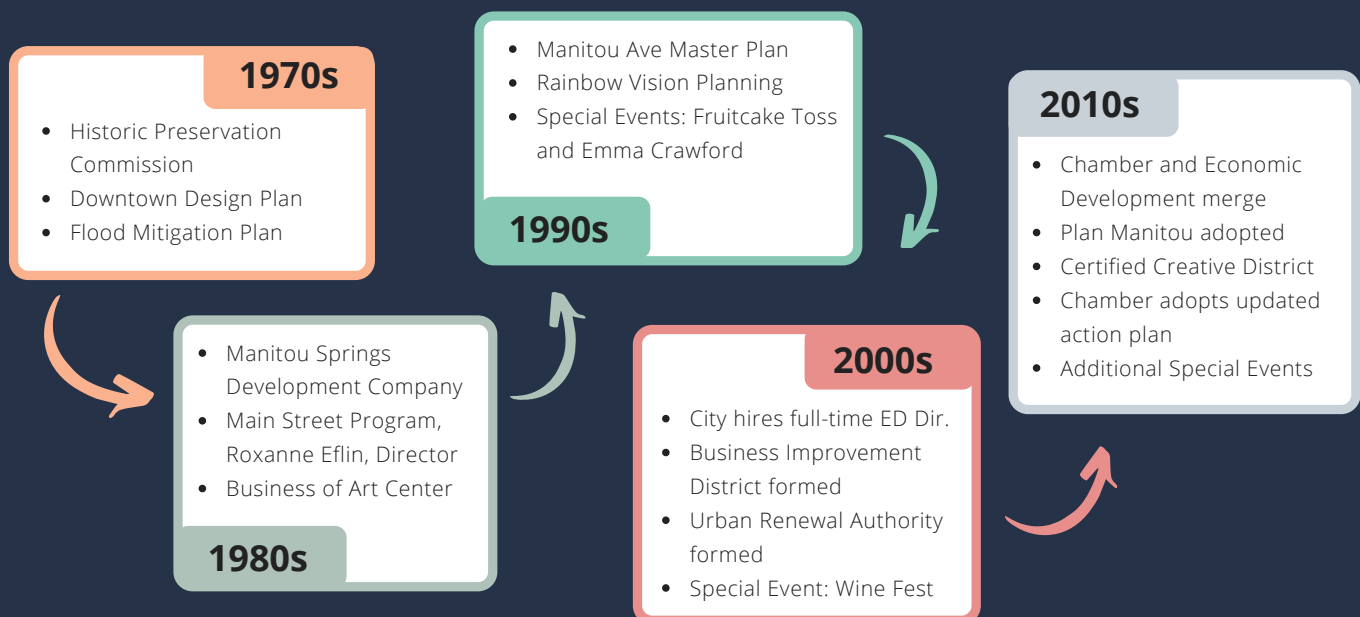
BUSINESS RESOURCE

- Emergency notification and support and mitigation of unforeseen events & natural disasters.
- Counterfeit and other training for businesses/staff.

BUSINESS ADVOCATE

- Liaison to City Council and other groups.
- Represent business interests in community.

A VISUAL HISTORY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



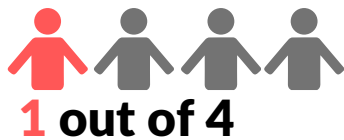
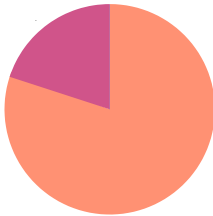
Looking Forward



Avg. change in Healthcare costs and income, 2000-2016³

80%

of small business workers in Colorado lack access to a retirement savings plan.²



Approx. number of Coloradans insured through Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).³

Future Economic Considerations

Business is booming in El Paso County, contributing to rising home prices and cost of living. Between 2000 and 2016, Colorado families earning at or less than the county median saw household costs rise faster than income.¹ Since 2004, the share of Coloradans in low-wage jobs grew 69%,¹ and 45% of Colorado workers today lack access to a workplace retirement plan.²

Manitou Springs has struggled to attract/maintain a quality workforce. This is in part due to the high cost of local housing and the seasonal employment. As a result, the workforce is largely commuter, adding obstacles like employee parking. It is important for the City to monitor city- and state-wide trends to better understand the future needs of our workforce.

At the same time, changes are happening in the tourism industry. As Colorado becomes an increasingly popular destination, the sustainability of our natural and cultural assets are threatened. Our physical landscape is at risk to natural disaster, from forest fires to extreme weather events. The long-term success of Manitou Springs depends on understanding consumer behavior and repositioning to meet these trends.



¹ "Briefed by the Bell: Wages," The Bell Policy Center, last modified July 17, 2018, <http://www.bellpolicy.org/2018/07/17/briefed-by-the-bell-wages/>

² "Briefed by the Bell: Predatory Economy," The Bell Policy Center, last modified September 10, 2018, <http://www.bellpolicy.org/2018/09/10/predatory-economy/>

³ "Briefed by the Bell: Healthcare," The Bell Policy Center, last modified December 17, 2018, <http://www.bellpolicy.org/2018/12/17/health-care-brief/>

into the **FUTURE**

Future Tourism Trends and Considerations

GENERATIONAL VISITATION⁴

Baby Boomers

- Anticipated travel spending of \$6,621.
- 66% will stay in a hotel/motel, 10% in a VRBO.

Gen X

- Anticipated travel spending of \$5,400.

Millennials

- Anticipated travel spending of \$4,403
- 53% said sustainability an important choice in choosing travel destination.

TOURISM TRENDS

- Autonomous Vehicles
- Traditional Retail vs. Experiences
- Changing demographics and the impact on Bed & Breakfasts
- Increased summer tourism competition

SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT

- Climate Change and impacts - on tourism and economic resiliency
- Sustainability/Environmental and Eco Tourism > Colorado Tourism Roadmap
- Record number of visitors in Colorado

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS 2019/2020

- Westside Avenue Action Plan (WAAP) Complete
- Manitou Ave Park to Serpentine (MAPS) Underway
- Beckers Lane Bridge
- Cañon Ave Bridge

Potential Construction:

- Ruxton Ave
- Crystal Park Road
- Creek Walk Trail



43%

Of Colorado Visitors say sustainability is important in choosing vacation destinations.⁵

An increase in economic dependence on tourism...



...leads to a decrease in resident attitudes toward tourism.⁶

86 Million



Colorado Visitors in 2017, **41%** increase from 2009.⁵

4. Vicki Gelfeld, "2019 Boomer Travel Trends," AARP Research, last modified December 2018, <https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00263.001>

5. "Colorado Tourism Sets All-Time Records for Eighth Consecutive Year," Colorado Tourism Office, last modified June 28, 2018, <https://www.colorado.com/news/colorado-tourism-sets-all-time-records-eighth-consecutive-year>

6. Michael D Smith and Richard S Krannich, "Tourism Dependence and Resident Attitudes," *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 25, No.4 (1998): 783-802, [doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383\(98\)00040-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(98)00040-1)

STRENGTHS

- Manitou & Pikes Peak Cog Railway
- Manitou Incline
- Natural assets: Mineral Springs, Pikes Peak, Garden of the Gods
- Built environment / Walkable Historic Downtown
- Location - Highway and Region
- "Be You in Manitou"
- Diverse shopping - not Amazon
- Arts and Culture community

Our city's current profit model requires more tourists to visit.

This is not sustainable and limits future economic growth.

WEAKNESSES

- Cog under construction
- Road construction
- Incline Management
- Aging Infrastructure - historic buildings, bridges, and walls
- Transportation / Parking
- Land constraints
- Getting / supporting quality workforce

OPPORTUNITIES

- Regional collaboration / Creative Corridor
- National Historic District
- Transportation technology and management
- Natural Environment / Outdoor recreation
- Academic partners - MSSD14 and local universities

THREATS

- Natural Disasters
- Location / next to Colorado Springs
- Parking
- Tourism Competition
- Technology
- Increasing business / labor costs
- Lack of available / affordable housing

NEEDS

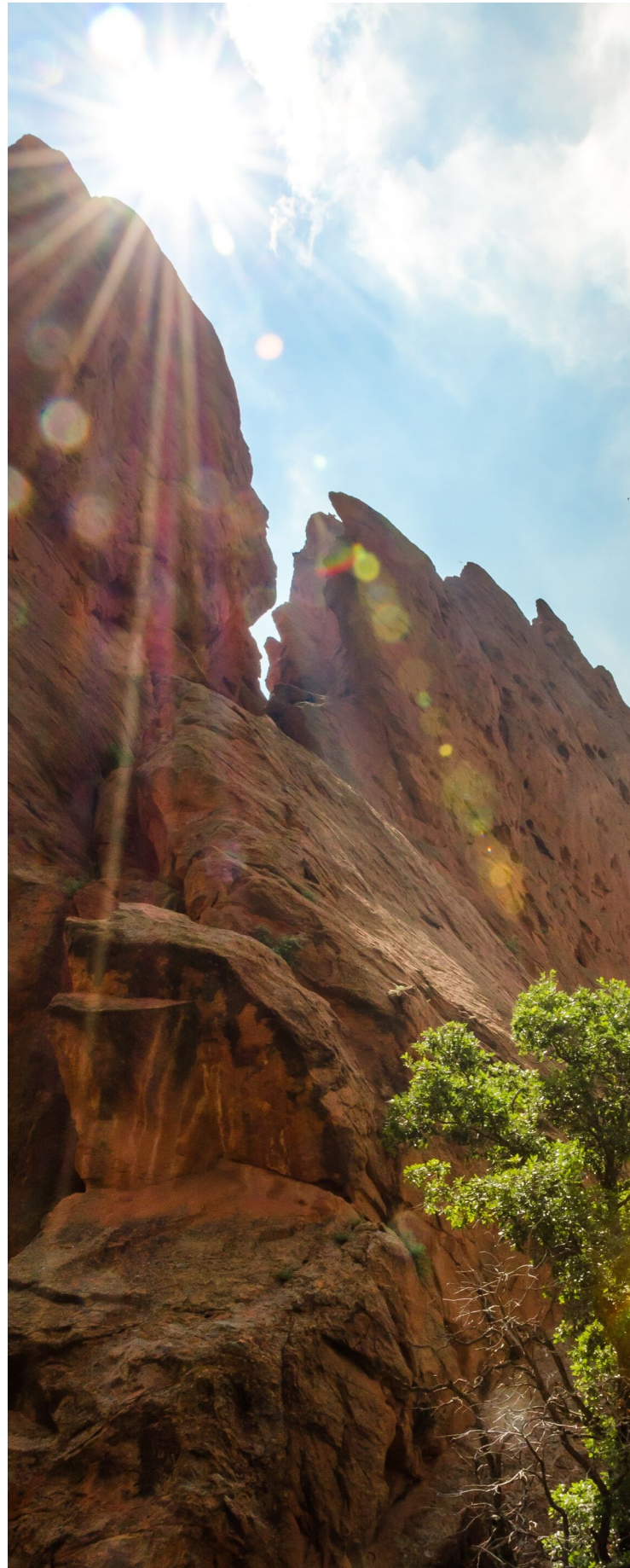
Staff, Time, Money, and Data
Feedback / info from businesses
Support to complete action items

CONCLUSION

Creating a sustainable economy that protects our unique tourism assets while supporting the needs of our residents will be integral to the future success of the City of Manitou Springs.

With a historically tourism-based economy primarily focused on growing visitor numbers, adjusting our economic development model will take time and collaboration. With limited resources, the Chamber of Commerce cannot act alone and is committed to engaging partners in setting the foundation for economic success in Manitou Springs.

The Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce commits to building a sustainable and resilient local economy and to supporting the business and resident communities that make Manitou Springs a great place to live, work, and visit. This plan will be updated as necessary to reflect changing needs and trends to ensure continued forward progress.



Resources

"Briefed by the Bell: Predatory Economy." The Bell Policy Center. Last modified September 10, 2018. <http://www.bellpolicy.org/2018/09/10/predatory-economy/>

"Briefed by the Bell: Wages." The Bell Policy Center. Last modified July 17, 2018. <http://www.bellpolicy.org/2018/07/17/briefed-by-the-bell-wages/>

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Gelfeld, Vicki. "2019 Boomer Travel Trends." AARP Research. Last modified December 2018. <https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00263.001>

Smith, Michael D and Krannich, Richard S. "Tourism Dependence and Resident Attitudes." *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 25, No.4 (1998): 783-802. [doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383\(98\)00040-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(98)00040-1)

Additional Resources

Colorado Tourism Roadmap. Colorado Tourism Office. Adopted March 15, 2017. https://www.colorado.com/sites/default/master/files/2017CTORoadmap_FINAL.pdf

"Sustainable Tourism Toolkit." Colorado Tourism Office. Accessed June 18, 2019. <https://industry.colorado.com/sustainable-tourism-toolkit>

Local Partners and Collaborations

- Age-friendly Manitou
- Business Improvement District
- Business Owners
- Citizens Advisory Committee
- Colorado Tourism Office
- Colorado Dept. of Local Affairs
- City of Colorado Springs / Visit Colorado Springs
- City of Manitou Springs / City Website
- Housing Advisory Board
- Manitou Art Center
- Manitou Metro District
- Manitou Springs Heritage Center
- Manitou Springs Historical Society / Miramont Castle
- Manitou Springs Planning Dept
- Manitou Springs School District 14
- Pedestrian and Cycle Manitou
- Pikes Peak Library District / Manitou Springs Library
- Pikes Peak Region Attractions
- Transportation and Mobility Study
- Urban Renewal Authority and URA Director
- WAAP, MAPS, and other projects

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MANITOU SPRINGS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN APPENDIX



GOALS and ACTIONS

2019 CHAMBER GOALS

These goals represent the the goals of the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, ranked by the board in order of importance. The final two initiatives will be pursued independently by the Manitou Springs Creative District.

- 1. Invite Economic Development partners and collaborators to report at Chamber meetings.**

Board President, Executive Director

- 2. Regional / Tourism Sustainability Planning**

Chamber Board and Staff, City of Manitou Springs, Planning Department, Outdoor Recreation groups

- 3. Provide resources and support for new businesses to navigate hiring, permits, and government regulations.**

Chamber Board / Staff, AmeriCorps VISTA, Business Owners

- 4. Secure Gateway / Highway 24 Signage.**

Emergency Economic Development Group

- 5. Research expanding or increasing the assessment of the Business Improvement District.**

Chamber Board, AmeriCorps VISTA, BID Board

- 6. Research the impact of VRBOs and AirBnBs on Manitou Springs, including how to help navigate permitting and licensing.**

Chamber Board, Hospitality owners, AmeriCorps VISTA, and Planning Department

- 7. Evaluate the sustainability of Special Events - What is the return on investment and do they meet economic development goals?**

Chamber Staff - Ex. Dir. and Special Event Coordinator

- 8. Build a *Block Captain* program in downtown Manitou Springs, identify business-owner champions.**

AmeriCorps VISTA, Chamber Board and Downtown Business Owners

- 9. Develop an employee strategy: Insurance, Living Wage, Retirement, Getting good people - including how to ensure they can live AND work in town.**

Manitou Springs Creative District and Emergency Economic Development Workgroup

- 10. Create a plan/toolkit to support restaurants and restaurant equipment in Manitou Springs.**

Emergency Economic Development Team, Restaurant Owners, Chamber Board/Staff, and Planning Department..

.....

- 11. Downtown Partnership Plan and 501(c)3**

Manitou Springs Creative District

- 12. Understanding Retail Mix: Event with Downtown Colorado, Inc.**

Manitou Springs Creative District

2019 ACTION STEPS

Before July 1st, 2019

1. PRIORITIZE GOALS.

Before September 1st, 2019

2. PRESENT PLAN TO MANITOU SPRINGS CITY COUNCIL.

Before October 1st, 2019

3. DETERMINE FIRST ACTIONS FOR EACH GOAL.

4. IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS, WILLING PARTNERS, AND WORKGROUPS.

5. COMPLETE FIRST ACTIONS AND REPORT TO CHAMBER BOARD.

Before December 1st, 2019

6. CREATE AN ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN AND A TIMELINE FOR PROJECT COMPLETION.

As tasks are completed, but no less than annually.

7. SUBMIT A SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND A PLAN FOR THE FOLLOWING YEAR.



DATE: _____
PROJECT: _____

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

GOALS FOR NEXT PERIOD:

DATE: _____
PROJECT: _____

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

GOALS FOR NEXT PERIOD:

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MANITOU SPRINGS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, VISITORS BUREAU &
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT