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| **2018 Annual Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and Progress Report** |
| **Project Number**  **ED16DEN3020023**  **Period Covered by the Report**  **January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2018** |
| **Date of Report**  **December 28, 2018** |

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Annual Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

**And Progress Report**

# **Section I: Adjustments**

The San Luis Valley Development Resources Group’s primary service area is comprised of six counties: Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Rio Grande/Mineral, and Saguache. These counties, commonly known as the San Luis Valley, are located in the south central part of Colorado in the 3rd Congressional District.

The Spring Fire in Costilla County during the last of June and first week of July burned over 108,000 acres and destroyed over 140 structures. The closure of US Highway 160 over La Veta Pass during the fire had a negative impact on the local tourist economy. Long term, the property loss will have a significant effect on local property tax revenues.

Unemployment in the Valley continues to trend above the state average of 3.2%, with the exception of Mineral County. Rates for 2018 ranged from 2.6% in Mineral County, the region’s least populous, to 4.1% in Costilla County.

Renewable energy continues to be a bright spot in the region’s economy. Five utility-scale solar plants, all located in Alamosa County, produce 136.7 Megawatts of electricity, enough to power 22,418 home. Three additional solar plants have been permitted by Alamosa County but construction has yet to begin. These proposed plants would generate an additional 155 Megawatts of electricity.

Agriculture is the driving force in the Valley’s economy, accounting for 29% of the region’s base economy. The primary crops produced are potatoes, alfalfa, barley, as well as cattle. In 2015 alone, the estimated production value of the Valley’s top three crops – potatoes, alfalfa and barley – was over $357 million. All three crops are heavily reliant on groundwater irrigation, which depends on an annual recharge from rivers and streams fed by mountain snow. However, drought conditions in the last decade have reduced the recharge, resulting in serious depletions of the aquifer.

To alleviate and correct the depletions, Colorado Division of Water Resources promulgated a rule governing the withdrawal of groundwater in the San Luis Valley. The new rule is likely to affect crop production in the region and could mean the fallowing thousands of acres of irrigated cropland, or changing crop production.

SLVDRG, through the San Luis Valley Council of Governments, commissioned an economic impact analysis of the effects of reduced crop production due to reduced irrigated on the region’s economy. The analysis produced an input/output model that can be used to estimate the economic effects to the regional and county economies of changes in crop production.

Proximity Malt, LLC is building a new regional craft malting plant in Rio Grande County intended to serve craft brewers and specialty malt users. Production is now underway at the new plant, which employs 32 people. The San Luis Valley is a major producer of malt barley for Molson-Coors.

Agricultural commodities were stable this fall with alfalfa around $190/T and cattle leveling after peaking at record highs in previous years. Potatoes, the region’s number one crop in value, were on par with 2017.

Population density is sparse, 5.61 persons per square mile (as of 2010), with 46,027 people calling the San Luis Valley home. This represents a decline of 0.35% since the 2000 census. Only two counties have shown any growth, Alamosa and Saguache, while Conejos, Costilla, Rio Grande, and Mineral counties have declined. Mineral County recorded the largest loss in population over the past decade of 14.32%.

Per Capita Personal Income for 2010 in the Valley was $29,267, about 70% of the state’s PCPI of $42,107. Over 15% of families in the county live under the poverty level. Around 47% of the San Luis Valley population is Hispanic and nearly 30% speak Spanish at home. Over half of the land mass is owned by the federal government and the State of Colorado.

# **Section II: 2018 Governing Board**

**San Luis Valley Development Resources Group Executive Board**

**Ty Coleman** - Chairman, Mayor, City of Alamosa, Rio Grande Savings & Loan

**Mike Yohn** – Vice Chairman, Alamosa County Commissioner, Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium

**Lawrence Pacheco** – Secretary/Treasurer, Costilla County Commissioner

**Ashley Valdez** – Area Manager for Community & Local Affairs, Xcel Energy

**Jack Wiley** – Trinidad State Junior College, Dean of Instruction

**Ken Anderson** – Saguache County Commissioner

**Kent Curtis** – Chief Executive Officer, First Southwest Bank

**Forrest Neuerburg** – City Manager, City of Monte Vista

**Larry Zaragoza** – Mayor, Town of La Jara, retired educator

**Karla Shriver** – Rio Grande County Commissioner

**Ramona Weber** – Mineral County Commissioner

**Section III: 2018 CEDS Strategy Committee**

**Ty Coleman** – Mayor, City of Alamosa, Rio Grande Savings & Loan

**Mike Yohn** – Alamosa County Commissioner, Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium

**Lawrence Pacheco** – Costilla County Commissioner

**Ashley Valdez** – Area Manager for Community & Local Affairs, Xcel Energy

**Jack Wiley** – Dean of Instruction, Trinidad State Junior College

**Ken Anderson** – Saguache County Commissioner, Farmer/Rancher

**Kent Curtis** – Chief Executive Officer, First Southwest Bank

**Forrest Neuerburg** – City Manager, City of Monte Vista

**Larry Zaragoza** – Mayor, Town of La Jara, retired educator

**Karla Shriver** – Rio Grande County Commissioner, Farmer

**Ramona Weber** – Mineral County Commissioner

**Darius Allen** – Alamosa County Commissioner, Rancher

**Michael Carson** – Alamosa City Councilor, Computer Services

**Dennis Koenig** – La Jara Town Administrator

**Tom Hicks** – South Fork Town Administrator

**Kairina Danforth** – Mayor, Town of Crestone

**Jeff Larson** – Mayor, Town of Creede

**Larry Kawanabe** – Blanca Town Trustee

**Andrea Jaramillo** – San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative

**Arden Trewatha** – The Colorado Trust

**Barry Van Sant** – Saguache County Chamber of Commerce

**Liza Marron** – Saguache County Sustainable Environment and Economic Development

**Bonnie Asplin** – Co-Director, Upper Rio Grande Economic Development

**Marty Asplin** – Co-Director, Upper Rio Grande Economic Development

**Jeremy Elliot** – Costilla County Economic Development Corporation

**Robert Rael** – Costilla County Economic Development Corporation

**Katharine Ferguson** - Aspen Institute

**Monique Johnson** – The Colorado Health Foundation

**Randy Wright** – Alamosa County Economic Development Corporation

**Thomas Monaco** – San Luis Valley Small Business Development Center

# **Section IV: Staff**

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# **Section V: 2018 Scope of Work**

1. **Build a Business-Friendly Environment** 
   1. Market federal, state and local programs that assist local businesses.
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: Residents and businesses of all six counties of the region are eligible for Colorado Enterprise Zone state income tax credits, and all six counties are now included in the Enhanced Rural Enterprise Zone.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: The EZ tax credit program returned $3.4 million in tax credits to 408 businesses in the region for investments in their businesses and in training of 138 employees.
      3. Difficulties Encountered: None.
   2. Act as a conduit for the State Department of Transportation to meet regularly with local officials and citizens to discuss and improve the San Luis Valley (SLV) regional highway network.
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: SLVDRG serves as the planning agency for the San Luis Valley Transportation Planning Region’s regional coordinating council, which includes county and local governments in the seven-county planning area. SLVDRG organized the San Luis Valley Regional Transit Council bringing together local governments, transit agencies, non-profit human service organizations, and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to monitor and share transit issues in the region.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: SLV TPR met quarterly to review progress on CDOT highway construction projects and receive updates on transportation and agency issues throughout the region and state. SLVDRG was awarded an annual planning grant from CDOT to continue serving as the regional transportation planning agency. Began training sessions during TPR meetings in preparation for development of regional transportation plan in 2019.

The San Luis Valley Transit Council resumed meetings with financial assistance from CDOT, which is providing two years of funding to seed transit efforts in the region and initiate a planning process for transit development.

The West SLV Transit Committee, a consortium of counties and municipalities was formed to assess potential ridership for intercity bus service and received a planning grant from CDOT for a transit study to include Rio Grande and Saguache counties.

Working with the Chaffee Shuttle, West SLV Transit initiated shuttle bus service once weekly from Del Norte to Monte Vista, Center, Saguache, Villa Grove to Salida and returning. A second route, once weekly, begins in Saguache, goes to Center, Del Norte, Monte Vista, and ends in Alamosa. After about six months, ridership is five to eight passengers per day.

* + 1. Difficulties Encountered: None
  1. Assist in the development of sector (cluster) strategies for agricultural and health industries.
     1. Accomplishments Achieved: None at this time.
     2. Quantifiable Deliverables: None at this time.
     3. Difficulties Encountered: None.
  2. Expand the development of sector (cluster) strategies to include the transportation industry. (Year 2 - January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017 only)
     1. Accomplishments Achieved: None at this time.
     2. Quantifiable Deliverables: None at this time.
     3. Difficulties Encountered: None.
  3. The staff will participate in training offered by various professional organizations including but not limited to EDA, International Economic Development Council (IEDC), Council of Development Finance Agencies (CDFA), and National Association for Development Organizations (NADO).
     1. Accomplishments Achieved: The day-long workshop, New Approach to Developing Your Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, provided important information and techniques for development of the next CEDS.
     2. Quantifiable Deliverables: Our Executive Director and Director of Research attended the seminar New Approach to Developing Your Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy in Denver during October. The Executive Director also attends meetings of the Colorado Association of Regional Organizations, Economic Development Council of Colorado conferences, and select IEDC events related toward maintenance of CEcD status. The Director of Research attends the annual State Demography Conference.
     3. Difficulties Encountered: None.

1. **Retain, Grow, and Recruit Companies**
   1. Assist businesses in developing a relationship with regional markets.
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: Very limited activity.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: Continued support and collaboration with the San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition to provide a local food marketing outlet for food produced in the region.
      3. Difficulties Encountered: None.
   2. Focus on businesses, which diversify the economy and provide lasting community benefits.
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: Provided loan counseling to 12 businesses in the region.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: Made ten loans to nine businesses totaling $573,470, leveraged $1,219,000 in private funds, and created or retained 17 FTE jobs.
      3. Difficulties Encountered: None.
   3. Assist businesses facing prolonged road construction.
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: SLVDRG has a program and guidebook for local businesses facing road construction in their communities. Entitled “The San Luis Valley *Cone Zone* Survival Guide,” the program gives businesses a pathway for managing the potential disruptions that road construction can bring.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: No communities in the region had prolonged road construction during the past year.
      3. Difficulties Encountered: None
   4. Complete an economic impact analysis of the effects of reduced groundwater irrigation in the Rio Grande Basin.
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: A research team from Colorado State University developed an input/output model to gauge the economic impact to the San Luis Valley regional economy should significant acreage of irrigated cropland be fallowed or if there are changes in crops raised. Task completed in 2017.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: Dr. Rebecca Hill and Dr. James Pritchett of Colorado State University completed development of a forecasting tool that may be used to estimate the effects on the regional economy of the San Luis Valley should large amounts of acres be taken out of irrigated crop production due to efforts to reduce depletion of the aquifer. The model can be applied regionally and or by county. Presentations were made to funders and the public. The model may be used by local governments and other decision-making entities, and holds potential for application to other sectors of the economy. A workshop on using the model was held in August to train lenders and representatives from water management agencies to use the tool. Task completed in 2017.
      3. Difficulties Encountered: None. Participation among lenders was good.
   5. Implement the suggested strategies to alleviate possible effects of the reduced groundwater irrigation. (Year 2 – January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017, only).
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: None at this time. No strategies are suggested by the model as it is a decision-making and information tool.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: None at this time.
      3. Difficulties Encountered: None.
2. **Increase Access to Capital**
   1. Bridge the gap for businesses to eventually qualify for bank financing and prepare them for traditional bank relationships.
      1. Accomplishments Achieved:  Five loan clients, still in operation, closed out loans with SLVDRG and now can be considered “bankable” with traditional lenders.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables:  Five loans totaling $361,077 at origination were closed out in 2018. Conventional financing for their businesses was not possible at the time the loans made. Those businesses continue to operate providing 11 jobs.
      3. Difficulties Encountered:  None
   2. Provide risk mitigation for local lenders.
      1. Accomplishments Achieved:  Originated two loans in 2018 with participation by local lenders.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: Of the thirteen new loans made in 2018, two were done in participation with local lenders, mitigating their risk. The two loans totaled $825,000 ($85,000 from SLVDRG and $740,000 for local lenders).

Closed three loans in an amount of around $50K each from a new State of Colorado character based loan program. Two of those loans were in support of a non-bankable emerging industry.

* + 1. Difficulties Encountered:  None

1. **Create and Market a Stronger San Luis Valley /Colorado Brand**
   1. Promote tourism through SLV Great Outdoors that highlights the uniqueness and authenticity of the region.
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: SLVGO grew to a staff of three that included and executive director, community engagement coordinator, and a development coordinator. SLVDRG continues to provide office space and support and serve as the group’s fiscal agent. SLVGO moved closer to becoming an independent, non-profit organization by gaining 501 (c)(3).

Among SLVGO accomplishments are: hosted the first SLVGO mini conference, participated in Del Norte Trails Showcase, coordinated service project for National Public Lands Day, initiated “Top 15 Things to do in the SLV’s Outdoors” on social media, and organizing SLV presence for national Outdoor Retailer show in 2019.

* + 1. Quantifiable Deliverables: Ongoing. SLVGO is a program of the San Luis Valley Council of Governments, and SLVDRG operates the SLVCOG. SLVDRG is the fiscal agent for SLVGO with responsibility for financial management. SLVDRG provides in-kind services to SLVGO by providing office space and support.
    2. Difficulties Encountered: None.
  1. Assist in the development of local trails for greater outdoor activities.
     1. Accomplishments Achieved: SLVDRG/SLVCOG continues to serve as the coordinating agency for San Luis Valley Great Outdoors (SLVGO), which is the regional organization responsible for the promotion and enhancement of outdoor recreational opportunities in the San Luis Valley. Outdoor recreation initiatives are occurring throughout the region in Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties. Secured program funding from new sources.
     2. Quantifiable Deliverables: SLVGO continues to meet and plan in 2017 for future development of outdoor recreation opportunities in the region. Among SLVGO accomplishments in developing trails are: designed mountain bike trail at Orient Land Trust, began discussion with Bureau of Reclamation on opening Closed Basin Project for public access, built new trails on Alamosa Ranch in Alamosa, and assisted several local entities with grant applications to fund trail and outdoor recreation programs.
     3. Difficulties Encountered: Securing funding for programs, promotion, and trail development.

1. **Educate and Train the Workforce**
   1. Assist with workforce sector strategies to determine the workforce needs of SLV businesses and industry clusters. (Year 1 – January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016 only)
   2. Develop Strategies to support stronger communication among partners who provide employment education including Workforce Development, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Temporary Assistance to Families (TANF), and adult education.
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: None.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: None.
      3. Difficulties Encountered: The concept of a “professional skills” incubator using a sewing cooperative business model to help TANF clients learn soft skills needed by businesses failed to gain local champions and was dropped.
   3. Assist organizations to develop mechanisms to assist businesses to meet their need for quality, trained, and skilled workforce.
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: None
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: None
      3. Difficulties Encountered: Change in SLVDRG personnel weakened relationship with Workforce agency.
2. **Cultivate Innovation and Technology**
   1. Promote SLVDRG as the repository for research, demographic information,

federal and state economic development programs for the SLV.

* + 1. Accomplishments Achieved: SLVDRG continues to provide pertinent and up-to-date information on demographics, state and federal government programs, and funding opportunities to local government, non-profits and individuals.
    2. Quantifiable Deliverables:
       1. Provided demographic and economic information to Colorado State Demography Office for annual demography conference.
       2. Attended annual State Demography Conference.
       3. Continue to distribute CEDS to local governments, individuals, and businesses. We constantly promote our CEDS as the definitive resource on the San Luis Valley and refer inquiries to the document.
       4. Certified State tax credits as a result of $88,304 in research and development expenses by private business.
    3. Difficulties Encountered: None encountered.
  1. Guide development of broadband strategic planning to address lack of adequate and cost effective broadband in several outlying communities. (Year 1 – January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016, only).
  2. Use the broadband strategic plan to begin implementing strategies to develop broadband in underserved areas. (Year 2 – January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017, only).
     1. Accomplishments Achieved: The SLV COG Technical Advisory Committee has taken a higher leadership responsibility with Kevin Daniels of Adams State University as chairman.
     2. Quantifiable Deliverables:
        1. SLV BOCES has engaged their school districts in an E-Rate initiative to bring both parity of cost and speed.
        2. The cities Alamosa and Monte Vista have opted out of Colorado Senate Bill 152, allowing these communities to take a more active role in broadband infrastructure.
        3. Utilization of Colorado Telehealth funds are being considered to build out a public/private network between health care providers and educational institutions with health care curriculum, as well as schools that have healthcare providers (school nurses) on staff. This network would be designed with excess dark fiber capacity accessible by internet service providers for lease.
        4. In 2018, supported over $2M in grants toward public private partnerships to deliver broadband capacity in three underserved areas of distressed counties.
        5. In 2018, facilitated E-rate parity among all San Luis Valley school districts.
        6. In 2018, established a “dig once” policy in two towns and one county, as well as overturned a local option State ban of public involvement in telecommunication activity.
     3. Difficulties Encountered: A lack of economy of scale for a solid business case to justify a competitive environment and a lack of trust between private sector providers and public entities as to capacity to meet a variety of deliverables.

1. Update the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
   1. Begin updating and re-writing individual sections of the SLV CEDS (Year 1 & 2 – January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017, only).
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: None.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: None at this time.
      3. Difficulties Encountered: None
   2. Begin meeting with strategy committee quarterly to discuss findings, develop strategies and outline future economic development needs and strategies for the CEDS update. (Year 2 & 3 – January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018, only).
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: Created new CEDS strategy committee.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: Met twice to begin development of CEDS strategy.
      3. Difficulties Encountered: None
   3. Meet with communities, counties and other organizations to assess community and economic development needs, issues, and concerns. (Year 2 – January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017, only).
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: None.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: None at this time.
      3. Difficulties Encountered: None
   4. Develop library of assessments from other organizations that study SLV needs. (Health care, childcare, elderly care, judicial, other economic development organizations, etc.) (Year 2 – January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017, only).
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: None.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: None at this time.
      3. Difficulties Encountered: None
   5. Submit any revisions to the updated/revised CEDS to the EDA Denver Regional Office and Economic Development Representative (EDR) based on EDA’s review of the document.
      1. Accomplishments Achieved: None.
      2. Quantifiable Deliverables: None at this time.
      3. Difficulties Encountered: None
   6. Submit in hard and electronic copy an updated/revised Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and CEDS Checklist following the new CEDS Guidelines and include a resiliency section. Submit document to EDA by December 31, 2018. The CEDS will have 30-day public comment period and be approved by the Board prior to submission to EDA.

Deadline for submission of 2018 CEDS extended to April 1, 2019. (Year 3 – January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018, only).

# **Section VI: Evaluate**

We have chosen eight performance measures against which to review our accomplishments and judge the effectiveness in meeting our goals:

1. Capital investment by new and existing businesses in the San Luis Valley.
   * During 2018, at least $144M in capital investment was made by 382 businesses in the San Luis Valley.
   * The top investments by sector were:
     1. Food Mfg. - $45M
     2. Wood Mfg. - $43M
     3. Ag, Forestry - $29M
     4. Construction - $5M
     5. Finance, Insurance, Real Estate - $4M
   * Through the Colorado Enterprise Zone Investment Tax Credit, $5.1M was returned to businesses in the form of state income tax credits to be reinvested in those businesses and their communities.
2. New jobs created in the San Luis Valley.
   * A total of 143 jobs were created as a result of qualified capital investments of $144,222,977.02, made in 2018.

1. Total jobs created or retained as a direct result of SLVDRG activities.
   * A total of 17 jobs were retained or created through lending by the SLVDRG business loan fund. Ten new loans were made to nine new or existing businesses.
2. Quality of jobs created or retained in terms of wages, occupation, skills, benefits, and other factors.
   * Proximity Malting, a value-added agricultural manufacturing enterprise, financed in 2015 by the SLVDRG, began operation in 2017. Company jobs require advanced skills and offers higher wages estimated to be $67,000/annum. The number of full-time jobs are estimated at 32.
   * Idaho Pacific Colorado, a food processing plant in Center, completed a $7M plant expansion in 2017 that added 35 new jobs to the community. SLVDRG financed $1.5M of the expansion that covers upgrades to the Center Sanitation District’s water treatment facility to expand the water infrastructure and treatment system necessary for the plant expansion.
3. Amount of private sector investment in the region as a result of CEDS implementation.
   * The investment by Proximity Malting of $25,587,532 as a direct result of SLVDRG assistance and activities based on the CEDS strategies. Their investment and activity continued 2017, when the plant began operation.
   * Idaho Pacific’s investment of $7M in plant expansion was made possible by SLVDRG’s loan assistance and is based on CEDS strategies.
4. Notable changes in economic environment of the region attributed to the programs, projects, and activities being carried out.
   * Our activities preserve the economic vitality of the San Luis Valley, which has continued to experience the economic challenges seen in other rural regions of Colorado and the United States. Compared to the state unemployment rate of 3.2 percent for October 2018, unemployment rates for counties in the San Luis Valley range from 2.6 percent in Mineral County to 4.1 percent in Costilla County for the same period. The region’s unemployment continues to be slightly higher than the state rate. There has been no loss of a single, major employer in the region, and job numbers indicate the region has recovered from the recession.
   * Agriculture continues to be the driving economic force in the San Luis Valley with the primary crops being potatoes, alfalfa, barley and cattle. Agriculture accounts for about 29 percent of the Valley’s base employment.
   * Real estate shows a rebound from the recession with the inventory of available residential property very tight, particularly in Alamosa County.
5. Number and types of investments undertaken in the region.
   * The SLVDRG business loan fund made 10 new loans to 9 business in 2018. Those loans totaled $573,470 and leveraged $1,219,500 in private funds, and created or retained 17 FTE jobs. The businesses ranged from a motel to a pizza parlor and a dog grooming spa.
6. Accomplishments or advancements made in achieving project objectives, and/or successful implementation of strategies and elements listed in the plan of action.
   * Financial Assistance continues to be a very important component of our strategies for economic development in the SLV. The SLVDRG maintains a loan portfolio of $6.2 million and 47 loans. The loan fund is a critical component for funding small businesses as local lending institutions continue to tighten their policies. We are also working with CHFA to use the Collateral Support program to assist lenders with collateral shortfalls.
   * In the agriculture industry, value-added processing has grown with the Proximity Malting beginning production and Idaho Pacific Colorado doubling its production capacity. Both companies received financial assistance from SLVDRG.
   * The region continues to “grow” its tourism economy. The number of visitors to Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve is one indicator of that growth. The park had 486,945 visitors in 2017. In 2018, that number will go over 480,000.
   * With funding and assistance from the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade and in-kind support from SLVDRG, a coalition of business and government leaders from the entire region developed a business brand for the San Luis Valley. The new brand name for the San Luis Valley is “Colorado Genuine”.
   * As an affiliate of the Colorado State Demography Office, we attend trainings and annual meetings in order to keep our demographic information up-to-date. Throughout the year SLVDRG provided demographic and economic data to local governments, businesses and non-profits.
   * SLVDRG serves as the coordinating agency for the San Luis Valley Transportation Planning Region, which includes all of the six counties in the region and Chaffee County. We provide local governments and other interests with information from the Colorado Department of Transportation regarding transportation issues. Other responsibilities include holding regular meetings of the TPR and providing regional input into state transportation meetings.
   * SLVDRG has responsibility for the creation and direction of the new San Luis Valley Transit Council and received funding from the Colorado Department of Transportation for two years to achieve that goal.
   * SLVDRG certified six census tracts within the region as Opportunity Zones under the 2017 Tax Act. The tracts are located across three counties in areas most likely for outside investment to occur. The development of investment prospectus for each of the opportunity zone census tracts was funded and solicited for outside consultant to be initiated and completed within the first half of 2019.

**Section VII: Schedule**

No schedule provided due to submission of 2018 San Luis Valley CEDS is April 1, 2019.