Delta County
Reinventing the Economy for the Next Generation
Background

• In 2014 Region 10, on behalf of Gunnison and Delta Counties, applied for and was approved for a U.S. Economic Development Administration FY 2014 Economic Development Adjustment Assistance Program Grant for Delta and Gunnison Counties.

• Working with consultants Better City for the past 16 months

• Have completed four phases: Economic Assessment, Market Analysis, Economic Strategies and Feasibility Studies – now moving into implementation
Goals

- Create projects that will bring private sector investment into our community.
- Starts us down the path towards prosperity.
- Position Delta County towards growth and expansion.
- Create a more diverse economic base and opportunity for existing and new business.
- Focus on what we do best.
Delta County: we are older, poorer and less educated

• Average Median Age is 47.3 (Colorado’s median age is 36.5)

• Average Hourly Wage is $15.90 (40.6% less than the Colorado average of $26.78)

• Median Household Income is $41,730 (29.2% lower than Colorado’s average of $58,942)

• 47.2% of adults age 25-44 have some post-secondary education where the state’s rate is 70% and 21% have a bachelor or higher (Colorado’s rate is 41%)
Targeted Workforce Demographic

Delta County Population by Age 2014 (source: DOLA)
URGENCY:

We need to create a community that attracts and keeps the targeted workforce demographic: Ages 25 – 44 years old
Vision

To create new economic engines for Delta County
INITIAL STRATEGIES

Focus on marketing, branding and strengthening of the local food industry.

Build upon community assets to attract and retain target populations.
Why Local Food Industry

- Delta County boasts a rich and diverse agricultural culture and industry including ranching, row crops, fruits, vegetables, sweet corn, dairies and more.
Why Local Food Industry?

- Delta County has more organic farms than any other county in Colorado and is ranked nationally.
- This agricultural industry supports existing farmers, agricultural community and small businesses.
- Growth in this industry will stimulate growth in other industries.
Value Added Food Manufacturing

- Shared space and co-location
- Incubator
- Commercial Kitchen
- Co-packing
- Co-Marketing
- Small batch processing

**There is interest regionally and from Front Range for food manufacturing to re-locate here and local manufacturers looking to grow**
Gateway Project
Hotel + Conference Center + Riverfront Activation
creates a new sense of place

take advantage of our river corridor to ignite our community

projects that spur growth

stepping stone for other economic development initiatives
Hotel & Conference Center

• Patrons are passing through the county because of hotel brands offered in neighboring communities but not offered here: Marriott, Hilton, IHG – there is a loyalty toward hotel brands
• Demand is already here for hotel and meeting space
• Becomes a base camp for exploring the county
Riverfront Activation
river • trails • lakes

• Active rivers spawn private investment in communities

• Provide public access for folks to recreate on the river

• Quality of life asset to existing residents & that is attractive to workforce and employers
Imagine activities along the Gunnison River...

Cable Park

Paddle Board Park
Connecting with other assets in Delta County...

Gunnison Gorge White Water Rafting (all levels) and World Class Fishing

The Local Food & Wine Experience
INITIAL Action Steps – currently underway:

- City of Delta was awarded funding for Phase I Riverfront Planning & Engineering (60% of planning) through DOLA.
- Garnering statewide leadership support for economic activities to assist Delta County’s economic recovery.
- Determining the best ways to fund projects privately and publicly.
- Developing model for specialty food manufacturing business incubator and beginning recruitment.
- Reaching out to hotel developers.
These projects

• Are building blocks to foster and support Delta County’s future and drive new economic development, enhance our communities.
• Are targeted to attract younger families, active retirees and a vibrant commercial business community.
• Will enhance and improve opportunities for existing businesses and families.