Economic Development in Arapahoe County

- Mission
- Tracking Outcomes
- Proactivity

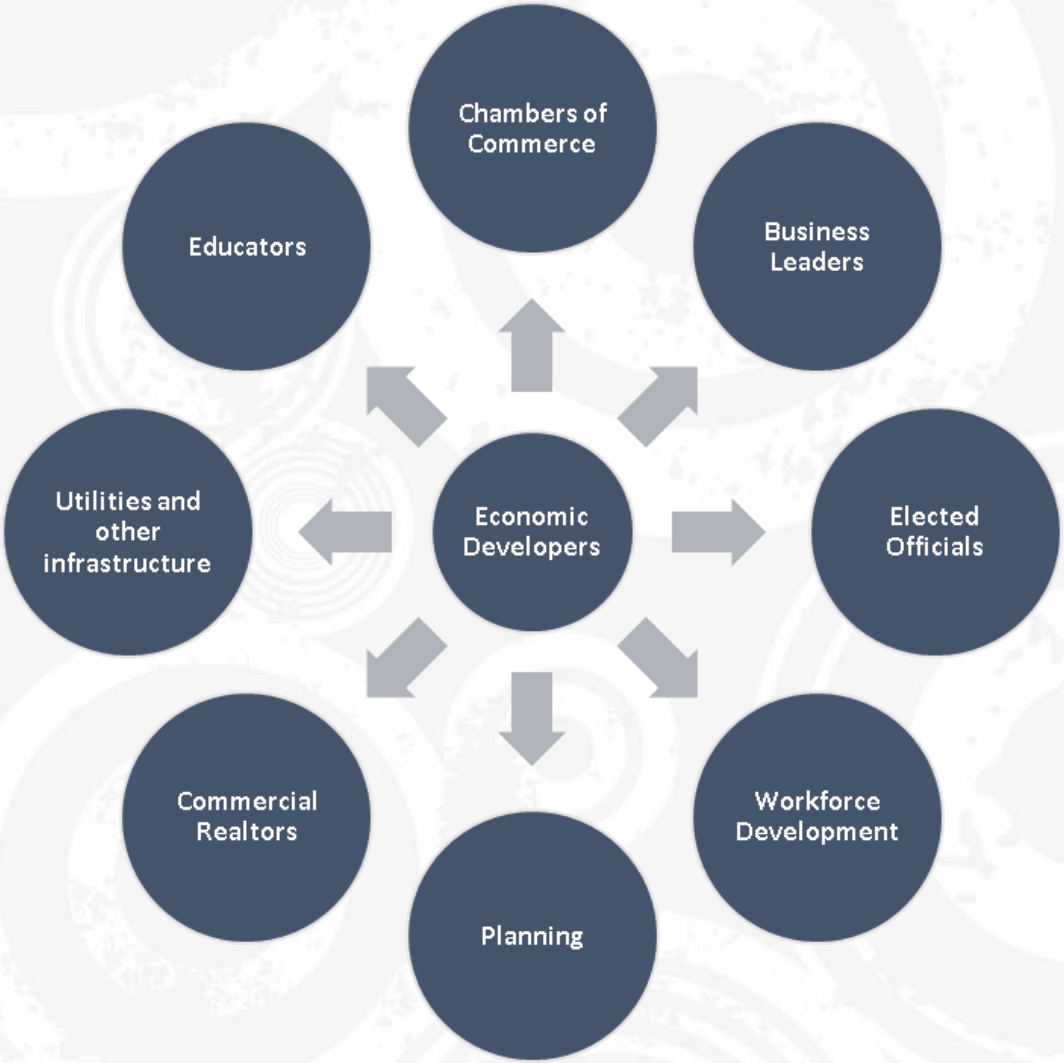
March 29, 2021

What is Economic Development?

The mission of economic developers is three-fold:

1. Attract new businesses
2. Help existing businesses expand
3. Retain existing businesses

This nearly always involves collaboration with a number of organizations in the community



Evolution of Economic Development in Arapahoe County

Centennial Airport, John Madden and the Arapahoe BOCC in 1968

Tom Clark, FasTracks, Ethics, and Collaboration

Internal or external or a combination?

Economic Development, Arapahoe County, and Align Arapahoe

Economic development may be housed in county or municipal governments, or in private non-profit entities. The Arapahoe BOCC decided some years ago to outsource economic development rather than having it be internal.

For example, the municipalities of Centennial, Englewood, Littleton, and Greenwood Village all have staffed economic development departments.

Aurora has an internal economic development department, but also works closely with the Aurora Economic Development Council, which is a 501(C)6 corporation.

Denver South, formerly Denver South Economic Development Partnership, is a 501(c)(6) corporation. It supports economic development efforts in the Denver South region that includes portions of the cities of Centennial, Greenwood Village and Lone Tree, the City and County of Denver and Arapahoe and Douglas Counties.

Along the I-70 Corridor, moving east from Aurora, economic development is handled by the Regional Economic Advancement Partnership (REAP) whose mission is to stimulate private investment in order to increase opportunities for employment, expand the tax base, broaden the economy, and generally improve the quality of life of our citizens.

Chambers of Commerce and How They Fit In

Chambers tend to be private non-profit entities that are primarily funded through business membership dues. They serve several functions in the community.

1. They provide a platform for local businesses to connect and network.
2. They promote interest in local businesses and sometimes hold events promoting those businesses.
3. They provide educational opportunities and assist businesses in a variety of ways, depending on the chamber.
4. They may also work independently or with other Chambers to promote legislation and local regulation that is business friendly.

Arapahoe County Funds Several External Economic Developers and Chambers

From page 311 of the 2020 Arapahoe County Budget

Arapahoe County **Appendix 5 – Aid to Agencies and Economic Development**

The County also provides contributions to various economic development groups within the County. The Economic Development Contributions are paid from the County Commissioner's Office. Contributions are made to help improve the economic wellbeing and the quality of life of the County.

Economic Development Contributions	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Estimate	2020 Adopted
Aurora Chamber of Commerce	$ 47,000	$ 47,000	$ 47,000	**$ 47,000**
Aurora Economic Development Council	105,500	100,500	105,500	**105,500**
Denver South Economic Dev Partnership	70,000	70,000	70,000	**70,000**
Discretionary Contributions	-	-	-	**4,450**
East Colorado Small Business Development Center	5,000	5,000	-	**-**
Glendale Chamber of Commerce	10,000	10,000	10,000	**10,000**
I-70 Corridor Chamber	125	270	300	**300**
I-70 Regional Economic Advan. Partnership	25,000	30,000	30,000	**30,000**
South Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce	88,250	88,250	88,250	**88,250**
Total Economic Development Contributions	**$ 350,875**	**$ 351,020**	**$ 351,050**	**$ 355,500**

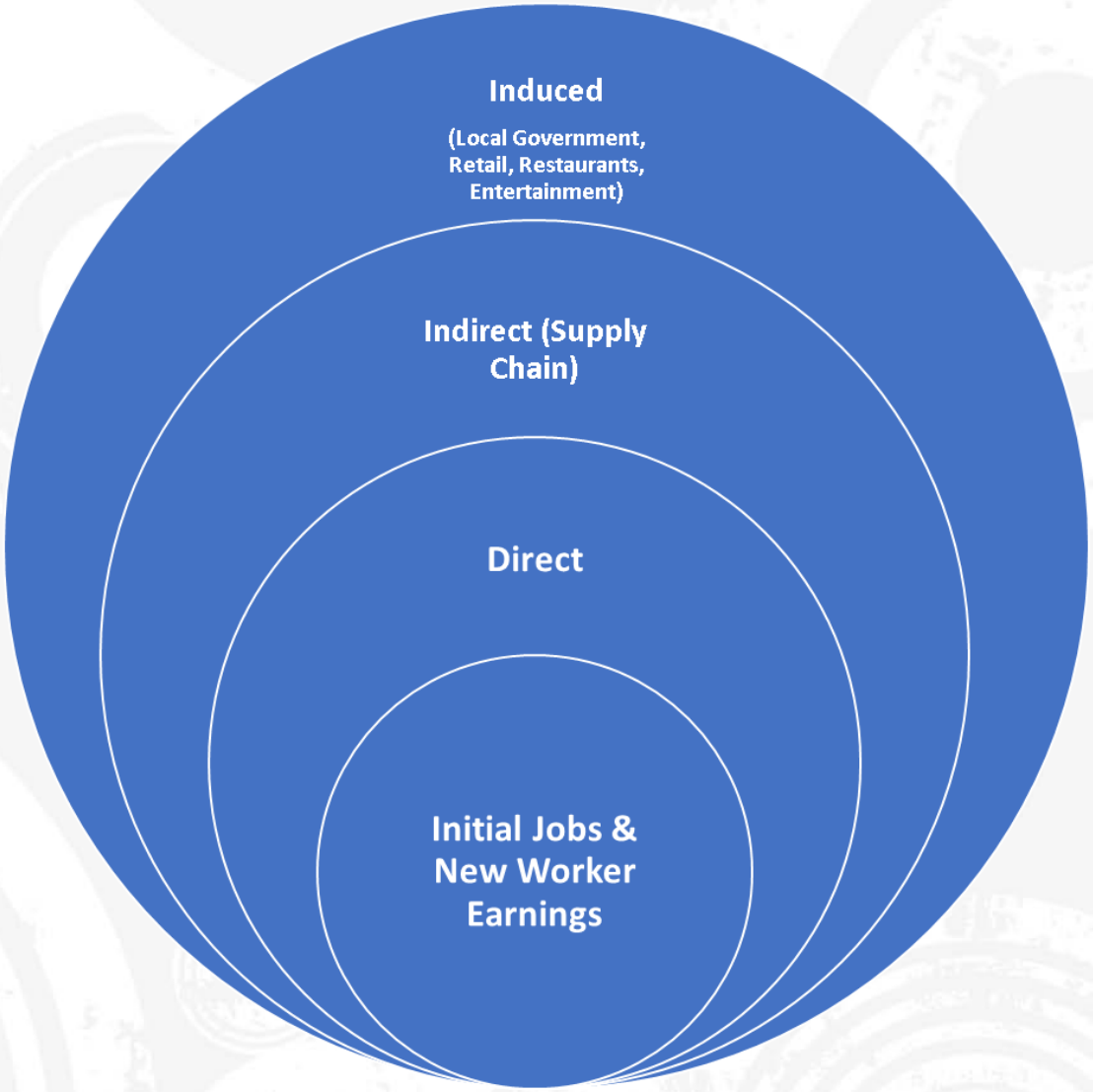
But How Does Arapahoe County Track the Return on Public Investment?

Concurrently with Align Arapahoe, and the drive to begin tracking key results, Arapahoe/Douglas Works! was asked to provide data on the return on investment of external economic development partners.

This is done using an economic modeling method called input/output analysis.

Essentially, an input/output model tracks the ‘ripple effect’ of adding new jobs in a community in terms of additional jobs added and worker earnings.

How the Ripple Effect Works



‘Wins’ and Clear Point

Period	Status	Total # of Jobs Added in Region	EDP Added Jobs as % of Total Job Growth	Total Jobs Added by EDP	Total of EDP Generated New Worker Earnings	Avg. New Worker Earnings Per EDP Generated Job	Total Funds Granted to EDP	For every dollar from ACG to EDP…	3-Year Avg of Total Jobs Added by EDP
2016	On Target	31,974	11.44%	3,658	$284,745,728	$77,842	$175,500	$1,519	3,265
2017	On Target	12,314	34.58%	4,258	$280,711,156	$65,926	$175,500	$1,599	3,831
2018	On Target	44,476	8.51%	3,786	$341,639,645	$90,238	$175,500	$1,947	3,901
2019	Below Plan	44,521	6.56%	2,920	$249,345,545	$85,392	$175,500	$1,406	3,655
2020	Below Plan	28,392	10.72%	3,043	$363,143,114	$119,337	$175,500	$2,069	3,533

At the end of each year, Aurora Economic Development Council, and Denver South both submit lists of their ‘wins,’ i.e. the list of companies that have either moved in or expanded in the area, and the number new jobs created. Input/output analysis is performed and the results are entered in Clear Point.

Is Economic Development Reactive or Proactive?

We have tracked the number of jobs Denver South has brought in since 2011 and the Aurora Economic Development Council since 2014.

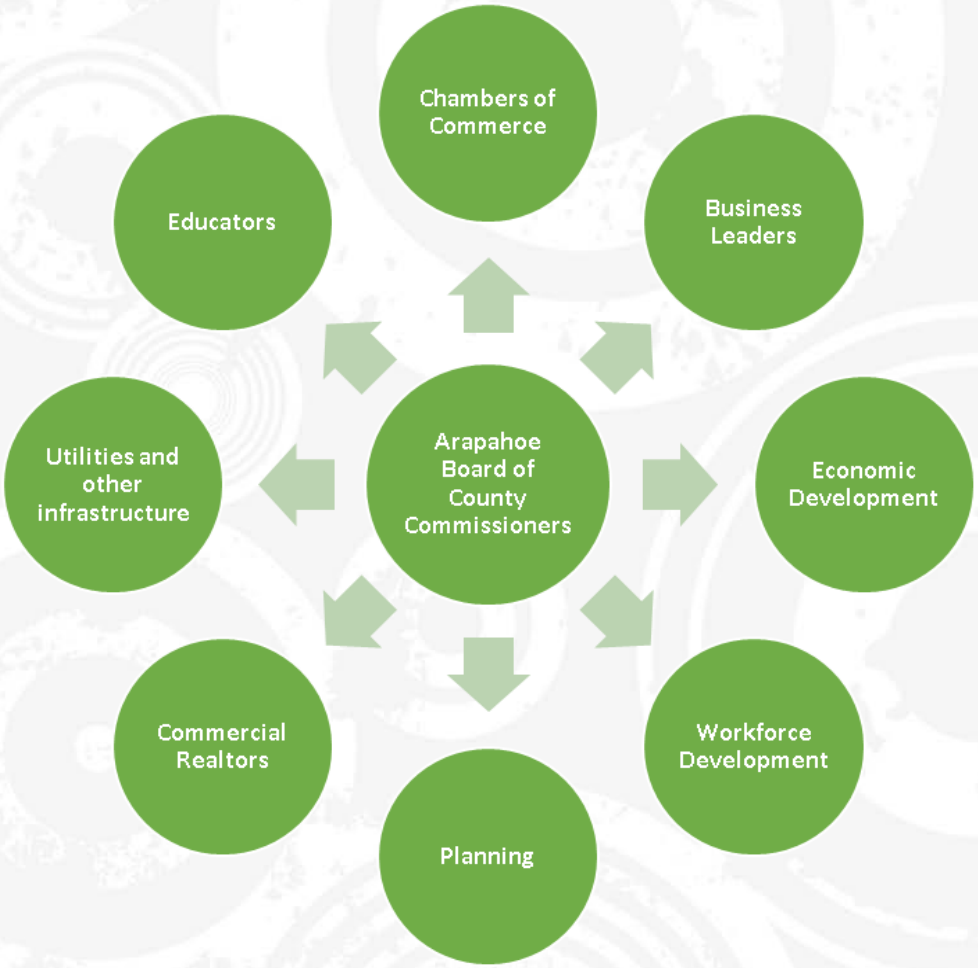
As to REAP, they are more focused on agri-tourism and increasing the quality of life in their communities.

The chambers fulfill different functions and may be best assessed through membership growth and/or attrition.

But who sets the goals?

What kind of jobs do we seek to bring in?

Is there a plan moving forward? Should there be?



Questions and Answers