

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ABOUT THE CEDS

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is a document for the Mountainland Economic Development District (MEDD), updated every five years, that charts a course for our region's future. It allows hundreds of partners throughout the region to align around shared priorities. This alignment positions our region to leverage investment from local and federal governments. The strategy identifies regional needs, actions necessary to address those needs, and organizations with the ability to lead those actions.

The CEDS contains the following elements:

- ◆ Summary Background
- ◆ SWOT Analysis
- ◆ Strategic Action Plan
- ◆ Economic Resiliency
- ◆ Evaluation Framework

ABOUT THE MEDD REGION

Utah's Mountainland Region is a stunning and diverse geographic area located within the heart of the state. Home to small towns and large urban centers alike, this region balances its rural charm with urban development, boasting a thriving economy and a strong educational presence at its core. The region's rapid growth in population has created both economic strengths and challenges. Rising to meet future needs will require a coordinated approach that reflects the diversity of life the region has to offer.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In developing this CEDS, the MEDD sought to engage a diverse set of key stakeholders and the public. MEDD hosted workshops in each county, conducted a public survey, and held a strategy session with the CEDS Committee and regional leadership. A public comment period was open for 30 days prior to finalizing the document.



STRENGTHS

Natural Landscape
Quality of Life
Rapid Economic Growth
Intellectual Capital
Tech Industry & Startups



WEAKNESSES

Inconsistent Collaboration & Vision
Cost-Burdened Households
Transportation & Other Infrastructure
High Cost of Living



OPPORTUNITIES

Infrastructure Improvements
Tourism Development
Address Housing Challenges
Increase Training & Coordination



THREATS

Environmental Impacts
Unmanaged Growth
Complexity of Housing Issues
Workforce Misalignment

OUR APPROACH

The CEDS is grounded in four of the region's most significant focus areas identified through both data analysis and stakeholder engagement: Transportation, Natural Resources, Livability, and Regional Collaboration. Each goal has been created to solve a problem currently facing the region's businesses, workforce, and environment. The MEDD has focused on resiliency and approaches integral to resiliency: equity and alignment.

01

Transportation

Provide a safe, connected, and accessible regional transportation network to meet current and future needs.

- 1.1: Expand public transit infrastructure, access, and awareness.
- 1.2: Align regional efforts to improve and execute transportation plans that minimize congestion, increase connectivity, and anticipate future trends.

02

Natural Resources

Balance regional growth, tourism development, and the protection of natural resources.

- 2.1: Use current data, best practices, and planning to catalyze action among regional partners.
- 2.2: Expand sustainable tourism initiatives.
- 2.3: Advocate for local governments to manage development with incentives, updated zoning and building codes, and code enforcement.

03

Livability

Improve quality of life to support the region's workforce and communities.

- 3.1: Coordinate regional efforts to address housing challenges.
- 3.2: Increase equitable access and affordability of quality education and childcare that meets the needs of students, families, and businesses.
- 3.3: Assess and address barriers to health and safety of residents, workers, and visitors.

04

Regional Collaboration

Accelerate problem-solving and build economic resiliency through increased collaboration.

- 4.1: Improve coordination between regional stakeholders, surrounding regions, and the state.
- 4.2: Advance efforts to further diversify the regional economy and increase competitiveness.

An Evaluation Framework has been developed to gauge progress on the successful implementation of the overall CEDS while providing information for the CEDS Annual Performance Report, as required by EDA. Over the next five years, the MEDD will provide annual progress updates.