

---

## II. PLANNING ORGANIZATION

---

### A. Organizational Background

The San Luis Valley Development Resources Group can be said to represent a melding of the best qualities in three major organizational efforts serving the region since the early 1970's, including the San Luis Valley Regional Development and Planning Commission (RDPC), the San Luis Valley Economic Development Council (SLVEDC), and the San Luis Valley Council of Governments (SLVGOG). The RDPC brought with it the EDA District designation and a business loan program; the EDC contributed a broader spectrum of private sector partners and the State's Enterprise Zone program; and the role of local governments in providing matching funds to continue both of these program operations emphasized the need to restore more of the functions once carried out by the COG, such as regional comment and review of subdivision plans and other proposals.

The historic consolidation of the EDC and RDPC occurred in January 1994, which dissolved the EDC and expanded membership on the RDPC under the EDA District membership rules and its 501(c)(3) non-profit tax status. This also enabled a much broader mix of program responsibilities and response to the area's economic development needs, with little or no increase in staffing. Fearing a deluge of unfunded program mandates on local revenues, the COG was terminated by the local governments in October 1982, and the RDPC reorganized to carry on the EDA District responsibilities.

### B. 2007 Membership Guidelines

Membership in the SLVDRG is established by EDA Development District codes and guidelines, which are also a major influence in the SLVDRG's stated mission: "To promote and facilitate economic and community development activities which will create jobs, improve income, and maintain the quality of life in the San Luis Valley."

For the first time in many years, EDA revised its membership guidelines affecting composition of the non-government representatives. The rule requiring no less than 51% and no more than a 65% majority of local elected officials did not change, but the non-government side is now required to have at least 36% and no greater than 49% of its members representing narrowly defined "private sector" and "stakeholder" categories. A balance of 0%-14% may be classified as "at-large" for persons who do not fit either category.

The new membership definitions are as follows:

- **Government Representatives:** *Elected officials and/or employees of a general purpose unit of state, local or Indian tribal government who have been appointed to represent the government.*
- **Private Sector Representatives:** *Any senior management official or executive holding a key decision-making position, with respect to any for-profit enterprise (at least one required).*
- **Stakeholder Organization Representatives:** *Executive directors of chambers of commerce, or representatives of institutions of post-secondary education, workforce development groups or labor groups (at least one required).*
- **At-Large Representatives:** *Other individuals who represent the principal economic interests of the region (no minimum required).*

**C. Executive Board**

Representatives elected to an Executive Board of the SLVDRG by the full membership are identified in the roster listing which follows. Selected other interests of the SLVDRG Board members are also identified. The Executive Board meets on a monthly basis to conduct the regular business of the SLVDRG, and the full board meets on a quarterly basis.

**D. Membership Roster**

The current list of governing board members shows a total of 41 persons; a majority of 23 (56.1%) representing elected officials of general local government; and 18 persons (43.9%) in the non-government categories. Of these 18 persons, a majority of 11 (61.1%) represent the private sector, with a balance of 3 in the stakeholder and 4 in the at-large categories.

**San Luis Valley Development Resources Group  
Governing Board Members**

**1. Local Government Representatives**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Name/Title</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Other Interests</b>
Alamosa County	George Wilkinson County Commissioner <i>Executive Board</i>	LGR	Transportation
Conejos County	John Sandoval County Commissioner <i>Executive Board</i>	LGR	Business, Minorities

Organization	Name/Title	Category	Other Interests
Costilla County	Edward Vigil County Commissioner	LGR	Costilla County EDC, Minorities
Mineral County	Karl Kolisch County Commissioner	LGR	Sawmill
Rio Grande County	Robert Hagedorn County Commissioner <i>Executive Board</i>	LGR	Agriculture
Saguache County	Mike Spearman County Commissioner <i>Executive Board</i>	LGR	Agriculture
City of Alamosa	April Gonzales City Councilor <i>Executive Board</i>	LGR	Law
Town of Antonito	Mike Trujillo Mayor	LGR	Minorities
Town Of Blanca	Myrrl Smith Mayor	LGR	Agriculture
Town of Bonanza	Joan Selvage Mayor	LGR	
Town of Center	Adeline Sanchez Mayor	LGR	Headstart, Minorities
Town of Creede	Eldon Seime Mayor	LGR	
Town of Crestone	(Ms.) Kizzen Laki Mayor	LGR	Publishing
Town of Del Norte	Glen Graham Mayor	LGR	State Div., Motor Vehicles
Town of Hooper	Gene Chrisman Mayor	LGR	Agriculture
Town of La Jara	Austin Valdez Mayor	LGR	Public Schools, Minorities
Town of Moffat	Earl LeRoy Mayor	LGR	
Town of Manassa	Tom Engel Mayor	LGR	Business
City of Monte Vista	Don Schall Mayor	LGR	Monte Vista EDC, Workforce Development
Town of Romeo	Donnie Martinez Mayor	LGR	Perlite Mfg., Minorities
Town of Saguache	Elvie Samora Mayor	LGR	Minorities
Town of San Luis	Christopher Rodriguez Mayor	LGR	
Town of South Fork	Larry Heersink Mayor	LGR	

## 2. Non-Government: Private Sector Representatives

Organization	Name/Title	Category	Other Interests
Asplin & Associates	Marty Asplin President	PSR	Upper Rio Grande EDC, Cabinet Shop
Boyd & Associates	Jon Boyd President	PSR	Upper Rio Grande EDC, Financial Advisor
Century 21	Terry Smith President	PSR	Alamosa Marketing District
Del Norte Federal S&L	T.J. Brown Designee Rep.	PSR	
Everything Wireless	Jeff Woodward President	PSR	Early Iron Festival, Cellular Phones
First Southwest Bank	David Boyles President <i>Board Vice-Chairman</i>	PSR	Alamosa Community Development Corporation
SLV Federal Bank	Duane Bussey President	PSR	Community Organization
SLV Rural Electric	John Villyard CEO	PSR	Electric Utilities
Sunflower Bank	Linda Hagedorn President	PSR	
Town & Country Car & Truck Center	Mike Goodart President	PSR	Alamosa County Development Corporation
The Wolf Creek Team	Patricia Fluck President <i>Board Chairman</i>	PSR	Real Estate

## 3. Non-Government: Stakeholder Organization Representatives

Organization	Name/Title	Category	Other Interests
Adams State College	Bill Mansheim CFO <i>Executive Board</i>	SOR	Higher Education
Colorado Workforce Center	Rudy Archuleta Director	SOR	Workforce development, Minorities
Trinidad State Junior College	Mike Maestas Director	SOR	Post-secondary education, Minorities

#### 4. At-Large Representatives

Organization	Name/Title	Category	Other Interests
Potato Administrative Committee	Jim Ehrlich Executive Director	At-Large	Agriculture, Marketing
Retired Persons	Executive Director Rudy Gonzales Former Job Service Director <i>Board Secretary/Treasurer</i>	At-Large	Workforce development Minorities
SLV Transit Advisory Committee	George Garcia Fleet Manager	At-Large	Blue Peaks Developmental Center
Xcel Energy	Kathy Worthington Community Service Manager <i>Executive Board</i>	At-Large	Electric and gas utilities

#### E. Staff

The work of the SLVDRG is currently being carried out by four full-time staff positions, frequently supplemented by consultants for projects sponsored by the SLVDRG where specific lines of expertise are required or workloads exceed staff capacity. Additional assistance may be provided by college-level interns for projects requiring exceptional workloads, depending on their availability, funding support, and skills needed for the work assignments.

Following is a brief biographical sketch of the SLVDRG staff and typical work roles:

#### **Michael D. Wisdom, Executive Director**

Responsible for overall SLVDRG management, liaison with funding agencies, business expansion and recruitment, Enterprise Zone administration, assistance to community projects, and a wide range of other duties. Membership participation includes: National Rural Development Council; Colorado Rural Development Council; Governor's Interregional Council on Smart Growth; Colorado Association of Nonprofit Organizations; Economic Developers Council of Colorado; and many more. Started position with SLVDRG in 1994.

#### **John S. Stump, Director of Research & Planning**

Responsibilities include: Coordination of CEDS staff support and CEDS document; EDA District program planning; Responsible Administrator and Environmental Certifying Official for CDBG- and EDA-funded business loan programs; SLV Transportation Planning Region assistance; State Data Center Affiliate services; and research studies. Also provides grants management and application work for other projects. Involved in District activities since 1982 and former Director of the SLV Regional Development and Planning Commission. Bachelor of Science, University of Wisconsin.

**Roni K. Wisdom, Chief Financial Officer**

Responsible for financial reviews, controls of the organization, and loan packaging and direct services for the business loan program. Served as Vice-President at Community First National Bank in Elizabeth, Colorado; CEO of Comfort Inn in South Fork; and Business Loan Manager for Prairie Development Corporation in Stratton, Colorado. Experienced in commercial and installment lending. Started with SLVDRG in 2004. Bachelor of Business Administration, University of Denver.

**Karen Studer, Office Manager**

Provides various clerical and related assistance including: Word processing and spreadsheets; receptionist duties; meeting arrangements; assistance in reports preparation; and other tasks. Also performing routine bookkeeping duties, correspondence, and related work. Started with SLVDRG in 2002.

**F. Broader Range of Planning Organization Programs**

In addition to its EDA District responsibilities, the SLVDRG also carries out a wider scope of other programs, projects, and activities for the region. By maintaining close contacts with government and business leaders, the SLVDRG serves as a “first responder” to emerging opportunities and issues, and a first point of contact for business and industry prospects. The current array of programs and services include important development tools such as the Business Loan Fund (formerly Revolving Loan Fund), and the State’s Enterprise Zone program providing tax credits and benefits for business expansion (discussed in more detail in Chapter Y. of the Background Information).

Our connections with State and Federal agencies are providing access to funding for a diverse range of programs, services, and feasibility studies described in various sections of the CEDS document. State-run programs are described in more detail under Section XI. on Plan Integration with State Development Priorities, and a full range of development partnerships are included in Chapter Z. of the Background Information. Our partnerships with the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) represent our best source of State Government support. We are also providing assistance for transportation planning with very limited funding from the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), and providing pass-through funding from CDOT’s Transit Unit to develop an operating plan for transit services and a multimodal transit hub.

On the Federal Government side, EDA’s Public Works and Economic Adjustment programs offer the best prospects for infrastructure projects, such as the renovation work needed to create a Business Development Center at the former train depot building in Alamosa. The USDA’s Rural Development Program provided funding

to advance several of our economic development priorities in the past, such as collection lines for the ag waste treatment facility in Center, but have been more difficult to access in recent years. In addition, we are keeping in close contact with the home area offices of U.S. Senator Ken Salazar and Congressman John Salazar to identify any possibilities for assistance.

To county-based development groups such as the Alamosa County Development Corporation (ACDC), the Upper Rio Grande Economic Development Council (URGED), and Saguache County Sustainable Environment and Economic Development Initiative (ScSEED), the SLVDRG provides support through its ongoing economic development tools and projects and services generally modeled to provide benefits on a multi-county or regionwide scale.

Our information and research capabilities have a universal appeal and use, including the provision of demographic and economic data essential for grant applications and analyzing business trends; economic research to assess economic impact, tax impact, and related costs and benefits; and as reference material for other research such as the Environmental Protection Agency's San Luis Basin Sustainability Project.

### **G. Organizational Funding Sources**

To maintain annual operating budgets in the \$400,000-\$600,000 range, the SLVDRG relies on a combination of Federal and State grants; local matching funds for these grants; interest and fee revenues from the Business Loan Fund (BLF); contributions from the private sector or individuals; and the administrative allowances provided (if any) for one-time projects. EDA Planning and DOLA Technical Assistance grants require matching funds ranging from 30%-50% of the grant award, with county and city governments being the most important source of the local cash share. In recent years, the grants and matching funds have contributed smaller shares of the budget, with increasingly larger shares generated from the BLF program operations.

Compared with its operating budget, the total amount of program funding directly managed by the SLVDRG, and the additional funding impacts of these programs, represent an impressive return on investment. A recent review of the BLF program, for example, showed over \$2.8 million in loan principal directly managed by the SLVDRG, and an estimated \$7.5 million in payrolls for active business projects which received BLF assistance. While the returns vary from year-to-year, a current estimate of funds leveraged by the SLVDRG showed about \$16.00 in directly managed or pass-thru funds for every \$1.00 of operating cost. For the additional impacts of generated funds, the ratio increases to over \$35.00 to \$1.00 when we include the BLF-assisted payrolls, Enterprise Zone tax credits and contributions, and private investments in business projects.

## **H. Upgrade in Office Facilities**

Plans are underway for conversion of a former depot building in downtown Alamosa into a Business Development Center which will house the SLVDRG offices on the second floor. This will provide adequate space for expansion of staff positions and potential co-location with other development and business services, such as the DOLA Regional Manager and Small Business Development Center. First floor space will accommodate the Chamber of Commerce, Marketing District, Visitor Center, and a passenger terminal for the San Luis & Rio Grande Railroad.

A move from the present location is anticipated late in 2008, following relocation to new facilities south of town by the Alamosa County Social Services Department which currently occupies the building, and the completion of renovations to the building interior and other improvements.