
VIII. COMMUNITY AND PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION

A. Expansion of Private Sector Representation

The 2007 CEDS guidelines place a strong emphasis on the importance of public and private sector participation to the implementation of the CEDS. While private sector participation has always played a key role in our planning process and project implementation, we made special efforts in this update to insure we were meeting the intent of the CEDS guidelines by making a significant number of new appointments of persons meeting the criteria for private sector representatives on the 2007 CEDS Strategy Committee.

We further broadened representation from other sectors to capture a greatly expanded cross-section of the community and other economic interests, while maintaining the private sector majority. Opportunities for members of both groups to participate in the CEDS activities is anticipated to carry forward in creating a greater level of cooperation in the project implementation phase as well.

B. Reliance on Partnerships

Nearly all of the projects providing a direct performance result in terms of jobs created or retained and private sector investment involve both public and private sector roles. Our resources alone are generally too limited to carry out all of the elements needed to complete a project, and rely on a diverse range of the partnerships noted throughout the CEDS document with a summary listing in Chapter Z. of the Background Information.

The value-added processing initiatives in Center, and projects requiring assistance from our Business Loan Funds, provide examples of public/private collaboration from ongoing programs and past projects. In order to support value-added processing of potatoes and other crops in Center, the Town of Center, Colorado Departments of Economic Development and Local Affairs, and SLVDRG participated as a team to acquire funding for a specialized wastewater treatment system designed to handle the ag processing waste products, and a combination of private companies and banks provided the majority of financing for processing plant construction.

For smaller business projects, bank loans and business funds for real estate improvements typically represent the private share, and the BLF covers gap financing for working capital and inventory for the public share. A much greater degree of public involvement and support from local governments, research institutions, and others will be needed to confront the future development challenges of large-scale solar energy production and distribution included in the 2008-2012 CEDS Plan.