

**RPI CONSULTING, LLC**

Durango, Colorado



# **OLATHE, COLORADO**

**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT  
& DIVERSIFICATION PLAN**

**September 2018**



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Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)

Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT)

Region 10

Town of Olathe

Making Olathe Better (MOB)

The Colorado Trust

Montrose County

Region 10

Montrose Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)



## INTRODUCTION

The Olathe Business Development and Diversification Plan is the culmination of a full economic development strategy that began in March 2018 with a business inventory and survey and a retail market assessment. The business inventory is compiled into a searchable, user-friendly business inventory that can be easily updated for future use. The business inventory includes survey results from the on-site Olathe business owner interviews.

The survey was designed to provide a better understanding of what goods and services are currently available in the market area; the markets businesses serve; businesses' basic operational factors; the challenges business owners are facing; specific opportunities for expansion; and community development needs that will support economic prosperity throughout the market area (see Appendix A for the Business Survey Findings Summary). The market assessment defined the Olathe market area and identified gaps and opportunities for retail development, professional services, agricultural services/supply and other sectors (see Appendix B for the Market Opportunity Assessment Report).

The strategies and recommendations contained in this plan reflect the expansion opportunities and challenges identified in the business inventory and market assessment. Together, the recommendations form a long-term economic development work program for the Olathe area.

The work plan priority strategies and action steps can be implemented in the near term, potentially within a one-year timeframe. The top priority actions are delineated in the workplan as Priority 1 actions. Priority 2 and Priority 3 actions are expected to require more than a one-to-two-year timeframe to achieve and generally require more up-front preparation and planning. The workplan needs to be regularly updated and edited as action items are completed and circumstances change.



## **YEAR-ONE PRIORITIES**

The priorities listed below are those that are identified as “linchpins” in generating momentum toward a more prosperous future in Olathe. These activities are pulled directly from the comprehensive workplan, starting on page six.

### **1. Retail sales & services enhancement:**

- a. Develop and implement a strategic marketing program and promotional strategy.
- b. Develop, market and implement a shop local campaign.
- c. Coordinate and market downtown retail-centric events, activities, promotions and parking during special events.

### **2. Encourage and support entrepreneurship and startup businesses**

- a. Determine the feasibility and scale of a co-working facility in Downtown Olathe.
- b. Evaluate the market and fiscal feasibility of an agricultural product distribution center aimed at consolidating and selling local agricultural products in the broader agricultural product market.
- c. Create and maintain an inventory of commercial buildings and development sites that includes occupancy/vacancy status, location, condition/readiness, owner contact, and key details about the property such as sq. ft., # of stories, restrooms, and parking.

### **3. Increase local capacity for business development.**

- a. Engage the Olathe area business community and regional/state economic development partners in a community process to evaluate organizational options and funding strategies of a staffed and fiscally sustainable business support organization focused on the Olathe area.

### **4. Community development.**

- a. Support local capital development, funding and planning efforts that align with the business diversification and development plan.
- b. Develop a wayfinding/signage program funding strategy.
- c. Establish a volunteer-driven Façade Squad to organize and execute façade improvement days.
- d. Develop a resource center for translation and interpretation services.



## PRIORITY 1: RETAIL SALES & SERVICES ENHANCEMENT

### Objective 1.1: Capture more resident retail spending in Olathe.

Action Items	STAKEHOLDERS / RESOURCES				Priority (1-3)	Notes
	Town of Olathe	Region 10	MEDC	Others		
<p>1.1.1 Develop and implement a strategic marketing program and promotional strategy for the Olathe area:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a tagline, messaging, logos, website and print materials to articulate Olathe’s brand, to solidify its identity and attract the interest of prospective businesses, employees, and residents.</li> <li>2. Develop a promotion strategy to communicate community assets to prospective residents, employees, and businesses and follow it through to implementation.</li> </ol>	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Olathe Federal Credit Union</li> <li>- Bank of Colorado</li> <li>-Office of Economic Development &amp; International Trade (OEDIT)</li> <li>- Montrose County</li> <li>- Placemaking/branding experts</li> <li>- Colorado Tourism Office (CTO)</li> <li>-Making Olathe Better</li> </ul>	1	
<p>1.1.2 Develop, market and implement a shop local campaign on the Olathe brand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with business owners to offer special promotions for the campaigns.</li> <li>• Track usage in order to show engagement levels.</li> <li>• Place shop local campaign and seasonal promotion information on the centralized website and other stakeholder websites, where possible.</li> <li>• Market the campaign in other media formats (radio and newspapers).</li> </ul>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Market area business owners</li> <li>-Making Olathe Better</li> </ul>	1	



1.1.3 Coordinate and market downtown retail-centric events, activities, promotions and parking during special events held near town (e.g. Corn Festival and Night Vision) in order to draw attendees into town.	X			- Downtown business owners - Bank of Colorado - Olathe Federal Credit Union - Making Olathe Better	1	
1.1.4 Develop and maintain/update an Olathe economic development and promotional website with all business recruitment information, economic development-related media/marketing, research and business support resources. Supplement and link website with social media.	X	X	X	- Website developer	2	
1.1.5 Develop and implement a retail business recruitment program. Target successful, regional retailers and restaurateurs who have replicable business models. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Horsefly</li> <li>• Texas BBQ / Jimmer’s Back Country BBQ</li> </ul> Ted Nelson’s Steakhouse	X	X	X	- Commercial real estate investors/partners	2	
1.1.6 Provide local/regional business owners and prospective businesses with a promotional packet that summarizes retail leakage/opportunities, available buildings/sites, tax incentives, business support and financing resources.	X	X	X	- Olathe Federal Credit Union - Bank of Colorado - Montrose County - OEDIT	2	

## Objective 1.2: Host/Recruit outdoor multi-day events in Olathe

Action Items	STAKEHOLDERS / RESOURCES				Priority (1-3)	Notes
	Town of Olathe	Region 10	MEDC	Others		
1.2.1 Identify a wide range of multi-day community events to attract and host in Olathe. Examples: skydiving, wine/food hops, farmers’ market events, youth and adult sporting, car shows, skydiving, etc.				Dependent on the event.	2	



1.2.2 Work with sporting event managers to ensure continued and more diverse use of the full range of park space in town; support existing events such as disc golf tournaments.	X	X	X	-Montrose Office of Business & Tourism	2	
1.2.3 Partner with the Montrose Summer Music Series to include the Olathe festival grounds in the summer schedule/series.	X			-Montrose Summer Music Series & Dave -Bowman -Making Olathe Better	2	



## PRIORITY 2: ENCOURAGE & SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURSHIP & STARTUP BUSINESSES

### Objective 2.1: Develop a co-working space in Downtown Olathe as an anchor institution.

Action Items	STAKEHOLDERS / RESOURCES				Priority (1-3)	Notes
	Town of Olathe	Region 10	MEDC	Others		
<p>2.1.1 Leverage the Colorado Blueprint 2.0 award for Coworking 101 (announced July 12, 2018) to determine the feasibility and scale of a co-working facility in Downtown Olathe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider co-locating future visitor center in the co-working facility.</li> <li>Possibly and partially co-locate regional business support resources in the facility at set times each month.</li> <li>Utilize space to provide Spanish-speaking services for business owners/managers.</li> <li>Possibly utilize space to provide translation services to businesses/residents.</li> </ul>	X	X	X	-OEDIT -Startup Colorado -Proximity Space -U.S. Office of EDA -Colorado Workforce Center -Montrose County	1	Lead agencies: MOB & Region 10
<p>2.1.2 Explore the feasibility of partnering with the ENGAGE business incubator to support startup companies originating in Olathe.</p>	X	X	X	-ENGAGE -Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade -United State Economic Development Administration	2	



2.1.3 Utilize the Opportunity Zone status to increase capital investment in local businesses and commercial property development.	X	X	X	- U.S. Economic Development Administration -Commercial real estate investors/partners	2	
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**Objective 2.2: Determine feasibility of expanding Olathe produce and value-added product markets.**

Action Items	STAKEHOLDERS / RESOURCES				Priority (1-3)	Notes
	Town of Olathe	Region 10	MEDC	Others		
2.2.1 Work with the ENGAGE program to evaluate the market and fiscal feasibility of an agricultural product distribution center aimed at consolidating and selling local agricultural products in the broader agricultural product market.	X	X	X	- Local fruit producers - Montrose County - ENGAGE	1	Lead agency: MEDC
2.2.2 Evaluate the market demand and fiscal feasibility of developing a cannery in Olathe.				- Local fruit producers - Montrose County - ENGAGE -Olathe CO-OP	2	Lead agency: MEDC

**Objective 2.3: Occupy vacant commercial buildings with businesses.**

Action Items	STAKEHOLDERS / RESOURCES				Priority (1-3)	Notes
	Town of Olathe	Region 10	MEDC	Others		



<p>2.3.1 Create and maintain an inventory of commercial buildings and development sites including occupancy/vacancy status, location, condition/readiness, owner contact, and details such as sq. ft., # of stories, restrooms, and parking.</p>		<p>X</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Colorado Department of Local Affairs</li> <li>-Montrose County</li> <li>-Local property owners</li> </ul>	<p>1</p>	<p>Lead agency: Region 10</p>
<p>2.3.2 Work with commercial real estate brokers and property management companies to market and promote ready-to-occupy commercial buildings and ready-to-develop vacant commercial property.</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- OEDIT – Sites and Buildings online tool</li> <li>-Property management companies</li> <li>-Real estate investors/developers</li> </ul>	<p>2</p>	
<p>2.3.3 Encourage temporary occupancy of vacant buildings to “test” business ideas incrementally and to build interest and business activity in town.</p>	<p>X</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-ENGAGE</li> <li>-Proximity Space</li> <li>-Making Olathe Better</li> </ul>	<p>3</p>	
<p>2.3.4 Support entrepreneurial start-ups by coordinating co-retailing agreements between property owners and tenants where inventories, services and furnishings/equipment of two or more businesses complement one another.</p>	<p>X</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Commercial property owners</li> </ul>	<p>3</p>	



## PRIORITY 3: INCREASE LOCAL CAPACITY TO SUPPORT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

### Objective 3.1: Develop and implement a business support organization.

Action Items	STAKEHOLDERS / RESOURCES				Priority (1-3)	Notes
	Town of Olathe	Region 10	MEDC	Others		
3.1.1 Engage the Olathe area business community and regional/state economic development partners in a community process to evaluate organizational options and funding strategies of a staffed and fiscally sustainable business support organization focused on the Olathe area.	X	X	X	- Business owners -Colorado Main Street Program -OEDIT -DOLA	1	



## PRIORITY 4: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### Objective 4.1: Improve and maintain municipal infrastructure.

Action Items	STAKEHOLDERS / RESOURCES				Priority (1-3)	Notes
	Town of Olathe	Region 10	MEDC	Others		
4.1.1 Support capital development, funding and planning efforts in Montrose County and the Town of Olathe that align with and promote economic improvement efforts and the business diversification and development plan.				- All stakeholders	1	

### Objective 4.2: Improve navigability and site recognition by developing, funding and deploying a wayfinding/signage program.

Action Items	STAKEHOLDERS / RESOURCES				Priority (1-3)	Notes
	Town of Olathe	Region 10	MEDC	Others		
4.2.1 Develop a wayfinding/signage program funding strategy, including grants and business improvement districts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include a sponsorship program to offset costs.</li> <li>• Publish an RFP for a design firm once funding is secured.</li> </ul>	X			- Colorado Department of Local Affairs - OEDIT - Montrose County	1	
4.2.2 Identify key signage needs throughout town. Sign designs should stringently integrate the town’s brand. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map all local assets including future development plans; consider traffic flow.</li> <li>• Conduct a public review process/meeting to gather feedback.</li> </ul>	X	X	X	- Colorado Department of Local Affairs - OEDIT - Montrose County - Contracted specialist - Local business community	2	



4.2.3 Draft and publish an RFP for sign printing and/or installation.	X				3	
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**Objective 4.3: Increase downtown vibrancy and visitation by implementing a façade improvement program.**

Action Items	STAKEHOLDERS / RESOURCES				Priority (1-3)	Notes
	Town of Olathe	Region 10	MEDC	Others		
4.3.1 Establish a volunteer-driven Façade Squad consisting of property and business owners, civic organizations, schools and the town. The Façade Squad would organize and execute façade improvement days and use donated supplies to improve a few facades in a single day. Utilize architectural expertise available through the University of Colorado, Denver University Technical Assistance (UTA) program to plan/design façade improvements.	X	X	X	- Make Olathe Better - Business and Property Owners - University of Colorado, Denver UTA program -DMEA	1	
4.3.2 Utilize Region 10’s Business Loan Fund and other business loan programs to finance façade improvements for motivated property owners. Explore grant funding options that would allow pairing of small grants with loans.	X	X		- Montrose Downtown Development Authority can act as a resource	2	

**Objective 4.4: Improve vibrancy and appearance of town through neighborhood cleanup programs**

Action Items	STAKEHOLDERS / RESOURCES				Priority (1-3)	Notes
	Town of Olathe	Region 10	MEDC	Others		
4.4.1 Assess the effectiveness of town codes to adequately address blighted properties. Amend as needed while being realistic about the town’s enforcement capacity.	X			- Montrose County - DOLA -Making Olathe Better	3	



4.4.2 Initiate a public information campaign (including radio, newspapers and flyers in utility bills) promoting the benefits of clean-up efforts and recycling; promoting town cleanup days; and explaining the code standards and enforcement protocol regarding junk, refuse, debris and inoperable vehicles.	X			-Making Olathe Better	3	
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**Objective 4.5: Improve youth amenities.**

Action Items	Key Stakeholders/Resources				Priority (1-3)	Notes
	Town of Olathe	Region 10	MEDC	Others		
4.5.1 Enhance outdoor recreational opportunities for local youth. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor basketball courts</li> <li>• Covered outdoor roller-skating rink</li> <li>• Outdoor climbing wall</li> <li>• Pump track</li> </ul>	X	X		- Montrose Downtown Development Authority - Montrose County - Great Outdoors Colorado - BMX and skateboarding organizations - Skate IDSA - Skateboard Supercross	3	

**Objective 4.6: Develop community support services to improve multi-lingual communication.**

Action Items	Key Stakeholders/Resources				Priority (1-3)	Notes
	Town of Olathe	Region 10	MEDC	Others		
4.6.1 Develop a resource center for translation and interpretation services.				Making Olathe Better	1	

