COLORADO'S REGENERATIVE RECOVERY
BUILDING COLORADO'S ECONOMY FORWARD

A COLORADO PROJECT
MANAGED BY
THE ALLIANCE CENTER

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CRAFTING SOLUTIONS

COLORADO EMERGENCE SERIES

Never let a good crisis go to waste.
-Winston Churchill

We’re at a turning point. COVID-19 hit Colorado hard. To meet this crisis, the Alliance Center created the six-month Emergence Series. The pandemic exposed flaws in an economy that worked well for some, and not others:

- Our supply chains are brittle.
- Too many Coloradans are economically insecure.
- The healthcare system only works for some.
- Food systems let far too many go hungry or underserved.
- Polluted water, bad air and inequitable access to services harm many.
- Extractive energy choices drive climate change causing droughts, floods and deadly fires.

The Colorado economy is already in transition to something better, a regenerative economy. Industries fight hard to keep things the way they have always been, however:

- Renewable energy already supplies more than twice the jobs of oil and gas.
- Outdoor industries and hospitality are the largest employers in the state.
- Colorado is the national home of the natural foods industry. Conventional agriculture is declining year on year, while organic food production is soaring. In the pandemic industrial meat processors closed, while farmers markets prospered.

The Colorado Emergence Series convened diverse individuals from across Colorado to share ideas for a recovery that would deliver a resilient and regenerative economy. The resulting action plan moves from vision to impact, addressing climate change, food systems, energy, water, infrastructure, natural resource management, workforce development to build a stronger democracy. The first outcome was the formation of the Regenerative Recovery Coalition to craft and oversee this transition.

Join us to Build Colorado Forward.
REGENERATIVE RECOVERY COALITION

The Alliance Center convened the Coalition to amplify the work of the Emergence Series and regenerative efforts already underway in our state. The COVID-19 pandemic, combined with the intersecting crises of climate, racism, economic inequality and loss of biodiversity requires us to bring businesses, academia, nonprofits, government and citizens together to drive implementation of a regenerative economy based on equity and inclusion, diversity and a shared prosperity on a healthy planet.

The Regenerative Recovery Coalition created working groups to shape and implement the new economic system. These will enable Colorado to:

- **Transition** rapidly to renewable, distributive, reliable energy
- **Strengthen** and increase Colorado’s regenerative food system
- **Provide** equitable access and opportunities for all
- **Build** the industries and workforce of the future
- **Invest** in natural and built infrastructure
- **Build** Colorado’s circular economy
- **Preserve** and strengthen democratic institutions
- **Leverage** diverse partnerships to demonstrate regeneration in action

**Regenerative Recovery:**
COVID-19 economic recovery efforts that builds a robust, localized economy abundantly meeting human needs while equitably providing clean water, air, energy and food.
Among these suggested solutions were:

- Create Regenerative Recovery Zones.
- Remove barriers that limit individuals and communities from implementing renewable energy.
- Initiate a Colorado Conservation Corps to restore damaged ecosystems and deliver jobs and training.
- Ensure that diverse stakeholders are included whenever statewide plans are created.
- Eliminate historical barriers faced by farmers of color in loan and funding access.
- Strengthen the Colorado Climate Roadmap to rapidly decarbonize the state.
- Prioritize areas like the Globeville/Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods for regenerative and restorative activities, as these areas have some of the worst water and air quality.
- Eliminate the digital divide by providing universal broadband and affordable technology to youth in schools, disabled citizens and in rural and Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, equipping them for the future workforce.
- Provide training and incentives to encourage the transition to regenerative agriculture.
- Recruit the companies of the future and preferentially invest increasing the industries of a regenerative economy.
- Implement an effective high school vocational program including apprenticeships for students who choose not to attend traditional colleges.
- Support the Colorado Water Plan.
- Provide job skills training to help oilfield workers gain new careers without uprooting their families.
- Work with trade associations and community workforce development groups to ensure that educational programs train people for the jobs for which companies will be hiring and de-risk the hiring program.
- Promote resilient and decentralized energy solutions, especially in rural areas and BIPOC communities.
- Invest in waste reduction and recycling industries that create jobs.
- Build a comprehensive conservation plan for Colorado.
- Encourage and promote agritourism and sustainable tourism for Colorado’s mountain and rural locations.
- Work with resort and tourism-based communities to build year-round economic opportunities.
COLORADO IS AN ECONOMY IN TRANSITION

Jobs by sector in Colorado*

IT industry in metro Denver
58,190

Clean energy
66,223

Arts and culture
100,631

Outdoor industry
511,000

Oil and gas
40,420

Colorado’s diversity is its strength. Our people, geography, professions, people, industries and cultures together underpin Colorado’s economy. From the orchards of the western slope to the plains of the east, from the ranching valleys to the urban I-25 courier and the ski towns of the mountains, we share a desire to build an economy for Colorado that works for all.

Our task now is to work together to deliver a regenerative economic recovery for Colorado. In partnership with the Polis administration, the Regenerative Recovery Coalition will tackle the biggest issues facing us. Together we can create an economy of equity and inclusion, diversity and shared prosperity on a healthy planet.

Join us to Build Colorado Forward. We look forward to working with you.

Visit thealliancecenter.org/coalition to learn more and join us.

*Pre-COVID-19 numbers. More information can be found in the full report.