

VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)

Title: Economic Development Coordinator II

Sponsoring Organization: Colorado Community Revitalization Association

Project Name: Downtown Capacity Builders

Project Number: 16VSWCO001

Project Period: 02/17/2019 - 02/15/2020

Site Name (if applicable): Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce

Focus Area(s)

Primary: Economic Opportunity

Secondary: Capacity Building

VISTA Assignment Objectives and Member Activities

Goal of the Project: To lay the groundwork for a 3 year Economic Development Strategic Plan based on “Plan Manitou” and an assessment targeting development and poverty reduction benchmarks. This would support the intentional development of our community, which is integral to ensuring economic development and eradicating poverty. In this same vein, the VISTA will also support the mission, vision, events of the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce / Visitors Bureau & Office of Economic Development, and encourage meaningful connections between our business communities. Implementing Plan Manitou will create a foundation for future growth and a reduction in poverty in Manitou Springs, which is currently at 14.3%, above the 12.7% national average of 2016.

Objective of the Assignment (*Period of Performance: 07/08/2019 - 07/08/2019*)

Organization – Help organize and lay the foundation for a three-year strategic plan for economic development and poverty alleviation to guide the Chamber, the City and the Creative District using stakeholder input and public engagement.

Member Activity: Work with Planning Department to coordinate efforts with “Plan Manitou”. Create a meaningful work plan with a timeline, deliverables and steps outlined in “Plan Manitou”. Attention will be paid to the alleviation of poverty through the research of strategies to expand local employment opportunities in Manitou Springs.

Member Activity: Work with Downtown Colorado, Inc. (DCI) – the VISTA’s sponsoring organization for the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce - on a gateway-to-gateway assessment.

Member Activity: Use the results of the assessment, “Plan Manitou”, and meetings with the Chamber of Commerce Board to develop manageable, quantifiable goals for Economic Development in our community.

Objective of the Assignment (Period of Performance: 07/08/2019 - 07/08/2019)

Engage business owners through networking opportunities, community outreach programs, money-saving collaborations, and know-your-neighbor efforts to develop a collaborative and cohesive business community that increases job opportunities for Manitou Springs' 7% unemployment rate.

Member Activity: Use relationships developed through gateway-to-gateway assessment to reach out to the business community. Spend time with each business to connect and relate to each. Work with each on an outreach program in order to promote employment in Manitou Springs.

Member Activity: Implement programs and events with a focus on helping small businesses, giving low-income residents access to jobs, and creating an inclusive business environment. For each event, create a straightforward guide to putting the event on, building partnerships, materials needed, etc.

Member Activity: Gather data, create a database, and implement an important reverse information notification system.

Objective of the Assignment (Period of Performance: 07/08/2019 - 07/08/2019)

Build capacity for the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau & Office of Economic Development in order to grow job opportunities.

Member Activity: Assist the Chamber with events and programs as related to the activities listed in this VAD, including developing a plan and outline for Chamber volunteers and event volunteers. Improve event-related data collection.

Member Activity: Represent the Chamber publicly and in meetings as needed.

Objective of the Assignment (Period of Performance: 07/08/2019 - 07/08/2019)

Training / Professional Development – Attend trainings, webinars, events, and conferences to gain more knowledge about community revitalization and to network with peers doing similar work to expand the web of resources for the City of Manitou Springs.

Member Activity: Participate in DCI in-person quarterly trainings near Manitou Springs to increase downtown revitalization skills.

Member Activity: Attend quarterly VISTA trainings hosted by DCI and the DCI Annual Conference.

Member Activity: Participate in regional DCI educational events. These events will allow the VISTA to gain exposure to best practices in Downtown Development, build networks, and get to know the regional community including other VISTAs involved with Downtown Revitalization in Colorado.

Member Activity: Attend City Council, Chamber Board, and other community Meetings as needed.

Member Activity: Attend additional trainings as needed that support the goals and objectives of the VISTA project.