



**community
builders**

PEOPLE | PLACE | PROSPERITY

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

**2019
—
2020**

STUDENT CONTENTS

<i>Welcome</i>	Pg. 3
<i>What We Do</i>	Pg. 4
<i>Our Work</i>	Pg. 6
<i>Success Stories</i>	Pg. 8
<i>COVID-19</i>	Pg. 11
<i>Impact</i>	Pg. 12
<i>Financials</i>	Pg. 13



MISSION

We help local leaders build healthy, equitable, and prosperous communities to improve peoples lives today and ensure a sustainable tomorrow.

VISION

Livable communities for all.

MEET THE TEAM



Clark



Jillian



Chelsae



Grace



Bud



Alison



Taylor



Danielle



Wally

A Letter From Our Executive Director

This year is exemplary of Community Builders continued work toward a better future for the West. A future where local businesses provide good jobs and a foundation for resilient economies. Where cities are walkable with vibrant downtowns. Where neighborhoods are inclusive and equitable. Where people can participate in shaping the future of their community.

I'm so proud of our work this past year. We partnered with seven communities through our Technical Assistance program to create smart growth, strong downtowns, healthy economies, and affordable neighborhoods. Our Building Better Places training brought together 57 leaders from eight communities to problem solve, work together, and identify solutions. We created a toolkit with the Wyoming Business Council to help communities across their state reform policies that impede housing affordability. Our partnership with the



State of Colorado provided cities with the resources they needed to cleanup brown-field properties.

But our work has only become more urgent. As the West continues to grow rapidly, we believe even more in shaping livable places that will stand the test of time. The consequences of COVID-19 are affecting our communities in profound ways and we remain committed to helping communities recover to build economies that are stronger, more diverse, and inclusive than before.

It's because of the local partners, funders and collaborators who contribute to our work that we can build a better future for people and places throughout the West. We are grateful for all we've done together so far and are excited by the work ahead. Onward.

Clark Anderson
Executive Director

How we do, *what we do*.....

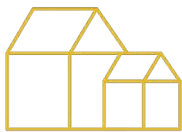


Priorities

We focus our work on four key issues that are shaping the future of our communities in order to support and create a more sustainable tomorrow.



Transportation



Housing



Land Use



Economy



What We Do

Our training and assistance brings communities together to tackle challenges. Tools and insights arms communities with information and inspiration.





Strengthen
Local
Leadership

Inspire
Community
Action

Enable
On-The-
Ground
Progress



How We Do It

We're a small but mighty team committed to building more livable communities. Our expertise is creative, collaborative, and strategic.

Planning & Design

Building Civic Health

Implementation

Communications

Research & Analysis

Capacity Building



Impact

In our first four years, our work has resulted in a meaningful impact on communities in the American West.

576

leaders trained

33

assistance projects

\$26

million in
implementation
funding



Hamilton, Montana



State of Wyoming



Grand Junction, Colorado



OUR WORK AROUND THE WEST IN 2019-20

- = Communities we've worked with through our Technical Assistance program to date.



Laramie, Wyoming



West End, Colorado



Taos, New Mexico

Locations



Taos, New Mexico

Created a community-wide vision for Downtown Taos while building trust between the community and government through a robust public process.



Grand Junction, Colorado

Updated their 1981 Downtown Plan of Development through deep community engagement resulting in unanimous City Council adoption.



West End, Colorado

Conducted a feasibility study for an entrepreneurial business center in the West End area of Colorado.



Hamilton, Montana

Developed design alternatives for Highway 93 and Main St. intersection to increase multimodal safety and enhance the character of downtown.



Laramie, Wyoming

Conducting a housing study to provide solutions that increase housing choice and affordability.



State of Wyoming

Developed state-wide toolkit to reduce barriers to affordable housing development. This included projects in Lander and Lovell, WY.

SMARTER GROWTH, STRONGER ECONOMIES

Over the past year, we wrapped up community assistance projects across the West, including projects in Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, and New Mexico. These communities were evaluated through our competitive technical assistance application process and eventually selected based on the significant potential for impact they presented. While each project is unique, they share common threads that help tell the story of our work.

These stories speak to the strength of our approach and the potential of communities to transform how they plan and grow if given the tools and support to do so.

Grand Junction, CO

The City of Grand Junction is a hub of economic activity and vibrancy on the Western Slope of Colorado. But Grand Junction is growing and changing fast. With the growth pressure and a Plan of Development that was 38 years-old, the Downtown Partnership did

“The process for this project is a model for community engagement. This downtown plan is the part of living in GJ that energizes me the most. I could not be more proud to support this.”

-GJ Council Member,
Anna Stout

not have the tools to guide downtown development that reflects the current community’s values.

Through a yearlong process branded “Vibrant Together,” we worked with the Downtown Partnership and local community advocates to develop ideas to build on Grand Junction’s current successes and bring a new energy to downtown. To help the community better understand the ideas and strategies, we engaged in a



social media campaign with project videos, blogs, and a Q&A session that reached over 24,000 community members.

The new Plan of Development was adopted unanimously by council in November 2019. Since, many strategies highlighted in the plan have moved forward, including a community crosswalk painting, a new brewery, converting one-way streets to two-way streets, and a mixed use, affordable housing project.

Taos, NM

While the Taos community has worked hard to maintain its sense of character and strong connection to its history, they also face significant challenges for the future, including a

struggling economy, few employment options, and high poverty rates. Responding to these issues, Taos wanted to change the way the community engaged in important conversations, as well as create a shared vision and strategy for Downtown Taos. Our project with them became known as Strong at Heart.



We began by establishing strong community leadership, then started a unique engagement process that included 300+ people at meetings, block parties, and small group conversations around kitchen tables. Once the trust was built, the community was able to effectively engage in conversations about the future.

The plan has been adopted as the

basis for the downtown section of the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, our project has resulted in several alleyway improvement projects and catalytic streetscaping.

Salida, CO

Our project with Salida, branded Future50, began at our of our team-based trainings. We had helped them identify key opportunity sites along their problematic highway- Hwy 50, and following the training, they enlisted our help to develop a community-driven strategy for the highway corridor.

The Salida community worked hard to provide the input, feedback, and leadership needed to create a vision and strategy for the corridor. A variety of engagement methods were used that focused on engaging Salidans in the places where they were already gathering, including pop-up tables at community events, focus group meetings, walk audits, and online outreach. The process resulted in a final plan- Future50: Re-Vision Rainbow Boulevard Plan.

The plan was adopted unanimously by the Salida City Council. As a result, the Salida Community Development Department applied for state and federal grant funds to assist the implementation of projects.

Additional Projects

Building Better Places Training



In February of 2020, we gathered local leaders from Montana, Idaho, and Colorado to plan for growth and change in their communities. Following our team-based training format, teams engaged in facilitated conversations and action planning that built leadership and identified goals for their communities.

Breaking the Code Toolkit



In July of 2020, we released the Breaking the Code Toolkit to help communities provide a range of housing options that locals could afford, as well as discover code and regulations preventing them from doing so. We piloted this toolkit in Lander and Lovell, WY, and both communities are near city council approval for code changes.

A New CB Website



In the winter of 2019, we launched our new website and branding. This process was key for our growth as an organization, and we wanted branding that fit our approach and team culture. In addition, the website has given us a space to more clearly articulate our work and its impact, as well as provide a platform for our tools and insights.

Attendees from our Building Better Places Training in Grand Junction, Colorado celebrate after 3 days of teamwork.



COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has uncovered the stark weaknesses, inequities, and vulnerabilities of our economies. Community Builders is uniquely positioned to support cities, towns, and counties in the American West through the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our team has the expertise, relationships, and community-driven approach to help places meet the growing challenges presented by this pandemic and come out stronger on the other side. The Community Builders approach prioritizes having the people who fuel our economies at the table to design and build the solutions that work for their future.

Gunnison

1

Technical Assistance

Gunnison County, Colorado had one of the highest COVID rates in the nation at the beginning of the pandemic. While they were able to get it under control, they recognized how unstable their economy was. We are currently working with them on mid-term economic recovery through surveys and scenario planning to set the stage for long-term resiliency planning.

Roadmap

2

Tools & Insights

The Roadmap to Recovery is an online interactive tool to help local leaders navigate the myriad of challenges and uncertainties of this time. The Roadmap walks change makers through creating the partnerships, building leadership capacity, and designing strategies needed to not only recover, but also build an economy that is more diverse and resilient than before.

Eagle

3

Technical Assistance

Eagle County, Colorado's economy has long since been dependent on tourism. When COVID-19 hit, this dependence became a glaring reality, and many jobs were lost. The need to diversify economically was never more apparent. We are helping them design and carry out a public engagement process that emphasizes not just recovering, but coming back stronger economically.

OUR IMPACT

In the four short years since the organization was founded, we have directly assisted 33 community projects, trained 576 local leaders, and catalyzed the investments of \$26M in cities, towns, and counties across the American West. This work has resulted in on-the-ground policy change, new programs, tangible shifts in civic culture and leadership structures, and contribution to the growing movement of inclusive, sustainable, and community-driven civic planning and outcomes.

Our work creates a domino effect that sets in motion years of progress toward a more livable place. This effect

is due to our approach of deep community engagement and leadership development that benefit each place and their local leaders for years.

The American West is changing. The sustainability of the region is dependent upon achieving a balance between the conservation of natural resources and the reality of its economic challenges. To achieve this, we must shift from sprawling patterns of development to a more efficient approach to planning—one that not only makes less of an impact on the environment, but creates more affordable, inclusive places to live.

Further, we need to create economies that are diverse and resilient—providing a setting for existing and new local businesses to thrive. When we make these types of investments in our communities, we see an increase in opportunity.

Enabling people of different backgrounds to succeed and ensuring diverse perspectives are a part of the community decision-making process lies at the core of building livable communities for all. There is a deep need to help communities succeed in their efforts to strengthen social equity and inclusion.



86%

of communities reported positive changes to how planning is conducted or improvements in planning skills after working with us.



71%

of teams that worked with us saw enhanced commitment to action toward a more livable future from their leaders.



93%

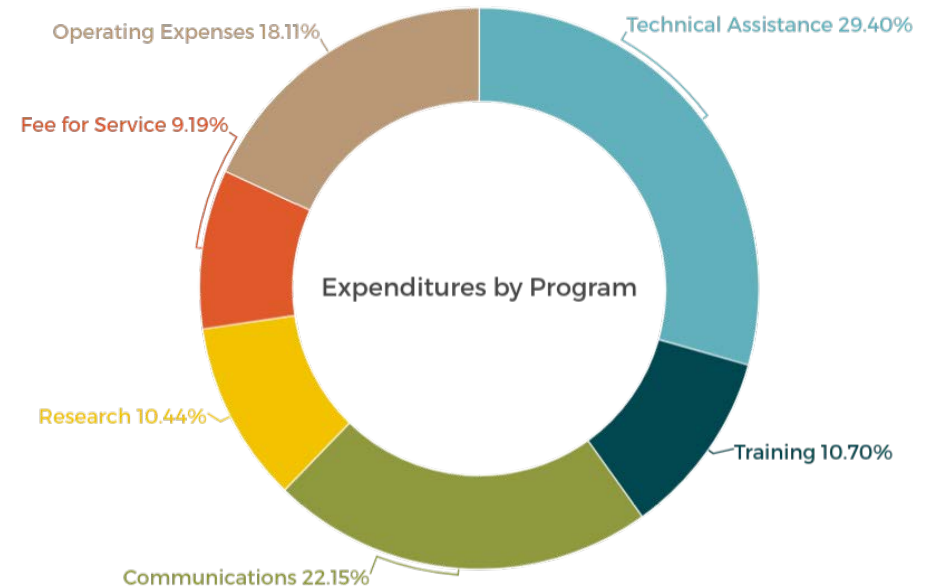
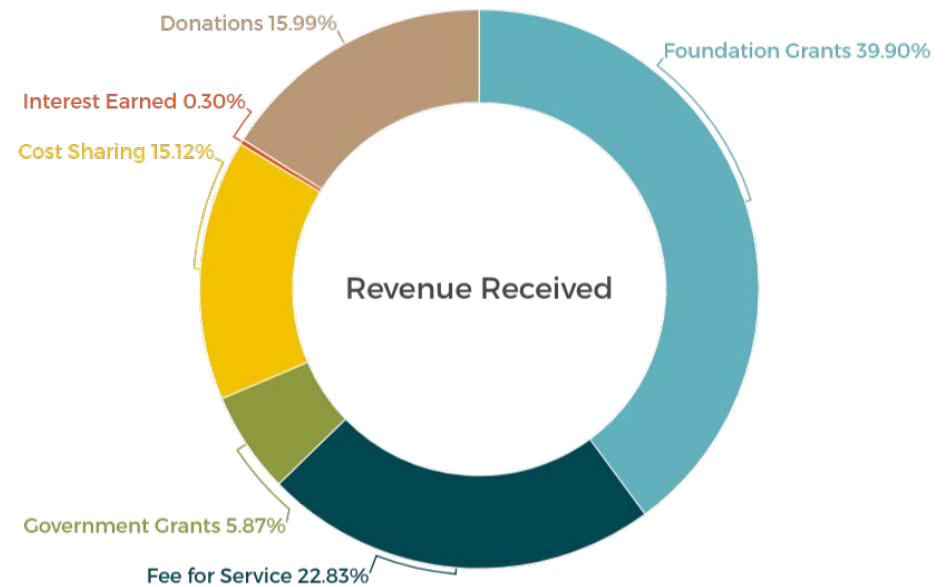
of communities responded that participation in one of our projects increased their community's ability to "come together" and plan for a more livable future.

FINANCIALS

In the last fiscal year (2019-2020), we spent \$882,623. We raised \$498,865 in new funding and covered the remaining balance with net assets from prior year funding. Looking ahead to our 2021 fiscal year, our organizational budget is \$725,000. Our current philanthropic commitments, financial partnerships, contract work, and healthy reserves support this 2020 budget with the goal of \$200,000 in new philanthropic investment to fund the high demand for new mission-aligned projects. Community Builders is uniquely positioned to bring funding to transformative community projects that would not otherwise be possible. The Community Builders project funding model involves an investment of funds, expertise, and time into the project.

As a significant and early investor in our work, the LOR Foundation has been a key partner and instrumental to our growth, development, and impact. In 2015, LOR made a generous four year grant to support the initial launch and development of the organization.

In March of 2020, we completed our launch grant from LOR. We wouldn't be who we are or where we are today without it. Fortunately, in the last four years we've managed our finances and built new funding partnerships that have allowed us to move forward with solid financial footing and healthy reserve. Going forward, we are focused on diversifying our funding, identifying strategic partners to leverage our resources, and continuing to build out the systems that allow us to maximize our work and impact through the funds we receive.





**community
builders**

PEOPLE | PLACE | PROSPERITY