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Government/private partnership conducts I-70 corridor study *Arapahoe and Adams Counties partner with REAP and local communities to complete I-70 corridor economic assessment*

Arapahoe County, CO --- Communities along the eastern I-70 corridor of Arapahoe and Adams Counties are uniquely different from the Denver Metro Area. During recent surveys, residents shared their appreciation for the friendly, rural way of life of Byers and Strasburg while also identifying their priorities and concerns.

Survey results showed that residents want to continue to build upon the good quality of life and improve the sense of community. A key priority was to focus on economic development and employment opportunities locally, while maintaining a balance between providing the necessary services and amenities that residents desire while preserving the small town, rural atmosphere.

“We’d like to thank residents for participating in the surveys, and we are in the process of helping these communities achieve their goals,” said Arapahoe County Commissioner Rod Bockenfeld, who serves as Board Chair. “We have partnered with a number of agencies to determine what needs to be done to help the I-70 corridor reach its full potential.”

To create a regional, eastern I-70 corridor framework that maintains its rural identity, but also encourages the right amount of economic development that will improve infrastructure, create local jobs (inviting youth to start their careers near home) and contribute to a sustainable economy, the Regional Economic Advancement Partnership is working with Adams County, Arapahoe County, Aurora, Bennett, Deer Trail, Watkins, Strasburg, Byers, and the many business partners and residents of the corridor.

“Adams County is projected to be the fastest growing county over the next decade and much of this new growth could occur along the I-70 corridor within Adams County,” said Alice J. Nichol, chairman of the Adams County Board of Commissioners. “This plan will help identify opportunities which can maintain the important balance between agricultural values and quality development while enhancing the characteristics of each community.”

Over the past year, this coalition has worked to collect and plot data that will help identify opportunities and constraints for future development and provide tools to market the corridor. Whether you are a business looking for a new location or a resident interested in learning more, new resources including corridor maps, demographic summaries and survey results are available at www.I-70reap.com, or you can request a CD by calling 720-874-6657.

To further build on these efforts, Arapahoe County has hired *Economic and Planning Systems, Inc.* and *Vision Land Consultants, Inc.*, to conduct an Economic Assessment in 2010. The study covers the area from Air Park Boulevard along I-70, to the Elbert county line and extends four miles on each side of I-70. The goals of the study and ongoing

collaboration are to document the corridor's strengths as they relate to market demand and identify and resolve infrastructure gaps to best position the corridor for increased business opportunities that benefit corridor communities.

Citizens can get involved in the I-70 Corridor Economic Assessment by attending monthly REAP meetings. Call 303-644-4607 to learn more. They can also contact their county office: Adams County at 303-453-8805 or Arapahoe County at 720-874-6657.

As part of the process, Arapahoe County will use the study findings to update its Comprehensive Plan and will seek public input from land owners, residents, business owners and public agencies. Updates to the Arapahoe County SubArea Plans for Strasburg and Byers will be scheduled for upcoming hearings this spring and can be viewed under "What's New" on the Arapahoe County home page at www.co.arapahoe.co.us along with the currently adopted plans. Future updates will incorporate additional results from the corridor assessment and 2010 U.S. Census.

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