



## Report reveals future gaps between labor demand, supply

### Computers, financials better bet than sales

By James Paton, Rocky Mountain News

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Denver-area workers seeking jobs in the financial, computer, health care and construction industries will fare better over the next five years than those looking for a sales or manufacturing gig, according to an updated report.

The Denver Office of Economic Development for the second time has commissioned a study to identify gaps between labor demand and supply. The goal is to narrow those divides to help workers and businesses.

City and county officials want to know where there's a glut of workers - too many people chasing too few jobs - and where there's a shortage.

They will rely on the findings to figure out what kind of job training they need to stress and what types of companies they should try to lure to the area with the promise of big labor pools.

"The incoming work force is not prepared for the working world," the report said.

And in plenty of cases, companies cannot find enough skilled workers. Retiring baby boomers will add to the challenge.

Economic development leaders, joined by Mayor John Hickenlooper, highlighted a number of other work force priorities in a news conference Monday.

One problem is that Denver companies and workers do not understand how they can take advantage of workplace centers to fill or find jobs, said Don Mares, director of the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment.

Companies think the work force sites around town are "bureaucratic and slow, and our job is to shift that thinking," he said.

Residents mistakenly believe the centers are aimed only at "people who are down and out," he added.

A similar study was done in 2004, but it was time for a new one, said Patty Silverstein, whose firm, Development Research Partners, led the study.

Construction workers will be in demand in the coming years because of projects such as the FasTracks light-rail plan, she said. In 2004, the opposite was true, she said. The sector didn't have an abundance of jobs.

The analysis complements efforts by the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development initiative, financed with a \$15 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

Supply and demand

#### **A few occupations that will need workers through 2011:**

Finance and insurance

Computer and mathematics

Architecture and engineering

#### **A few occupations that will have too many workers:**

Sales

Installation, maintenance and repair

Manufacturing

**A few occupations that will be in balance:**

Arts, design, entertainment and sports

Food preparation

Office and administrative support

Source: 2007 Denver Regional Workforce Gap Analysis

[patonj@RockyMountainNews.com](mailto:patonj@RockyMountainNews.com) or 303-954-2544

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