



NEWS RELEASE

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Walt Elish: NCEDC Incoming President and CEO 207-227-1873

Walter J. Elish named President and CEO of NCEDC

Walter J. Elish, a proven CEO with considerable economic development experience, has been named president and CEO of Northern Colorado Economic Development Corporation (NCEDC) by unanimous vote of the NCEDC board of directors.

As president and CEO, Elish will lead efforts to build the organization's investor base and communicate with all investors. He also will oversee NCEDC programs that attract new businesses to the region and retain and expand existing businesses throughout Northern Colorado. Mr. Elish will begin his position with NCEDC on Oct. 10, according to Joe Scherger, NCEDC board chairman.

Elish joins NCEDC having served most recently as president and CEO of Aroostook Partnership for Progress in Caribou, Maine, a regional economic development initiative. Prior experience also includes serving as Director of Economic Development for Maine Public Service Company; Executive Director for Waukesha County Economic Development Corporation in Waukesha, Wisconsin; as Economic Development Consultant in Milwaukee, Wisconsin for Forward Wisconsin, Inc.; Executive Administrative Assistant for the State of Tennessee's Department of Economic & Community Development in Nashville; and as Principal Planner for the State of Tennessee Department of Economic & Community Development.

"Our search committee led by George Hayes, CEO of Medical Center of the Rockies, did an outstanding job and followed a rigorous process in recommending Walt as CEO to our board," said Scherger. NCEDC began its national search earlier this year for a permanent CEO.

"Early in the process the search committee outlined very specific criteria in what we were looking for in a CEO – including eight specific factors related to professional knowledge and experience along with six factors related to CEO skills and traits required for this position," said Scherger.

These criteria were then used by Jorgenson Consulting, an economic development executive search firm from North Carolina, engaged by NCEDC to assist in the search process. Initially, over one hundred applications were received by Jorgenson from across the country. Applications were then reviewed and narrowed down to eight candidates by Jorgenson. The NCEDC search committee then selected three finalists for personal interviews and ultimately decided on Walt Elish for the CEO position. "We are delighted that Walt Elish has agreed to become CEO

of NCEDC. Walt will bring a tremendous background and skill set in economic development that will be a real asset to Northern Colorado,” said George Hayes, CEO Search Committee Chair.

Elish’s professional associations include CoreNet Global, International Economic Development Council and the Economic Development Council of Maine.

Elish was recognized for his economic development accomplishments by being designated as Developer of the Year in Presque Isle, Maine. He has also been involved in civic activities serving as Chairperson on the Presque Isle City Council and Vice President of Aroostook County Tourism, Inc. Elish has also served as a board member on several other civic organizations such as the Utility Economic Development Association and the Northern Maine Regional Airport. Additionally, Elish has been actively involved in Rotary and United Way as well as with his church.

Elish will fill the positions currently being held by Interim CEO, Don Churchwell, since Mike Masciola, former COO of NCEDC, resigned in February. “Don has done an exceptional job of leading this organization through this transition period and we are most appreciative of his invaluable contribution to NCEDC during this time,” said Scherger. “Our board made the right decision in naming Don as Interim CEO which in turn allowed us to focus on the important task of selecting a permanent ‘top flight’ CEO in Walt Elish.”

NCEDC’s MISSION: The Northern Colorado Economic Development Corporation advances economic vitality through strategic job growth.

ACTION STATEMENT: We accomplish our Mission by:

- Collaborating with public and private partners throughout the region.
- Focusing on primary jobs in Larimer County.
- Facilitating business attraction, creation, retention and expansion.
- Demonstrating leadership and expertise in economic development.

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