

## **RDC Written Progress Report to Los Alamos County Year 3 – Q2 (October - December, 2023)**

### **Overview**

This report provides an overview of the tasks, services, and outcomes completed in the first quarter of the third year of the seven-year agreement between the Regional Development Corporation (RDC), a private non-profit 501c3 economic development organization, and Los Alamos County (LA County). The agreement covers a service area that includes Taos, Rio Arriba, Los Alamos, and Santa Fe counties (four-county service area).

With the support of the Los Alamos Economic Development Administrator, the Executive Directors of the RDC and North Central New Mexico Economic Development District (NCNMEDD) made a presentation on the Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Strategic Plan update to the Los Alamos County Council on November 28<sup>th</sup>. The Council approved support for The Plan. Los Alamos County, the RDC, and NCNMEDD all agreed to proceed with meetings with regional community leaders. The RDC recommended that the annual REDI Summit take place in the first quarter of 2024 with a focus on getting general buy-in for The Plan.

This quarter, the RDC:

- ✓ Received support for the **REDI Strategic Plan Update** from the Los Alamos County Council
- ✓ **Compiled metrics and survey results** from RDC Micro-Grant and Technology & Manufacturing Fund awardees
- ✓ Sponsored the **New Mexico Outdoor Economic Summit**
- ✓ Held **Business Connectivity Events in Taos and Espanola** (70+ participants)
- ✓ Sponsored a 2-Day **Workforce Integration Network (WIN) Event** in Taos
- ✓ Held an online interactive **three-part workshop on Marketing**
- ✓ Met with the **New Mexico Partnership** to discuss how to manage PRO's for the region

## Quarterly Progress Summary by Agreement Category

### Regional Strategic Plan Update

- The Regional Strategic Plan Update was endorsed by the Los Alamos County Council on November 28<sup>th</sup>. The RDC and NCNMEDD plan to begin meetings with regional community leaders to discuss The Plan.

### Regional Economic Development Strategy Implementation & Forum

- Based on The Plan Update, the RDC has started to update strategies for the implementation of a four-county workplan.

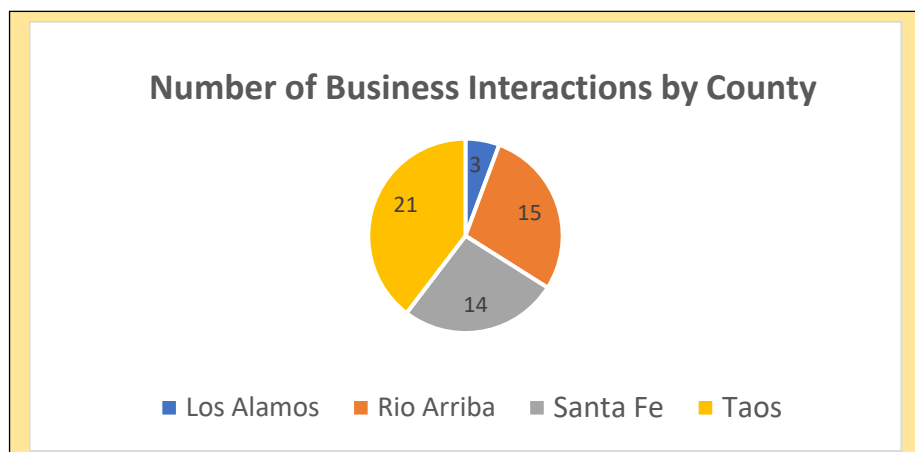
### Economic Development Organization (EDO) Training

- Patrick Vanderpool, the RDC's new Executive Director, the past Chair of the International Economic Development Council's (IEDC) Education and Certification Committee, is uniquely qualified to assist with EDO training in the region.
- The RDC has had conversations with local Economic Developers (ED) to determine their needs and promote the advantages of IEDC and OUEDI's training that leads to certification.
- In order to further determine EDO training needs, monthly meetings lead by Patrick Vanderpool for regional Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) are expected to begin in January 2024.

### Business Retention & Expansion

*The RDC's Business Retention and Expansion Program consists of four components: 1) Outreach/Site Visits to regional businesses, 2) Direct Investments (grants and a no-interest loans that are awarded in an annual, competitive process), 3) Workshops on topics of interest to regional businesses, and 4) PROs for the region*

- **BR&E Visits**
  - ✓ **RDC Interacted with 53 Businesses** in the four-county service area; 18 interactions were in-person, 4 were via phone calls, and 31 were via RDC events.



- **Direct Investments (grants and no-interest loans)**
  - ✓ No new grants and no-interest loans were awarded this quarter.
  - ✓ RDC Micro-Grant and TEAM Fund awardees were sent a year-end survey to collect metrics to evaluate the year and determine the focus for next year's RDC's events and workshops.
    - Both groups showed increases in revenue over 2022
    - Both groups showed a substantial increase in new jobs created in 2023

- Business challenges varied between the mostly rural small business that were awarded Micro-Grants and the higher growth-potential technology and manufacturing businesses. Marketing-related issues were the top challenge for Micro-Grant awardees, and cash flow-related issues were the top challenge for the TEAM Fund awardees. Staffing-related issues were high on both lists.



- Top MICRO-GRANT Business Challenges**
- Marketing
  - Labor
  - Time Management
  - Increasing Supply/ Material Costs
  - Cash Flow Management
  - Outgrown Facility/Space

- Top TEAM Fund Business Issues**
- Cash Flow
  - Finding Qualified, Reliable Staffing
  - Lead time — Materials/Parts
  - Long Commute
  - Challenging Sales Climate
  - Cost to Manufacture in USA
  - Employee Pay Increases
  - Supply Chain Delivery/Cost
  - Rural Broadband
  - Outgrown Facility
  - Community Engagement Down
  - Raising Pre-seed Money

- RDC Sponsored Events
  - ✓ Sponsored and attended the New Mexico Outdoor Economic Summit on October 23rd.



- ✓ Sponsored and attended the biannual convening of the Workforce Integration Network (WIN) stakeholders in Taos on November 2 -3.
- **PROs**
  - ✓ RDC Executive Director is on the Board of the New Mexico Partnership and he has had a conversation with them about how to handle vetting PROs for the region going forward.

### Human Capital Initiatives

- **Skilled Trades - Workforce Integration Network (WIN) Project**

The project's goal is to build a qualified Northern New Mexico workforce in the construction and skilled trades industries by streamlining and aligning academic and non-academic training programs and services. As a sub-recipient to the 3-year \$6.4 M Good Jobs Challenge grant awarded to NCNMEDD, the RDC is responsible for developing the skilled trades pipeline in Northern New Mexico. Work completed this quarter includes:

- ✓ A bi-annual convening of over 100 stakeholders in the Skilled Trades and Healthcare sectors took place in Taos on November 2-3. Priorities for focused actions across the region were developed by employers and supported by educators, government agencies, and regional non-profit organizations.

**WIN 2023 CONVENING**

WIN is calling! Join us for our second biannual convening.

**November 2 & 3, 2023**  
**El Monte Sagrado, Taos, New Mexico**

Leaders, employers, support organizations, governmental agencies, and other stakeholders will gather for two days to discuss workforce opportunities and solutions in north-central New Mexico.

- ✓ The Skilled Trades Mobile Training Unit debuted at Northern NM College on November 28<sup>th</sup>.



- **Higher Education Workforce Project**

The RDC works with four regional institutions of higher education to create “clear, coherent and structured educational experiences” for students pursuing relevant certificates and/or degree programs that will successfully lead to careers in the region.

Institution	Funding \$	Project Overview
Northern New Mexico College	\$40,000	<b>Need:</b> More trained welders in the region <b>Solution:</b> Funding for welding instructor and assistant, administrative assistant, OSHA instructor, student scholarships, and welding equipment <b>Expected Outcomes:</b> 30 students will be trained in welding and DOE OSHA 10 certification.
Santa Fe Community College	\$60,000	<b>Need:</b> Students need paid real-world workforce experience and mentors <b>Solution:</b> Structured curriculum that provides workforce development through training, education, and real-world paid internships. <b>Expected Outcomes:</b> 25- 30 paid internships with tracking of the percentage offered paid positions after completion
University of NM – Los Alamos	\$40,000	<b>Need:</b> More Early Childhood Education Providers needed in Los Alamos area <b>Solution:</b> Funding for Early Childhood Education Certificate Program <b>Funding for:</b> curriculum development, course instruction, marketing, books, and need-based student tuition stipends. <b>Expected Outcomes:</b> Stackable Certificate and Skills in Early Childhood Education, Guided Pathways to Employment and Potential to Transfer to Degree Programs
University of NM - Taos	20,000	<b>Need:</b> Strengthen and expand commercial truck driving program <b>Solution:</b> A CDL Simulator provides practice driving and a Class B Training Motor Vehicle provides safe training practice. <b>Expected Outcomes:</b> Increased number of trained drivers to meet regional needs.
<b>TOTAL RDC Funding</b>	<b>\$160,000</b>	

### Small Business and Financial Services

- A three-part interactive marketing workshop series was held in November.
- “Connect with RDC’s Business Network” Events were held in November and December in Taos and Espanola. Over 70 businesses and resource partners, including those offering financial services, participated.

**Connect with RDC's Business Network**  
(Lunch is on us)

**WHEN:**  
Friday, December 8, 12:00-1:30 pm

**WHERE:**  
RIO ARRIBA COUNTY: Northern New Mexico College  
Event Center, General Education Building  
921 N Paseo De Oroste, Espanola, NM

**REGISTRATION:**  
[www.rdcnm.org/events-1](http://www.rdcnm.org/events-1)

Come and connect with the business community of the Espanola Valley. Meet current and past RDC awardees. Learn about RDC's ongoing business support and services. Be introduced to our resource partners including the Espanola Valley Chamber of Commerce and many more!

The Regional Development Corporation (RDC) offers responsive business support, ongoing mentoring, and training, provides easily accessible funding opportunities, spearheads innovative employer-focused workforce initiatives, and works with community leaders to create opportunities.

