



Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Plan

FINAL DRAFT

May 2024



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Regional Commitment

“Just as Los Alamos National Laboratory is recognized as the primary economic engine for Northern New Mexico, the Lab depends upon other area municipalities, educational institutions, and businesses throughout the region to supply workforce, housing, land, retail, and entertainment options, as well as other goods and services not available in Los Alamos. As home to the Lab, Los Alamos County’s efforts to support LANL’s growth and success are contingent upon the economic growth and success of our neighboring communities. Hence, in addition to its support of LANL’s regional outreach programs, the County conducts its own collaborations with the surrounding cities, counties, and pueblos to identify strategic projects for funding and execution.”

-Los Alamos County Economic Vitality Strategic Plan, 2019

I. Executive Summary

Background. In 2006, Los Alamos County established the Progress Through Partnering (PTP) initiative to identify and contribute funding to projects that benefit the region. The impetus for PTP was a change in management at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), which resulted in gross receipts tax payments to Los Alamos County for the first time. Through PTP, Los Alamos County currently contributes funding to several regional organizations—including the North Central Regional Transit District (NCRTD) and the Regional Development Corporation (RDC).



The Northern New Mexico Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) began as a PTP initiative in 2007. At that time, Los Alamos County signed cooperative agreements with local governments in the four-county region of Los Alamos, Rio Arriba, Santa Fe and Taos to develop a plan that would serve as a roadmap for regional investments. The REDI Plan was adopted in 2009 and this document represents its first update since that time. Among numerous initiatives recommended in the original REDI Plan, several have been successful and remain effective today.

PTP has continued and evolved in recent years. In 2020, the County formally created a Regional Capital Fund to assist with and provide matching funds for capital projects that have significant impact for partnering local governments. In 2022, the county signed memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with the City of Española and Rio Arriba County, thereby directing the funds to Los Alamos' two closest neighbors. In November 2022, Los Alamos County announced its first investments from the fund, including \$2.3 million for two projects in Rio Arriba County and \$660,000 for one project in the City of Española.

Planning Process. This update to the REDI Plan uses current data, current economic development plans, and an environmental scan to document changes in the four-county region since 2009. This information was compared to stakeholder input solicited through SWOT sessions and a REDI Summit held with regional stakeholders. There was substantial alignment between the two sets of information, allowing NCNMEDD to develop a list of recommendations and performance metrics. The stakeholder input conducted for the Plan update is detailed further below:

- **SWOT Sessions** were held to assess Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) for each county in the REDI region. These facilitated sessions were held in April 2022. For each session, the facilitator shared the history of the original REDI Plan and asked participants to provide feedback and share their impressions of

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats for their community, county, and the region. Summaries of each SWOT Session are provided in Appendix A.

- **A Review of Regional Conditions** was completed by the North Central New Mexico Development District (NCNMEDD), which authored this Plan update. The review included updated demographic, economic and industry data (Section II) current economic development plans and initiatives (Section III); and changed and unchanged conditions since the original REDI Plan was developed in 2009 (Section IV). This information was analyzed side-by-side with the input from the SWOT Sessions. Substantial alignment between the review and stakeholder input enabled NCNMEDD to identify six major themes (Section IV), from which projects and a funding strategy were derived.



Housing Roundtable at the REDI Summit, March 2024

Photo courtesy of Seth Roffman, Green Fire Times

- **The REDI Summit** held in early March 2024 allowed NCNMEDD and the RDC to present the proposed themes and recommended projects to a larger group of regional stakeholders. Stakeholders participated in roundtable discussions for each of the seven priorities and provided feedback which was used to refine and further detail the proposed projects.

Summary of the Major Themes, Projects, and Funding Strategy

Themes and projects are discussed in detail in Section IV.

Table 1: Summary of Themes and Recommended Projects

THEME	RECOMMENDED PROJECTS	LEAD ENTITIES	METRICS
1. Regional Collaboration	a. Sponsor a regional roundtable for collaboration, sharing of resources and expertise, and implementation of the REDI Plan.	RDC and NCNMEDD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Number of regional and public/private partnerships
2. Business Development	a. Continue to build regional economic development capacity through economic development events, small business training, coaching, industry-specific problem solving, and expanded outreach. b. Strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem by addressing critical infrastructure needs in professional services, real estate, and small business hubs and marketplaces. c. Continue and expand upon RDC-led business development efforts with a regional approach to business attraction and Prospective Recruitment Opportunities (PRO) responses.	RDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Number of jobs created and retained by new and existing businesses o Number of new businesses formed and attracted o Number of businesses assisted
3. Workforce	a. Continue and expand the Workforce Integrated Network (WIN) to address regional workforce needs. b. Develop private sector leadership for key industries. c. Implement work-based learning, career technical education and employability skills . d. Support workforce development through government investments in quality, affordable housing, transportation, and childcare .	Local governments, private sector WIN WIN Local governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Decreased unemployment rate* o Increased workforce participation rate* o Increased rate of population under 60 years of age o Increased median household income and wages* o Decreased poverty rate* o Increased rate of households with health insurance* <p>*For all counties above/below the national average</p>
THEME	RECOMMENDED PROJECTS	LEAD ENTITIES	METRICS

4. Climate Change & Renewables	<p>5. Align the region with complementary Renewable sector strategies and manufacturing opportunities.</p> <p>6. Establish the region as a national leader in place-based climate resiliency.</p>	<p>RDC</p> <p>RDC, LANL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase in renewables sector businesses and jobs
5. Workforce Housing	<p>a. Develop and implement a regional housing strategy with goals for each county or community.</p> <p>b. Identify a primary entity to track housing goals, coordinate projects, and work with developers, communities, and Tribes.</p> <p>c. Sponsor housing summits and other events to mobilize housing projects and initiatives.</p>	<p>RDC, NCNMEDD</p> <p>RDC, NCNMEDD</p> <p>Los Alamos County, RDC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of new and rehabilitated housing units available to workforce ○ Increased ability of low and moderate-income people to rent and purchase homes in each county
6. Broadband	<p>a. Establish regional partnerships to apply for funding and bring high-speed broadband to areas where it is lacking.</p> <p>b. Provide broadband information and options to residential and small business customers.</p> <p>c. Provide REDI Net with operational funding and technical assistance to develop a sustainable financial model.</p>	<p>REDI Net</p> <p>Local and tribal governments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased rate of households with an Internet subscription for all counties below the national average
7. Funding	<p>a. Support recurring funding for NCNMEDD's grant writing and technical assistance program through advocacy with regional legislators.</p> <p>b. Develop or partner with other entities on a matching fund or funding pool for the region.</p> <p>c. Prioritize investment in projects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leverage the greatest amount funding from federal, state, and other sources. ○ Promote equity in the region by improving conditions in small, rural, and/or under-resourced communities. ○ Are regional, utilize a regional platform, or are replicable among communities. 	<p>Local and tribal governments</p> <p>Local and tribal governments</p> <p>Los Alamos County</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Amount of new funding and investment for businesses and communities ○ Increase in local tax receipts ○ Return on investment

II. Regional Conditions

This section summarizes and compares population, geography, economic conditions, demographics, and top industries for the four counties in the REDI region.

Table 2: Population, Geography, and Demographics in the REDI Region

Indicator	US	NM	Los Alamos	Rio Arriba	Santa Fe	Taos
Total Population	331,097,593	2,112,463	19,253	40,285	155,664	34,475
Size (square miles)	3,533,038.28	121,312.75	109.12	5,860.87	1,910.38	2,202.37
Population/square mile	93.8	17.5	178	6.9	81	15.7
Total Households (HH)	125,736,353	812,852	8,149	14,076	67,866	12,736
Median Age	38.5	38.6	41.2	41.7	48.5	49.8
Median HH Size	2.57	2.55	2.38	2.82	2.23	2.48
Race & Ethnicity						
Hispanic or Latino of any race	18.70%	49.80%	18.30%	71.30%	50.30%	56.80%
White Alone	58.90%	35.60%	70.50%	12.00%	41.30%	35.60%
African American Alone	12.10%	1.80%	1.20%	0.60%	0.60%	0.10%
American Indian Alone	0.60%	8.50%	0.90%	14.00%	2.10%	4.60%
Asian Alone	5.70%	1.50%	5.30%	0.50%	1.60%	0.70%
Other Alone	0.40%	0.40%	0.20%	0.70%	0.50%	0.10%
Two or More Races	2.90%	2.00%	3.30%	0.70%	1.90%	2.20%

Source: American Community Survey 2022 Five-Year Estimates, DP05 ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates 5-year Estimates, and S0101 Age and Sex ACS 5-year Estimates

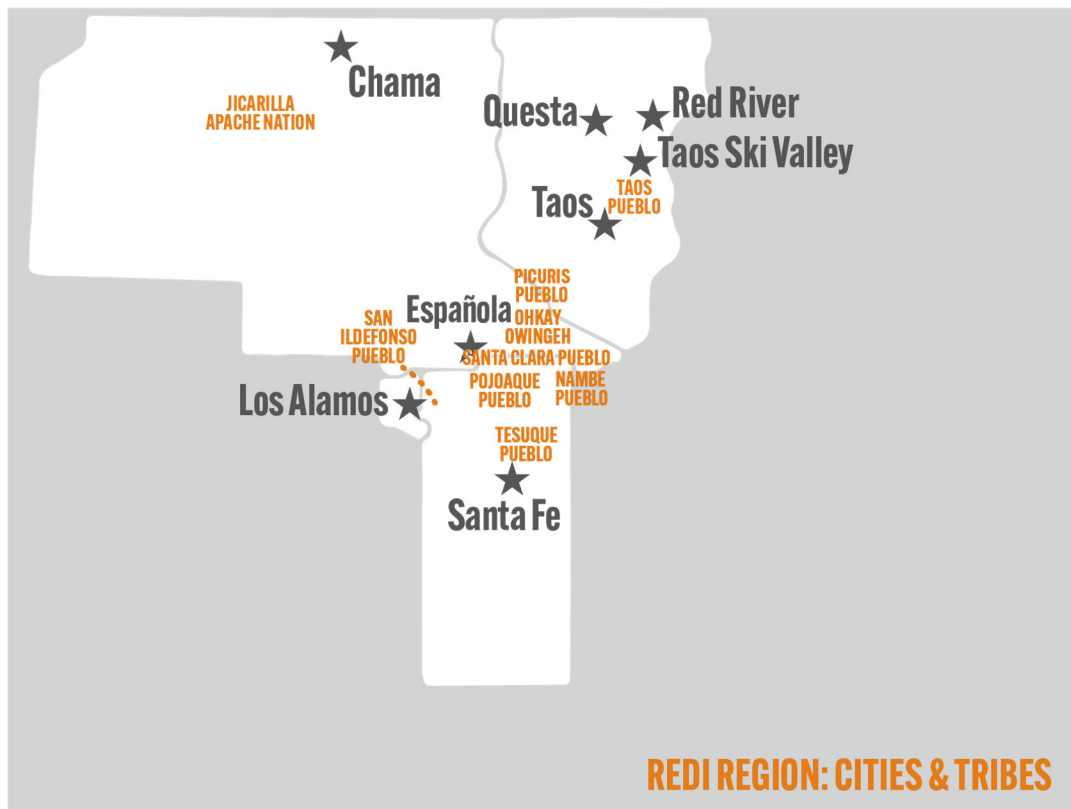
Population and Geography. Los Alamos County is a consolidated city/county government with a population of roughly 20,000. At 109 square miles, it is the smallest county in New Mexico.

Santa Fe County is one of only four Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) in New Mexico, and the only MSA in the north central region. It is anchored by the City of Santa Fe, with a population of 89,000. Outside of the city and its suburbs, however, Santa Fe County is a collection of small villages and unincorporated communities, like other rural areas in northern New Mexico.

Rio Arriba and Taos counties have similar populations and each are anchored by one small city—Española and Taos—surrounded by numerous traditional villages and mountainous terrain. While both counties are large geographically, Rio Arriba County is one of the largest counties in the state, making provision of services difficult and expensive. There are several small municipalities in Taos County (the villages of Questa, Red River, and Taos Ski Valley) and one small municipality in Rio Arriba (the Village of Chama).

Santa Fe, Rio Arriba, and Taos counties have significant amounts of federal land, including U.S. Forest Service and Wilderness Areas, Bureau of Land Management holdings, and Tribal

lands. Federal land reduces the taxable land base of the counties, and each county receives federal PILTS (Payments in Lieu of Taxes) as compensation. Federal land ownership also results in jurisdictional complexity, especially in and around the City of Española. The City of Española falls into both Santa Fe and Rio Arriba counties and is checkerboarded with Tribal lands. Federally recognized Tribes in the REDI region include the pueblos of Tesuque, Pojoaque, Nambe, and San Ildefonso in Santa Fe County; Santa Clara Pueblo, Ohkay Owingeh and the Jicarilla Apache Nation in Rio Arriba County; and the pueblos of Taos and Picuris in Taos County. Partnerships, infrastructure, and service coordination with the Tribes is essential for communities in the REDI region.



Demographics. One indicator that all four counties share is an older population. Los Alamos, Rio Arriba, Santa Fe and Taos counties all have median ages above the state and national averages of 39 years. The median age in the REDI region ranges from 41-42 years in Los Alamos and Rio Arriba counties to 49-50 years in Santa Fe and Taos counties. New hiring at LANL may begin to reverse this trend in Los Alamos and Rio Arriba, as many LANL workers live in these counties. This will be more difficult in Santa Fe and Taos counties, which will likely remain impacted by their popularity as retirement communities.

Median household size is similar among the counties. At 2.2 and 2.4 persons, Santa Fe and Los Alamos counties have smaller household sizes than New Mexico (2.6). Taos County's median household size is 2.5, while Rio Arriba's is the largest, at 2.8.

In terms of race and ethnicity, New Mexico has long been a minority-majority state, with 49.8% of residents reporting as Hispanic or Latino, and 8.5% reporting as Native American. This stands in contrast to the US where 18.7% of residents are Hispanic/Latino and 0.6% are Native American. Among the four counties, three have higher rates of Hispanics than the state—50.3% in Santa Fe, 56.8% in Taos, and 71.3% in Rio Arriba. Taos and Rio Arriba counties also have high rates of Native Americans at 4.9% and 14.0%, respectively, with Rio Arriba’s rate being higher than the state’s. Los Alamos County is similar to the US in that 18.3% and 0.9% of residents report as Hispanic/Latino and Native American. Los Alamos County has a higher rate of Asian residents at 5.3%, which is consistent with the US rate of 5.7%, but higher than the state’s rate of 1.5%.

Economic Indicators. At nearly \$136,000, Los Alamos County’s median household income is one of the highest in the nation and is more than twice the state’s median household income of \$58,722. At 3.7%, Los Alamos County’s poverty rate is extremely low compared to the state poverty rate of 17.6% and the national rate of 11.5%. Santa Fe County has higher incomes (\$70,522) and lower poverty (12.0%) than the state but lower incomes and higher poverty than the US. By contrast, Rio Arriba and Taos counties have lower median household incomes (\$52,031, \$55,145) and higher poverty rates (18.1%, 18.4%) than both New Mexico and the US.

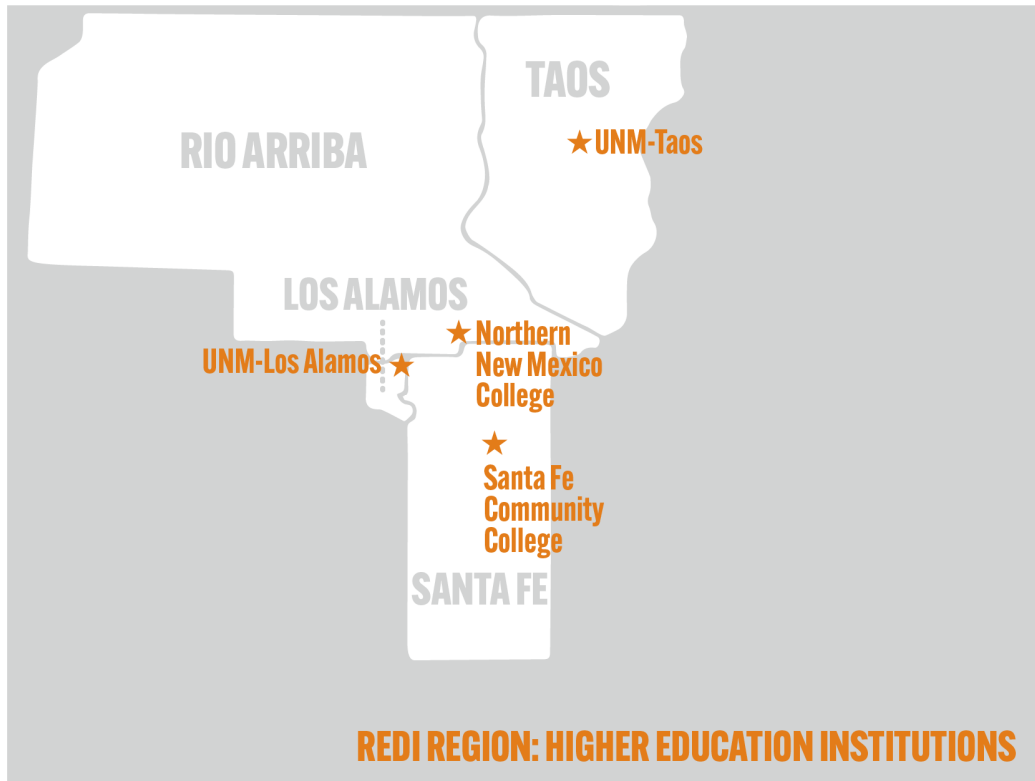
Table 3: Economic Conditions in the REDI Region

Indicator	US	NM	Los Alamos	Rio Arriba	Santa Fe	Taos
Median HH Income	\$75,149	\$58,722	\$135,801	\$52,031	\$70,522	\$55,145
Poverty Rate	11.50%	17.60%	3.70%	18.10%	12.00%	18.40%
Unemployment Rate	5.50%	6.60%	3.10%	6.20%	5.30%	9.90%
Workforce Participation Rate	63.60%	57.30%	68.50%	51.60%	57.70%	51.40%
Bachelor’s Degree+	34.30%	29.10%	69.70%	18.20%	42.20%	34.50%
HH with Internet Subscription	88.30%	81.70%	93.50%	66.50%	85.70%	82.00%
Without Health Insurance (Under 65)	9.30%	10.00%	3.00%	13.10%	12.60%	12.10%
Homeowners	64.80%	68.70%	72.80%	78.90%	71.50%	80.50%

Source: American Community Survey 2022 Five-Year Estimates, S1901 Income

Unemployment and workforce participation rates follow a similar pattern. Unemployment is highest in Taos County at 9.9%, and lowest in Los Alamos County at 3.1%. Rio Arriba (6.2%) and Santa Fe (5.3%) counties fall closer to the state and national unemployment rates of 6.6% and 5.5%, respectively. Unfortunately, New Mexico is known for a low workforce participation rate, currently at 57.3% compared to 63.6% in the US, although this too varies across the region. Workforce participation is high in Los Alamos (68.5%), in line with the state average in Santa Fe County (57.7%), and low in Rio Arriba and Taos counties (51-52%).

All counties except Rio Arriba have high educational attainment and rates of Internet subscription (82%+), similar or higher than the state. Adults with a bachelor's degree or greater represent 69.7% of the age 25+ population in Los Alamos County, 42.2% in Santa Fe County, and 34.5% in Taos County, compared to 29.1% in New Mexico and 34.3% in the US. By contrast, in Rio Arriba County, only 18.2% of the adult population has a bachelor's degree or greater and only 66.5% of households have an Internet subscription.



Homeownership is typically an indicator of household wealth. While New Mexico has historically boasted a higher homeownership rate than the US, our rate includes a high number of manufactured homes and reflects generational inheritance of family homes. The current homeownership rate for New Mexico is 68.7% compared to 64.8% in the US. Rates in the four counties are even higher, ranging from 71.5% in Santa Fe to 80.5% in Taos.

All counties except Los Alamos have higher rates of adults without health insurance than the state (10.0%). The rate of uninsured ranges from 12.1% in Taos County to 13.1% in Rio Arriba County. Los Alamos County has a very low rate of 3.0%.

Industry Sectors. Tables 5-7 present total private sector employment and top five sector data for each county. Government employment is also discussed in this section.

Los Alamos County's private employment is almost comparable to its population, as LANL draws employees from other counties including Rio Arriba, Santa Fe, Sandoval and even Bernalillo and Taos. Most of the employment is concentrated in the Professional and Business Services, with a 5.06 employment quotient compared to the US, due to Triad and subcontractors reporting employment in this sector. Annual pay in this sector is more than twice as high as the next largest sector, Education and Health Services, \$117,927 compared to \$51,897. LANL's 2023 Economic Impact Report shows total Lab employment at 15,932.

Table 5: Los Alamos County Employment and Top Five Industry Sectors

LOS ALAMOS COUNTY							
Industry	Annual Average Establishment Count	Annual Average Employment	Annual Total Wages	Annual Average Weekly Wage	Annual Average Pay	Employment Location Quotient Relative to U.S.	Total Wage Location Quotient Relative to U.S.
Total private employment	559	17,507	1,866,619,294	2,050	106,621	1.06	1.08
1. Professional and business services	175	14,705	1,734,112,757	2,268	117,927	5.06	4.31
2. Education and Health Services	107	977	50,681,831	998	51,897	0.33	0.19
3. Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	54	511	19,582,353	737	38,315	0.14	0.06
4. Leisure and Hospitality	40	473	11,204,961	456	23,717	0.23	0.12
5. Other Services	63	265	6,435,385	467	24,277	0.47	0.16

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2022 Annual Census of Employment and Wages

Table 4: LANL Employment and Salaries by County

County	Employees	Salaries
Los Alamos	5,459	\$758,303,756
Santa Fe	3,975	\$460,844,932
Rio Arriba	2,398	\$201,084,245
Bernalillo	1,243	\$105,171,900
Sandoval	707	\$73,408,442
Taos	306	\$24,095,772
Other NM	414	\$31,125,099
Out of State	1,430	
Total	15,932	\$1,654,034,146

Source: [LANL 2023 Economic Impact on New Mexico](#)

With 1,799 employees, Government is technically the largest second employer in Los Alamos County. Local government is the largest segment, with 1,379 employees. Annual wages for government workers are high, ranging from \$63,027 for state workers to \$134,130 for federal workers.

Table 6: Santa Fe County Employment and Top Five Industry Sectors

SANTA FE COUNTY							
Industry	Annual Average Establishment Count	Annual Average Employment	Annual Total Wages	Annual Average Weekly Wage	Annual Average Pay	Employment Location Quotient Relative to U.S.	Total Wage Location Quotient Relative to U.S.
Total private employment	6,407	45,723	2,410,191,042	1,014	52,713	0.88	0.84
1. Leisure and Hospitality	628	10,608	370,170,934	671	34,896	1.68	2.43
2. Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,008	9,832	424,549,553	830	43,180	0.86	0.81
3. Education and Health Services	981	9,651	579,633,037	1,155	60,058	1.03	1.29
4. Professional and Business Services	1,549	5,573	374,864,188	1,294	67,270	0.61	0.56
5. Construction	550	2,982	148,761,551	959	49,882	0.96	0.83

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2022 Annual Census of Employment and Wages

While LANL employment is categorized as private, it is in fact employment associated with a federal laboratory. In the other three counties, government is also among the top employers. As the location of the state capitol, this is particularly true of Santa Fe County, where government employs 14,620 workers, 7,504 of whom work for the state. Government annual pay ranges from \$54,666 at the local level to \$85,700 for federal jobs.

In private employment, the sectors of Leisure and Hospitality; Trade, Transportation and Utilities; and Education and Health Services are the next largest, responsible for roughly 10,000 jobs each. Santa Fe County has high employment location quotients for State Government (4.11), Leisure and Hospitality (1.68) and Other Services (1.53). Note that wages in Santa Fe are higher for each sector than in Rio Arriba and Taos. This is because of a higher local minimum wage, and because state government jobs tend to be higher-paid and push up government wages overall.

Table 7: Rio Arriba County Employment and Top Five Industry Sectors

RIO ARRIBA COUNTY							
Industry	Annual Average Establishment Count	Annual Average Employment	Annual Total Wages	Annual Average Weekly Wage	Annual Average Pay	Employment Location Quotient Relative to U.S.	Total Wage Location Quotient Relative to U.S.
Total private employment	944	9,260	412,279	856	44,532	1.00	1.00
1. Education and health services	246	1,433	78,511,178	1,054	54,791	0.99	1.40
2. Trade, transportation, and utilities	114	1,347	46,423,289	663	34,473	0.77	0.72
3. Leisure and hospitality	84	950	22,240,571	450	23,401	0.98	1.18
4. Professional and business services	111	447	27,464,296	1,180	61,384	0.32	0.33
5. Construction	79	309	20,997,642	1,307	67,954	0.65	0.94

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2022 Annual Census of Employment and Wages

In Rio Arriba County, government is the largest employer with 3,926 workers, 3,188 of whom work in local government. Annual government pay ranges from \$36,328 at the local level to \$75,443 at the federal level. The largest private sector employers are Education and Health Services; Trade, Transportation and Utilities; and Leisure and Hospitality, with roughly 1,000 jobs each. The employment location quotient relative to the US is higher for all government categories (3.72 for local government, 1.69 for state government, and 1.49 for federal government), as well as for Natural Resources and Mining (1.73), due significant oil and gas production on the Jicarilla Apache Nation.

Table 8: Taos County Employment and Top Five Industry Sectors

TAOS COUNTY							
Industry	Annual Average Establishment Count	Annual Average Employment	Annual Total Wages	Annual Average Weekly Wage	Annual Average Pay	Employment Location Quotient Relative to U.S.	Total Wage Location Quotient Relative to U.S.
Total private employment	1,348	8,901	344,823,713	745	38,742	0.97	0.91
1. Leisure and hospitality	203	2,676	74,537,706	536	27,856	2.38	3.73
2. Education and health services	223	2,036	95,117,832	898	46,720	1.22	1.61
3. Trade, transportation, and utilities	245	1,771	64,003,899	695	36,137	0.87	0.93
4. Professional and business services	221	564	30,324,504	1,035	53,815	0.35	0.34
5. Financial activities	115	459	18,726,057	784	40,783	0.75	0.45

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2022 Annual Census of Employment and Wages

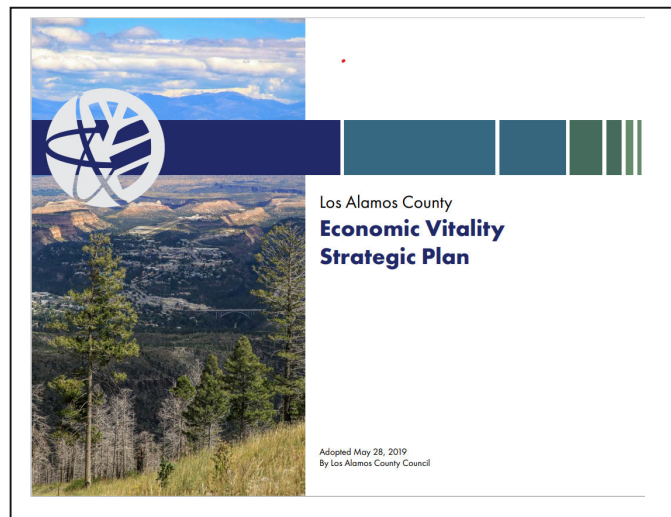
Taos County's employment distribution is relatively even, with Leisure and Hospitality; Education and Health Services; and Trade, Transportation and Utilities accounting for 1,700 to 2,700 jobs each. Government employs a similar number of workers at 1,842, 1,301 of whom work in the local sector. Taos County's employment location quotient is high for Leisure and Hospitality (2.38), Local Government (1.31), Federal Government (1.25), and Education and Health Services (1.22). Taos County also has a high location quotient for Natural Resources and Mining (1.33), due to employment associated with mine clean up resulting from the closure of the Chevron Questa molybdenum mine in 2014.

In both Rio Arriba and Taos counties, wages are lowered by fewer jobs in high paying sectors and by concentrations of jobs in the Leisure and Hospitality and Trade sectors, where wages are in the \$20,000- \$30,000 range annually. The loss of mining jobs has also negatively impacted wages in Taos County; annual average pay in Natural Resources and Mining is \$40,513, indicating that remediation work is paying less than traditional mining jobs.

Summary of Related Plans and Initiatives

Los Alamos County Economic Vitality Strategic Plan (2019)

Originally drafted in 2010, Los Alamos County's *Economic Vitality Strategic Plan* was updated in 2019. Serving in an advisory capacity to the Los Alamos County Council, the county's Economic Vitality Action Team (EVAT) developed the plan and oversees its progress. 2019 Plan goals are similar to those in the original 2010 plan and include: 1) Increase the availability of housing in the County, both affordable and market rate; 2) Define and address quality of life priorities; 3) Grow a separate, complementary economy to LANL; 4) Support and retain LANL as the area's best wealth producing employer. The 2019 Plan includes detailed action plans for each of the four goals.



Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL)

LANL's managing partner, Triad National Security, LLC, invests in the region through its Community Commitment Plan which matches employee contributions to qualified charitable organizations and supports K-12 education, capacity, and coordination for nonprofits in northern New Mexico, and regional economic development. To carry out the economic development element of the Plan, Triad contracts with the RDC to facilitate job growth and diversify the economy in the counties of Los Alamos, Mora, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, San Miguel, Santa Fe and Taos.

In addition to its investment with the RDC, LANL directly provides no-cost technical assistance to businesses through three different programs. The New Mexico Small Business Assistance Program (NMSBA) helps for-profit small businesses access cutting-edge technologies, solve technical issues and gain knowledge from technical experts at LANL and Sandia National Laboratories (SNL). The Technology Readiness Gross Receipts Initiative (TRGR) is the Lab's tech transfer initiative, enabling businesses to work directly with scientists and engineers to market technologies developed or licensed from the Labs. Finally, the Community Technical Assistance (CTA) program provides short-term, limited assistance of lab scientists and engineers to entities facing technical hurdles that overlap with LANL capabilities. Together, these programs have significant economic benefits as shown in the graphic below.

LANL has formal workforce development partnerships with regional colleges and high schools for educational programs and skill development to prepare future LANL staff.

Current partnerships include Associate's Degree programs in Radiation Protection and Engineering Machining Technologies with Northern New Mexico College and Santa Fe Community College; a Bachelor's Degree program in

Mechanical Engineering with the University of New Mexico; and high school craft partnerships with the unions, UNM-Taos, Santa Fe Community College, Luna Community College and the following high schools: Pecos, Taos, Questa, Bernalillo, Los Alamos, and Santa Fe ECHO. LANL also provides thousands of summer internships to New Mexico and non-New Mexico residents every year. In 2022, the LAB launched the New Mexico Lab-Embedded Entrepreneur Program (New Mexico LEEP), which provides a two-year fellowship for entrepreneurs focusing on deep tech for national security.

A significant focus is given to LANL's small business procurement efforts, which enable local companies to offer products and services to the Lab. In 2023, LANL spent \$930 million with New Mexico businesses, and paid \$155 million in New Mexico gross receipts tax. LANL contracts are recognized by the community as a prime means to help local businesses grow and increase wages, particularly in surrounding lower-income communities. One good example of a successful procurement partnership is the mentor-protégé program between Triad National Security and Pueblo Alliance, LLC which was formed in October 2020. Triad provided mentorship in business planning, business development, marketing, proposal development, and quality assurance, which resulted in formation of a joint venture company between Tsay Corporation and San Ildefonso Services, owned by the Pueblos of Ohkay Owingeh and San Ildefonso. The Pueblo Alliance now provides staffing solutions for LANL and other US Department of Energy entities. In 2022, LANL contracted with the company to create a new distribution center outside Española to address LANL's uptick in shipping and procurement needs.

Economic Development

Developing new business, strengthening existing companies, contributing to a diverse economy

The Laboratory invests and partners in economic development initiatives and programs that help stimulate business growth, create jobs, and strengthen our communities.



Source: [LANL 2023 Economic Impact on New Mexico](#)

REDI Plan, 2009

Adopted by Los Alamos County in 2009, the REDI Plan identified a set of five regional goals, based on needs identified through SWOT analysis. The Plan focused on the four industry clusters of Renewable Energy/ Clean Industry, Media, Technology, and High-Value/Value-Added Agriculture, which were prioritized by stakeholders across the four-county region and were key to implementing the Plan's goals. A table showing how the REDI Plan clusters align with target industries from other planning documents can be found in Table 12.

Table 9: REDI Plan Needs and Goals

Regional Needs	Goals
1. NM, and northern NM in particular, are overly dependent on government jobs and investment. Private sector is weak.	1. Diversify the economy.
2. NM has some of the lowest educational indicators in the US, and rural schools typically lag behind.	2. Develop a high-quality workforce.
3. Taos and Rio Arriba counties have very low incomes and high poverty rates.	3. Increase the number of higher-paying jobs.
4. Northern NM suffers from "brain drain" of its best and brightest, who move away for better economic opportunities and lower costs of living.	4. Retain and attract youth and families.
5. BBER is projecting a substantial shift in NM's population to the urban areas.	5. Make rural communities vibrant.

Upon its adoption in 2009, the REDI Plan recommended that Los Alamos County invest in several initiatives, including Regional Broadband, Cluster Strategies, Economic Development Services (business retention and attraction), Human Capital (workforce development), and an annual State of the Region Conference, all of which were contracted to the RDC for implementation.

The Regional Broadband initiative was implemented through the establishment of REDI Net, which was funded by the National Information and Telecommunications Administration (NTIA) in 2010. Now in its tenth year of operation, REDI Net is owned, managed, and operated by a coalition of local and tribal governments and is working on expansion plans throughout the region. A similar NTIA investment, and subsequent federal grants awarded to Kit Carson Electric Cooperative in Taos, have provided high-speed broadband to most Taos County businesses and residents, primarily through fiber-to-the-home technology.

Finally, Cluster Strategies for the target industries and the intersections among them were developed during the implementation phase of the Plan. While industry leaders were identified for each strategy, only some elements were ultimately carried out. In some cases, changing conditions prevented the strategies from being implemented as planned. The lack of follow-through can be partially attributed to diluting the focus among too many initiatives, something that stakeholders for this Plan update have cautioned against.

The 2009 REDI Plan also reflected a strong emphasis on LANL technology, tech transfer and tech commercialization. However, before the change in Lab management to Triad in 2018, LANL shifted its economic development focus to be more community driven. LANL's Community Partnerships Office is now strongly focused on technical assistance, workforce development for trades, and procurement opportunities for local businesses. This trend is seen across the region as communities and organizations shift their focus to support job growth in areas which benefit lower-income, rural communities, and which align with the demographics and needs of those communities.

NCNMEDD Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), 2021

The US Economic Development Administration (EDA) requires that every project submitted to the EDA for grant funding align with a regional CEDS. Economic development districts such as NCNMEDD are required to develop or update their CEDS every five years. NCNMEDD updated its CEDS in 2021 for its region, which includes the counties of Santa Fe, Los Alamos, Rio Arriba, Taos, Colfax, Mora, and San Miguel, as well as the rural areas of Sandoval County.

Table 10: CEDS Themes and Goals

Theme 1: Build on Existing Strengths	Theme 2: Go Big with Emerging Opportunities	Theme 3: Enhance Regional Infrastructure & Partnerships
Goal 1.1: Continue to foster tourism by promoting the region's authenticity and leveraging assets toward economic diversification.	Goal 2.1: Employ the region's natural assets to become a major player in the renewable energy sector.	Goal 3.1: Provide robust broadband to every household in the region.
Goal 1.2: Support industries rooted in traditional livelihoods.	Goal 2.2: Expand emerging technologies and associated manufacturing, particularly in bioscience.	Goal 3.2: Ensure that quality affordable housing options exist for young adults, families, and the workforce.
Goal 1.3: Increase local procurement and trades employment with federal contract opportunities.	Goal 2.3: Expand local manufacturing and associated opportunities for warehousing, distribution, and global trade through the region's transportation network.	Goal 3.3: Bolster small business support services throughout in the region.

In the CEDS, all communities in the region prioritized the five sectors of Outdoor Recreation, Film and Television, Professional and Technical Services, Specialty Manufacturing, and Health Care. While all communities spoke favorably about Green Energy and Agriculture, these sectors were highly ranked in counties that possess assets, such as wind, sun, and water. San Miguel, Mora, and Taos counties also identified Educational Services as a priority sector. Both Agriculture and Educational Services are associated with other sectors

prioritized by all counties, such as Specialty Manufacturing of food products and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services.

New Mexico Economic Development Department (NMEDD)

The vision of NMEDD's recent economic development plan, *Empower & Collaborate: New Mexico's Economic Path Forward* (Center for Innovation Strategy & Policy at SRI International, October 2021) is to build a diverse and robust economy that engages local talent, cultivates innovation, and delivers prosperity for all New Mexicans.

Empower & Collaborate states that while other regional economies have actively pursued new opportunities for high-skill, high-wage jobs, New Mexico has continued to rely on a few core industries—retail, agriculture, oil and gas, and government, including its federal national laboratories. This approach has resulted in inconsistent growth, limited economic opportunities for many New Mexicans, inability to capitalize upon state assets, and volatility which hinders recovery from events like the Great Recession and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Like the structure of the 2009 REDI Plan, *Empower & Collaborate* identifies six challenge areas for New Mexico's economy, which are addressed through several overarching strategies and priorities, shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Empower & Collaborate Challenge Areas and Strategies

Challenge Areas	Strategies
1. Lack of collaboration between economic development stakeholders.	1. Collaborative New Mexico: Modernize New Mexico's Economic Development Ecosystem
2. Difficulty attracting and retaining talent in urban, rural, and tribal communities.	2. Dynamic New Mexico: Strengthen New Mexico's Communities
3. Misalignment between higher education and industry.	3. Skilled New Mexico: Reimagine Education and Training
4. Disengagement of socioeconomically disadvantaged communities in planning processes.	4. Inclusive New Mexico: Promote Equity through Economic Justice
5. Public-sector dominance in New Mexico's innovation ecosystem.	5. Innovative New Mexico: Enable High-Quality Home-Grown Innovation
6. Concentration of economy in a few key industries.	6. Resilient New Mexico: Diversify New Mexico's Economy

To jumpstart New Mexico's recovery and transform its economy to become more diversified, resilient, and inclusive, *Empower & Collaborate* identifies nine industries selected for their qualities of stability, high earning potential, job creation, and high employment concentration for the state. These industries are:

- Aerospace
- Biosciences
- Cybersecurity

- Film & Television
- Outdoor Recreation
- Sustainable & Value-Added Agriculture
- Intelligent Manufacturing
- Global Trade
- Sustainable & Green Energy

Despite representing only 10-12% of total employment in the state between 2010 and 2020, several of the industries have steady employment and high employment growth. The industries also complement New Mexico's existing assets and will help address the challenge areas identified in the Plan.

New Mexico Partnership

The New Mexico Partnership is New Mexico's designated single-point-of-contact for businesses which wish to locate in New Mexico. The Partnership uses Prospective Recruitment Opportunities (PROs) to allow individual communities to respond to businesses looking for specific criteria and incentives. In alphabetical order, the Partnership identifies the following as the state's major industries for business attraction:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Business Headquarters, Support & Sales
- Defense & Aerospace
- Emerging Technologies
- Energy & Natural Resources
- IT & Data Centers
- Logistics, Warehousing & Distribution
- Value-Added Agriculture

Currently, local governments in northern New Mexico participate individually with the Partnership in responding to PROs. No regional approach or collaboration currently exists.

Summary

As shown below, there is good alignment among many of the state's industry clusters and those prioritized in the north central region. The region also has several priority sectors (Professional Services, Health Care, and Educational Services) which are not prioritized by the state, and vice versa. To build on the sectors that are aligned, the region and the state could increase collaboration. This would prevent regional efforts from operating in silos and enable the region to take full advantage of statewide resources and opportunities.

Table 12: Alignment of REDI Plan Clusters with Other Planning Documents

State & Regional Alignment?	REDI Plan (2009)	NCNMEDD CEDS (2021)	NMEDD (2021)	NM Partnership (2023)
YES	Technology	<i>Bioscience, Emerging Tech, reflected in goals</i>	Biosciences	Emerging Technologies
			Cybersecurity	
YES	Media	Film & Television	Film & Television	
YES		Outdoor Recreation	Outdoor Recreation	
YES	High-Value/ Value-Added Agriculture	Agriculture	Sustainable & Value-Added Agriculture	Value-Added Agriculture
YES		Specialty Mfg.	Intelligent Mfg.	Advanced Mfg.
YES	Renewable Energy/Clean Industry	Green Energy	Sustainable & Green Energy	Energy & Natural Resources
PARTLY		<i>Warehousing & Distribution reflected in goals</i>		Logistics, Warehousing & Distribution
NO		Professional & Technical Services		
NO		Health Care		
NO		Educational Services		
NO			Aerospace	Defense & Aerospace
NO			Global Trade	
NO				IT & Data Centers
NO				Business Headquarters, Support & Sales

IV. Major Themes and Project Recommendations

This section elaborates on the Summary Table provided in Section I: Executive Summary. It provides an overview of the major themes which emerged from analyzing conditions since the original REDI Plan was completed in 2009, and comments from the SWOT sessions and 2024 REDI Summit.

1. Regional Collaboration

In the SWOT sessions, the prominence of the broad topic of “Governance” was unexpected. Depending on the county and the specific issues discussed, Governance was variably identified as a strength, weakness, opportunity, or threat. Some participants noted that their leadership works together to address tough issues, while others cited duplication of effort, competition, and political dysfunction. Primarily, however, participants agreed on the benefits of increasing regional cooperation and discipline in focusing on one or two priorities arising from the REDI Plan update, rather than many.

Two regional economic development organizations operate in northern New Mexico. The Regional Development Corporation (RDC) was founded in 1996 as a US Department of Energy Community Reuse Organization (CRO). The RDC developed the original REDI Plan and is updating the plan through a subcontract with the North Central New Mexico Economic Development District (NCNMEDD), which was formed in 1967 as the council of governments for eight counties in north central New Mexico. NCNMEDD assists local and tribal governments to obtain funding for and manage infrastructure, community, economic development, and workforce projects.

In addition to work conducted by the regional organizations, REDI counties and others partner on many regional initiatives, including the North Central Regional Transit District (NCRTD) and REDI Net. Building on the current capacity and collaboration of regional organizations and other partners will provide a solid foundation for REDI’s implementation in the years to come.

Projects recommended for consideration include:

- a. **Sponsor a regional roundtable for collaboration, sharing of resources and expertise, and implementation of the REDI Plan.** The RDC is currently hosting a regular meeting for the Economic Development Representatives (EDOs) that work in its service area. Participants at the 2024 REDI Summit recommended a similar coordinating mechanism for communities in the region. The RDC and NCNMEDD should jointly organize a monthly roundtable for general coordination, sharing of resources and expertise, and to oversee implementation of the REDI Plan. This will improve the effectiveness of the RDC and NCNMEDD, along with other regional partners such as NCRTD and REDI Net.

2. Business Development

The RDC is the go-to resource for small businesses in northern New Mexico. It has a multi-year contract to implement the REDI Plan, including training for economic development organizations (EDOs), business retention and expansion (BR&E) efforts, small business and financial services, and human capital initiatives. It also receives an annual investment from LANL to carry out economic diversification and job growth initiatives identified in Triad's Community Investment Plan.



The RDC's role is significant because, according to the [US Small Business Administration](#), small businesses make up 99% of all businesses in New Mexico. Fifty-four percent of employees in New Mexico work for small businesses. Nowhere is small business more important than in northern New Mexico. There are a number of anchor businesses in the Santa Fe and Los Alamos area, but they are the exception to the rule. And those anchor businesses rely on smaller businesses to meet their needs, providing a growing number of opportunities for local entrepreneurs and creative suppliers.

Northern New Mexico's small businesses are diverse, reflecting the region's rich traditions, arts and culture, agricultural heritage, recreational opportunities, and technology assets. As a result, the RDC has and continues to support a broad range of businesses with coaching, start-up and expansion assistance, financing, and access to capital.

Projects recommended for consideration include:

- a. **Continue to build regional economic development capacity through economic development events, small business training, coaching, industry-specific problem solving, and expanded outreach.**

The RDC will continue to host events on basic economic development programs, tools, and selected topics. Events feature experts in key areas of such as business attraction, strategic planning, economic development finance, real estate development, credit analysis, small business development, business retention/expansion, workforce development, technology-led economic development, economic development ethics and other pertinent topics.

The RDC provides structured training to address all aspects of business, including planning, finance, marketing, manufacturing, and workforce. Training is offered both in person and virtual, tailored to local business needs and interests and featuring partners with expertise in specific topics. The RDC will also continue its

one-to-one coaching and connections to resources for local leaders and economic developers on topics of concern or interest.

The RDC often works with businesses on common problems related to business concerns. Where issues are identified, the RDC will identify the appropriate sector partnerships and engage the appropriate strategic partners. This includes working with the LANL's Small Business Assistance Program or New Mexico MEP for technical issues, workforce partners on workforce issues, and city/county officials and local economic developers on regulatory and permitting challenges.

The RDC is in the process of reinvigorating its outreach efforts, aimed at reaching start-ups and small to medium sized businesses within the region, generating new contacts, and responding to referrals and other requests for assistance. The RDC's approach is to be a problem-solver and ally, and to provide ongoing support for the business. This includes helping the business define its needs, connecting the business to partners and resources, and offering access to RDC funding opportunities as well as other sources of capital.

b. Strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem by addressing critical infrastructure needs in professional services, real estate, and small business hubs and marketplaces.

Northern New Mexico entrepreneurs face several unique systemic challenges that are best addressed through a larger, regional approach. The first of these is professional services at all levels, most impactfully in legal, human resources, and finance/accounting. This gap in services impacts all businesses but is particularly challenging for small businesses and entrepreneurs who lack expertise and connections in these areas. The RDC can play a key role in training the professional services workforce through apprenticeships, internships, and work-based learning; by assisting professional services start-ups; and helping existing businesses to grow and expand. Jobs in professional services are high paying, can often be done remotely, and can evolve into economic base opportunities marketed to the region, state, and beyond.

A second need is an up-to-date real estate inventory, including incubator space, vacant and available buildings, which can be used to help entrepreneurs and small businesses start up and expand. Such an inventory would enable northern New Mexico to retain and nurture more small businesses as they grow, rather than lose businesses with growth potential to metropolitan areas or other states. Participants at the 2024 REDI Summit expressed interest in a regional network of physical hubs for coworking, training and technical assistance. It was noted that most rural communities have vacant, unused, or underutilized spaces that can be repurposed to support this concept.

Finally, the RDC plans to develop an annual physical and online marketplace to highlight its clients' products and services. This concept can be expanded to

include other northern New Mexico entrepreneurs and small businesses to keep dollars local and increase connections and sales among businesses throughout the region.

c. **Continue and expand upon RDC-led business development efforts with a regional approach to business attraction and Prospective Recruitment Opportunities (PROs).**

While business attraction typically benefits larger communities outside of northern New Mexico, communities in our region would benefit by having the RDC vet PRO opportunities with a lens on individual community assets across the entire region. An opportunity that is not a good fit in one community may be right for another. Having a “bird’s eye” view of the whole region is a strategic way of doing business attraction so it benefits rural communities.

As part of its PRO and business attraction work, the RDC should consider a regional marketing campaign that builds upon northern New Mexico’s reputation for natural beauty and cultural assets. Such a campaign would impart a quality of life that is attractive to small innovative businesses, entrepreneurs, and home-based workers who want to grow, develop technology, and/or manufacture products in a more sustainable way. A regional marketing campaign would have numerous benefits, including reducing costs to individual communities, maximizing impact and visibility, recruiting new and innovative businesses, and encouraging new local business formation and growth.

3. **Workforce**

Workforce availability, the quality of local talent, and workforce training were discussed at length in each of the four SWOT sessions. Participants viewed existing institutions of higher education and their workforce training programs as strengths but found the quality of local schools to be uneven throughout the region.

There was a general concern that northern New Mexico is losing its youth and college graduates to places of greater opportunity. This was also reflected in *Empower & Collaborate*, which cited low population growth, out-migration of young people, and difficulty attracting young professionals, especially in the rural areas. REDI stakeholders commented on the opportunity to attract young people through remote work, which could be an advantage for the region.



The emphasis on workforce was present in the original REDI Plan, but the hiring environment is quite different today. Influenced by post-pandemic trends, employers across the nation are struggling to find workers. This is pushing wages upward for jobs in most industries and provides a rare opportunity to address low incomes throughout the region, particularly in the rural areas.

Another difference from 2009 is the region's opportunity to capitalize on a \$6.4 million EDA Good Jobs Challenge grant, awarded to the NCNMEDD, the RDC, Santa Fe Community College, and other partners in 2022. The grant is funding the Northern NM Workforce Integrated Network (WIN) to support workforce development in the health care and skilled trades sectors. These sectors are critical for northern NM, with its aging population, shortage of doctors and nurses, and high demand for craft workers at LANL and its subcontractors. The project has a strong equity focus. Among the populations targeted for job placement include minorities, low-wage/low-skilled workers, and individuals transitioning from substance abuse recovery and the criminal justice system. This project grew organically from past and existing REDI human capital initiatives, such as Accelerate, the Workforce and Academic Network, and the Higher Education Workforce Project.

Projects recommended for consideration include:

a. Continue and expand the Workforce Integrated Network (WIN) to address regional workforce needs.

Participants at the 2024 REDI Summit emphasized the need to break down silos through articulation within the educational system, collaboration with employers, and multiple on-ramps for youth, low-skilled workers, returning citizens, and individuals recovering from substance abuse disorder. This work is currently in progress through WIN. As the RDC and NCNMEDD plan for the continuation of WIN after the grant ends in the fall of 2025, they will outline roles for current and new partners, as well as address sustainability and funding.

b. Develop private sector leadership for key industries.

As discussed in Section II, New Mexico and northern New Mexico are historically dependent on government employment. Northern New Mexico's private sector consists primarily of small businesses, most of which do not have sufficient time or resources to become involved in industry groups. As a result, government entities have historically led most economic development initiatives. If the region is to diversify, it is critical to shift the current paradigm and place industry at the center of regional economic development. As part of WIN, the skilled trades and health care sectors have active sector leadership and are meeting and collaborating regularly. Sector development is expected to continue and expand with the continuation of WIN, using the State of Colorado as a model.

c. Implement work-based learning, career technical education (CTE), and employability skills.

Many of today's workforce challenges stem from decades of disinvestment in vocational and technical education. Employers participating in WIN and the REDI Plan voiced the need to enhance, increase, and where possible, standardize, CTE and work-based learning programs, career support, and soft skills education. The New Mexico Public Education Department's (PED) [Innovation Zone](#) initiative was cited as a model for schools throughout the region. The WIN program's current grant funding does not address individuals younger than 21 years of age; however, the RDC and NCNMEDD are beginning to work with PED, high schools, and middle schools to incorporate youth into the model going forward.

d. Support workforce development through government investments in quality, affordable housing, transportation, and childcare.

Local and Tribal governments, employers, and residents alike recognize that employees need personal stability to be successful at their jobs and careers. Yet the basic supports of housing, transportation, and childcare lie out of reach for many low-income people. A critical role for government is to act upon these needs which are in the public wheelhouse through targeted community investments. This would provide support and resources for individuals and private sector businesses to grow and prosper and would lay a foundation for successful public-private partnerships in the years to come.

4. Climate Change and Renewables

Stakeholder input for this Plan update reveals strong interest in advancing renewables and climate resiliency. In the SWOT sessions, stakeholders discussed the region's natural attributes for solar and wind. While individual local and tribal governments and businesses are participating in the renewables sector, there is no regional sector leadership in place currently.



REDI Plan stakeholders recognize the opportunities emerging from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), passed in August 2022. The IRA is the single largest investment in climate and energy in US history. It targets major investments in domestic energy production, clean energy manufacturing, and sets the US on a path to achieving its climate change goals, including a net-zero economy by 2050. These goals are reflected at the state level, with New Mexico's Energy Transition Act (ETA) requiring 100% zero-carbon electricity for utilities by 2045 and for rural electric cooperatives by 2050. Los

Alamos County has pledged a more ambitious goal of 100% zero-carbon electricity by 2040.

The region also has the benefit of LANL's groundbreaking work on climate change. In addition to serving as a national leader in hydrogen research, the Lab is working on technologies to support systemic change, including reduction of plastic waste. LANL and the University of New Mexico are also providing the research for I-WEST, a consortium of six states (Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Montana, and Wyoming) whose goal is to scale down national energy use and carbon emissions at the local level. The consortium's recent [Phase I report](#) highlights technologies that can help facilitate the energy transition from fossil fuels in the Mountain West region, including turning Co2 into fuel. This expertise places Los Alamos in a leadership role, including the ability to foster change at the state level.

Climate change has become more tangible due to the increased number, scale, and unpredictability of disasters in recent years. Recent climate caused disasters, including those in the north central region, have brought the need for resiliency to the forefront. Strategic investments in resilient infrastructure can be game-changing for the regional economy, ushering in new, high paying jobs that are well matched with the environmental priorities and needs of the region. The sector integrates various levels of job opportunities, including professional and support services, research, and development, testing and engineering, installation and maintenance, and manufacturing and sales. In this way, it promotes equity by providing opportunities for workers at all levels of education and career development.

Projects recommended for consideration include:

a. Align the region with complementary Renewable sector strategies and manufacturing opportunities.

Participants at the REDI Summit agreed on the need to document data, assets, and projects, and to develop a strategy for the region. At the same time, participants noted that strategies for Renewables will only be effective on a larger scale, at least on a statewide or multi-state level. It therefore makes sense for the REDI region to participate in and become aligned with two ongoing efforts. The first is a nascent statewide advanced energy alliance focused on NM regulatory reform, marketing, and development of manufacturing hubs. The second is the North American Intelligence Manufacturing Initiative, which recently received an EDA grant to develop workforce training in cybersecurity and IT, which have applications for Renewables. The RDC will be working to ensure REDI region participation in both groups, and to potentially bring manufacturing opportunities to the region.

b. Establish the region as a national leader in place-based climate resiliency.

There is great opportunity to build upon LANL's expertise in technologies that help address climate change at a more systemic level. Also, with the national

disasters experienced in northern New Mexico, including previous wildfires in Los Alamos County and the recent Calf Canyon/Hermit's Peak fire in Mora, San Miguel and Colfax counties, the region can apply its growing expertise in climate resiliency.

5. Housing Infrastructure

Housing has taken on renewed importance due to numerous factors (supply chain issues, high material and labor costs, worker shortages and stagnant production) in play at the national level. Mirroring national trends and exacerbated by long-standing local issues such as old housing stock and high home prices, housing is the most frequently mentioned infrastructure need in the region. Today's crisis in housing affordability and availability is impacting far more than business attraction efforts. In most communities, housing deficiencies make it difficult to fill positions in the essential local workforce, including teachers, nurses, and public safety workers. The lack of housing and its high cost is also a barrier to retaining young people and recent college graduates in their home communities. In the region's communities which rely on tourism, the service sector workforce, as well as moderately paid members of the professional workforce, are priced out of the housing market, which is often saturated by second homes and vacation rentals.



Los Alamos County, Santa Fe County, and the City of Santa Fe have developed programs to keep people housed, develop housing, and incentivize housing development. The Town of Taos is moving in a similar direction. However, Taos County, Rio Arriba County, and the City of Española do not have housing programs or staff of their own. Several of these communities are currently being assisted by NCNMEDD's housing technical assistance program, funded by the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority, which provides preliminary site plan and pro forma development for housing projects.

Projects recommended for consideration include:

- a. **Develop and implement a regional housing strategy with goals for each county or community.**

The strategy should identify targets for additional rental and homeownership at various income levels, using both new construction and rehabilitation, and should identify potential sites and projects.

b. Identify a primary entity to track housing goals, coordinate projects, and work with developers, communities, and Tribes.

At the 2024 REDI Summit, participants discussed the need for a regional point person or entity to assist communities, keep housing efforts on track, and to be available to work with developers as well as communities and Tribes. This entity could also serve as a one-stop shop for updating codes and ordinances to align with best practices which incentivize additional housing, such as higher-density zoning and accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

c. Sponsor housing summits and other events to mobilize housing projects and initiatives.

Continuing education and regional collaboration are needed to effectively plan and develop critical housing for communities and workforce. Due to its expertise in housing and its experience with housing development including senior, Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, and workforce projects, Los Alamos County is a natural leader in this area and should continue to organize regional summits and events.

6. Broadband Infrastructure

Broadband continues to be a primary infrastructure concern in this Plan update, as it was in the original REDI Plan and the NCNMEDD CEDS. A major accomplishment of the 2009 REDI Plan was securing \$10.6 million in federal funding for the REDI Net middle mile broadband network in Rio Arriba and Santa Fe counties, as well as funding for Kit Carson Electric's fiber to the home

deployment in Taos County. REDI Net is significant because it is a community-based, open access network, meaning that it is not proprietary and that last-mile providers which meet minimum quality standards can tie in at affordable rates.



Nevertheless, most residents and many businesses outside of Taos County still lack high-speed internet, with needs being especially acute in rural and remote communities. At the 2024 REDI Summit, the Broadband roundtable recognized that high-speed broadband to the home, ideally fiber-to-the-home, is a necessity in the rural areas of the state for economic growth and daily life. Gaps in broadband continue to represent a major barrier to business expansion and attraction throughout the region. More collaboration is clearly needed to enable interconnections, redundancy, middle-mile expansion, and last-mile services.

The broadband environment in the REDI region has become more complex since the completion of REDI Net in 2013. With significant amounts of federal and state funding now available for broadband, a multitude of established providers and new entities are applying for grant funds, including rural electric cooperatives which represent good last-mile partners for REDI Net. While REDI Net is also applying for grants to build out middle-mile fiber to unserved and underserved areas, it is competing with many better resourced companies who have funding to not only apply for grants, but also to challenge competing applications.

Projects recommended for consideration include:

a. Establish regional partnerships to apply for funding and bring high-speed broadband to areas where it is lacking.

While there is general knowledge of broadband gaps in the region, areas lacking broadband should be mapped and a funding/deployment strategy developed for each. With proper funding, REDI Net would be the ideal entity to carry this out, given its presence throughout the region, its public ownership by local governments and Pueblos, and its middle mile focus. Where appropriate, REDI Net could partner with and/or assist last mile providers with funding applications to address regional gaps.

b. Provide broadband information and options to residential and small business customers.

At the REDI Summit, residents expressed frustration with broadband service, including gaps in service, slow speeds, high costs, and lack of options for upgrading service. Residents suggested having one or more websites to show the broadband/ISP offerings in various areas, and options for alternative installers or residential hubs/nodes to bring down the cost of deployment.

c. Provide REDI Net with operational funding and technical assistance to develop a sustainable financial model.

Because REDI Net is a middle-mile network which charges affordable rates, primarily to government entities, its revenue growth is limited. To operate at its full potential, expand into new areas, and ensure affordable service and open access for all, the organization requires more capacity via greater revenue or financial support from the region it serves. This will help ensure that an open-access, middle mile network remains viable for all communities in northern New Mexico.

Beyond broadband and housing, other infrastructure essential to economic development, including transportation, childcare, regional health care and quality of life improvements have been priorities for Los Alamos County for many years. This Plan recommends that the County continue its investments in these areas. It is notable that

infrastructure deficiencies are typically more severe in rural areas. In 2021 and 2022, the State of New Mexico formed a Rural Economic Opportunities Task Force and commissioned a report which points to severe water, wastewater, and other infrastructure deficiencies in our rural areas, including counties like Rio Arriba and Taos. The high concentration of infrastructure deficiencies in rural areas continues to be an equity issue in our region and New Mexico as a whole.

7. Funding

REDI's funding strategy is shaped by the fact that federal funding opportunities exist at an unprecedented scale for the next five years. Following on the heels of significant disaster relief from the Coronavirus pandemic, the federal government passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), in November 2021. IIJA is an extraordinary investment in U.S. infrastructure. The law authorizes \$1.2 trillion for transportation and infrastructure spending, including for energy, broadband, and water infrastructure. Some of the funding is available through competitive grants issued by federal agencies, with most funding flowing through established federal programs administered by states. Funding will be made available over a five-year period, rather than in a short one or two-year window, as was the case with the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

IIJA and the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, discussed previously, represent once-in-a-lifetime opportunities for north central New Mexico communities to obtain grant funding for infrastructure projects. However, along with these opportunities come challenges of matching funds and capacity for grant writing, implementation, and project management. Two major events are working to address these challenges:

- Beginning in July 2023, NCNMEDD established a free grant writing and technical assistance program for public entities in the region. To date, the program has resulted in nearly 130 grant applications, 60 of which have been awarded, with 35 applications pending. Awards total \$40 million in regional investment to date. The program depends upon continued annual funding from the Legislature and is currently funded through fiscal year 2026.
- In the 2024 Legislative Session, the State of New Mexico instituted a \$75 million matching fund for federal grants, with additional funds appropriated for tribal projects. This is a positive step that will help Tribes and small local governments apply for federal grants which require matching funds; however, the funds have yet to be released and will likely not be sufficient to meet demand.

This Plan and regional cooperation are key to ensuring that north central New Mexico capitalizes on new funding to address the infrastructure deficiencies that continue to hold our region back.

This Plan recommends that:

- a. Los Alamos County and other local and tribal governments support recurring funding for NCNMEDD's grant writing and technical assistance program through advocacy with regional legislators.**
- b. Los Alamos County considers developing or partnering with other entities on a matching fund or funding pool for the region.**
- c. In terms of Los Alamos County's current investments, priority should be given to:**
 - Projects that will leverage the greatest amount of funding from federal, state, and other sources.
 - Projects that promote equity in the region by improving conditions in small, rural, and/or under-resourced communities.
 - Projects that are regional, utilize a regional platform, or are replicable among communities.

Appendix A: SWOT Session Summaries

Rio Arriba County, April 21, 202

Key topics of discussion included:

- **Governance:** The group shared that politics sometimes holds up progress and also leads to duplication of efforts. Improving partnerships to reduce these inefficiencies was highlighted. The group believed that a consistent vision among leaders would give larger initiatives a greater chance for success.
- **Data:** Related to governance and the roles of our participants, the group expressed that some of their organizations deal with a lot of data. They wanted to ensure that REDI and other projects were being led in a way that includes visible metrics to determine success or otherwise adjust the approach.
- **Tourism/Recreation:** Ohkay Owingeh has a 42-acre outdoor recreation facility that is intended to support outdoor recreation interests of the larger region. While fully funded, the organizers would like more collaboration and participation in planning and activities from partners and others in the region. Although not discussed in the SWOT session, Rio Arriba County is also planning a regional recreation facility.
- **Support for Local Business:** There was interest in finding ways to encourage more visitors and travelers to support local and tribal businesses.
- **Transportation:** There was a desire to rethink and develop strategies for a more regional approach to transportation.

Rio Arriba County SWOT Summary			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p><u>Workforce</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern NM College trades programs Northern NM El Rito Campus <p><u>Industries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture Recreation Tourism Arts Creative experiences Creative entrepreneurship <p><u>Governance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community's willingness to address difficult topics <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our traditions and cultures 	<p><u>Workforce</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating living wage jobs <p><u>Industries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attracting industries, businesses other than fast food <p><u>Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall maintenance of the community Infrastructure needs to be updated and expanded to ensure capacity for growth Affordable housing Mental health and addiction resources <p><u>Governance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent vision needed for the future from county and city working together Politics can get in the way of things Duplication of community services <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative perceptions of our area are highlighted by media 	<p><u>Industries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative cultural entrepreneurship Support local and tribal businesses <p><u>Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanding public transit so the workforce can access job opportunities LANL facilities located in community <p><u>Funding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased federal funding (IIJA/BIL) <p><u>Governance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City council and tribal government working together Coordination of efforts and less redundancy <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive marketing 	<p><u>Workforce</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of workforce preparation for industry sectors we seek to attract Workforce challenges Youth leaving for better opportunities <p><u>Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broadband weakness Changes in funding environment <p><u>Governance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competing priorities and agendas Dependent on government resources mindset <p><u>Disasters/Resiliency</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-going Pandemic and economic fallout Global events that impact fuel prices and costs of goods <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing sector of aged residents and insufficient health services

Los Alamos County, April 21 and 24, 2022

Key topics of discussion included:

Data, IT, and Quantum Computing: The most successful companies that have spun off from the Lab and stayed in our region are data or IT based. Of particular interest is the development around Quantum Computing where LANL and New Mexico are on the leading edge and LANL Chief Scientist John Sarrao has been working on developing a strategy to ensure economic impact locally, as well. Participants asked how Los Alamos remains the leader in this area and converts its leadership into economic gain and jobs for the region.

Energy: Participants emphasized that climate change is pushing forward a carbon neutral economy and asked how this impacts the region and what opportunities exist. The US Department of Energy (DOE) is emphasizing approaches to energy that recognize the need for decarbonization or removing oil and gas from our energy portfolio. For LANL this includes investment and interests in the hydrogen economy in the southwest. Additionally, given oil and gas production in Rio Arriba County, this may provide local opportunity to assist in the transition to renewable sources.

JUSTICE 40: DOE has adopted the “Justice 40” initiative to combat climate change. This may represent an opportunity to enhance LANL’s environmental capabilities.

Workforce: Trends for LANL run counter to what we are seeing nationally: Instead of an aging workforce, LANL’s average age dropped from 52 to 42 in recent years. The group was curious if other communities see a similar shift, particularly in locations that appear attractive to younger employees and those who can work from home. This change has had unexpected effects, like the increased need for daycare and other services that younger demographics most want.

Arts: The group was interested in opportunities that would add value to artist participation in Santa Fe and other art markets.

Governance: In discussion around the REDI approach, there was consensus that efforts coming out of the REDI plan focus on only one or two priority efforts. *“We need to have the discipline to pick two. And to do them to do them well over a long term, rather than to pick nine and spread the butter so thin, that we really never get traction anywhere.”*

Other: There was an interest in understanding how the US’s recent investment in domestic manufacturing capability could benefit the region. The group also discussed the target wage of jobs we want to create and how to address the disparity between tech jobs at \$97,000 compared to service sector and tourism jobs at minimum wage.

Los Alamos County SWOT Summary			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p><u>Workforce</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experienced workers Intellectual capacity (1000's of the world's brightest minds inscience) Diversity of culture and human capital Educated work force Young workers School system <p><u>Industries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NMSBA Program NM LEEP Environment and outdoors Skiing and variety of outdoor recreation opportunities <p><u>Governance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive county government Partnerships People 	<p><u>Workforce</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of experienced entrepreneurs who can scale a business Lack of workforce Short on construction trade training Inequitable educational opportunity in the region <p><u>Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land to develop Limited real estate for private investment Lack of housing Expensive housing Missing middle housing Public transportation <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Silver tsunami Inequality Poverty 	<p><u>Workforce</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging youth for science careers Great place for remote work <p><u>Industries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Momentum, investment, and support around electrification movement Outdoor opportunities LANL spin offs New Energy economy Carbon free power <p><u>Governance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem solving ability with Los Alamos County <p><u>Funding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Govt' funding offers stability during a national recession 	<p><u>Workforce</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finding skilled labor to build infrastructure needed for economic growth (new roads, housing, commercial buildings) Getting college graduates to return or stay in the region Funding for trade schools Lack of skilled labor <p><u>Funding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downturn in federal funding would affect LAC Change in federal priorities and related spending Supply chain Change in state attitude toward LANL

Taos County, April 25, 2022

Key topics of discussion included:

Tourism/Outdoor Recreation: The group expressed that outdoor recreation efforts need to be balanced with environmental needs and protection of natural resources. Natural disasters such as wildfire can result from outdoor recreation, and we need to consider displacement and additional costs.

Workforce: There is a disconnection between jobs in high tech/high growth industry segments mentioned in different plans and the kids in our schools. We must ensure a pathway and opportunities for people who are not geared toward high growth industry sectors. The region should consider the full spectrum of employment needs.

Governance: The timing of the REDI Plan Update may be a special opportunity to reconnect and reestablish a healthy working relationship across the region. There is a desire to participate in and contribute to a plan and strategy that identifies a project, the resources it needs, and really follows through, building accountability and trust in the process. Taos County SWOT Session participants seek a resilient collaboration that persists through challenges and through the long term.

Taos County SWOT Summary			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p><u>Workforce</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNM Taos • UNM Taos -HIVE <p><u>Industries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gigabit founder networks • Solar arrays, and planning towards a more sustainable micro-grid electric system • Biotech initiatives • Project to build two-way transmission line for renewable power import and export <p><u>Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading technology infrastructure • Housing effort with Project Moxie, NCNMEDD, Town of Taos, Taos County, Questa, etc. • Broadband completion with state and federal funding for students, schools, and community members <p><u>Disasters/Resiliency</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of the formal Enchanted Circle Community Organizations Active in Disaster • Doughnut Economics and other regenerative economic models to address climate change <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water banking • Water Issues & Commitments 	<p><u>Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The housing crisis is impacting health care, educators, workers, etc. • Out migration of youth and limited workforce due to housing crisis <p><u>Governance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of clear plans and accountability • Historical trauma and ignorance getting in the way of movement forward • Transparency regarding funding; what you have, what you are going after, how it fits to community goals, and where are we collaborating vs. competing • Lack of mechanisms and safe places to develop political will <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecosystem is not balanced 	<p><u>Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding broadband in all northern NM • Create one integrated high-speed broadband network for all north central NM with multiple players • Sustainable housing initiative – think Green starting now. What are we waiting for? <p><u>Governance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamlining initiatives • The power of collaboration • Projects where we can model a new kind of politics – servant leadership, bipartisan, serving the whole or something greater than one's personal desires 	<p><u>Governance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How we are not funding enough of the right things such as forest and soil health, workforce development • Lack of clear commitment to focus areas and goals then how to secure funding collectively for them. • Sometimes, leaders' inability to know their lane, be 100% accountable for their lane, and truly collaborate across lanes. <p><u>Disasters/Resiliency</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global warming impact on water • Covid and future pandemics • Drought, high winds, and fire as northern NM's climate issues. How are we not prepared? <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gentrification

Santa Fe County, April 25, 2022

Key topics of discussion included:

Housing: The group expressed that housing is an essential part of economic development.

Food and Agriculture: Participants supported messaging and efforts to develop the food and agriculture ecosystem which are more geared toward farmers and the state being “independent” about economic development.

Workforce: Recognizing that high tech and high growth are important, and that new opportunities for artisans and specialty manufacturing are good, many people are changing sheets, driving trucks, and engaged in the trades. People at “the lower rungs of the ladder” need to be included because that is just as critical to the overall success of the region.

Santa Fe County SWOT Summary			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p><u>Workforce</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated workforce (large percentage of advanced degrees) • Generally, there is coordination among ecosystem providers from the workforce, business training, etc. • Learning institutions have a high number of Hispanic and minority students <p><u>Industries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LANL helps local manufacturers • Meow Wolf • Tourism Industry • Large number of galleries, festivals, and folk art recognition • Natural beauty and end of the Rockies (the Rockies *Start* here!) • Outdoor assets, low traffic, general high quality of life • Great weather • Cultural heritage of the Pueblos, World Heritage Sites • World class Art Market (world is Aware!) • Brand recognition for Santa Fe • Amazing Opera • Greer Garson Film Studio • Emphasis on sustainability • Alternative medicine <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A history of resiliency 	<p><u>Workforce</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current challenge of LANL recruiting and draining local talent because of high pay • Brain drain and problems retaining talent within the area • Lack of connection into rural schools <p><u>Industries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of diversity in the economy • <p><u>Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadband access, digital divide • Broadband for post-production • High cost of living and lack of affordable housing <p><u>Governance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agility and process improvements needed at the governmental, institutional level <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socioeconomic gap between high end and low end • Adjusting land use regulation to support broader community development • NIMBYism 	<p><u>Industries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are well-poised for renewable energy <p><u>Funding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal infrastructure funding <p><u>Governance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unified infrastructure efforts • Unified grant hunting • Include Pueblos in “economic development” thinking <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over development of other areas (we do focus on quality of life in the region) 	<p><u>Workforce</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordability and quality education of other markets <p><u>Industries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliance on tourism <p><u>Funding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in federal or state policy maybe if we think there will be funding • Recession or economic downturn always possible <p><u>Disasters/Resiliency</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution channels/networks of other markets • World changes faster than we can adapt for our community and the next generation

Appendix B: REDI Summit Notes, March 5, 2024

Business Development Roundtable

Facilitator: Richard Lavallee, RDC

- We quickly moved away from the tourism question. Taos Chamber, and Santa Fe's economic developer, all feel self-sufficient in tourism. But all agreed that tourism has yet to develop NM to its full potential. For the RDC, the importance is having an ongoing tourism relationship to better serve its hospitality and tourism portfolio.
- Somebody expressed the need to implement a business-to-business supply network.
- Also, to implement an ongoing conversation between the communities like the current RDC's EDO roundtable.
- An obvious urgency for all the communities at the table is to create a vehicle to promote their empty commercial real estate spaces. This could be a component of the entrepreneur ecosystem project.
- We also discussed skill trade training, perceived as a handicap to economic growth.
- In the end, when asked about what entity should undertake these issues, it was always unanimously the RDC—in short, the RDC is perceived as best to connect businesses-to-businesses, communities-to-communities, businesses to resources, and champion some critical needs in Northern NM's communities.

Broadband Roundtable

Facilitator: Jerrold Baca, REDI Net

Summary:

The Broadband working group was attended by one internet service provider, multiple county representatives, a representative from Senator Ben Ray's office and community members interested in high speed broadband availability. The discussion was focused more on consumer issues and suggestions reflect this.

Resources or Data for Broadband:

- The group would like to see websites that show more ISP offerings in their respective areas.
- Opportunities for alternative installers for fiber to the home due to high cost quoted by incumbent providers.
- Hubs and maps for businesses to be able to access high-speed broadband in areas where there is none.

Short and Long term Goals:

- Partnering with other communities to bring high-speed broadband where there is none. Where there is a need for one community, there is a need for all.
- Recognizing fiber as a utility.

Next Steps and Implementation:

- Counties start looking at fiber to the home as intentional builds

- Look at leasing licensed wireless spectrum as a community to meet short term needs and in rural areas where fiber build costs are high.
- Counties go after available grants for high speed broadband builds
- Regional collaboration

Key Players in broadband:

- Counties and local government
- ISPs willing to invest in the area to bring competitive pricing

Conclusion:

It is recognized that high-speed broadband is a necessity in rural areas across the state. The opportunity for economic growth and for life well-being is enhanced with high speed broadband. Local, state, and federal officials need to continue to push for and fund high-speed broadband initiatives in rural New Mexico

Housing Roundtable

Facilitator: Daniel Osborn, Los Alamos Count

- Folks generally thought the recommendations were too general and recommended a multi-faceted approach to housing. RDC to provide resources to the region and point person to provide continuity and hold jurisdictions to accountable through time in their delivery of new housing stock (based on local Master Plans). Resources could include:
 - One-stop-shop for regionally approved ADU and housing stock plans that are pre-approved by the local jurisdictions.
 - Point person/attorney to facilitate discussions with the Pueblos and Tribes to understand legal structure of development on the Pueblo/Tribal lands.
 - In addition to grant writing services – RDC should consider grant management and reporting services to the region.
 - Infrastructure and parcel mapping to know who owns development parcels and to ensure proper prioritization of infrastructure projects and identify cross funding opportunities.
- Continued facilitation of housing summits and discussion -- What is working, what isn't, opportunities and challenges, etc.

Renewables Roundtable

Facilitator: Darien Cabral, San Ildefonso Enterprises, RDC

Notes by Suzie Havemann, Los Alamos County Councilor

- Impressive group of people are around the table who should be leading this effort.
- San Ildefonso Services is planning a solar array on Pueblo land that can potentially provide power to LANL, Los Alamos County), the Pojoaque Regional Water System and the Pueblo.
- The Lab has resources but needs to commit.
- LANL will do a procurement in the Spring for energy that will be open to bidders nationally. Secretary Granholm has presented the idea of Tribal preference, but nothing is signed.
- Sustainability UAC (?) Is part of a food composting project with Santa Fe and Ls Cruces. Have

learned that EPA wants partnerships.

- A challenge is getting someone to step up to be a fiscal agent who can be accountable, write grants and provide administration.
- David Perez is creating a not-for profit- statewide energy consortium – Advanced Energy Alliance. There is a need to follow up.
- A lot of people and organizations are working in silos – communication is needed throughout NM.
- Renewable Industries Energy Association was mentioned.
- REAP – Renewable Energy for American Program -USDA – helps fund solar projects
- The issue is much broader than regional scale – it's statewide and larger. Need to think federal – pull in Senator Heinrich
- NCNMEDD is involved in resiliency opportunities associated with the disasters including biochar manufacturing which is one way to utilize waste (burned) wood.
- NM reforestation center is going in at Mora – greenhouse will be producing five million seedlings annually.
- The Science and Technology Department is issuing RFPs for biofuels. Idea to address housing with an abundance of timber.
- RETA- Renewable Energy Transmission Authority.
- 550 mile line from NM to Pima County AZ to send power from NM to western markets. 4000MW DC line – no off or on ramps - more efficient.
- Represents \$20B investment in New Mexico.
- Biggest issue with RETA line is storage.
- Representative Tara Lujan is planning an Energy Summit and encourages participation.
- Renewables are critical regarding our resources, e.g. there are geothermal resources in Jemez

Next steps:

- Develop a new organization
- Darien will talk to Pat Vanderpool and David Perez.
- Darien will connect folks through a website or online platform.

Workforce Roundtable

Facilitator: Rebecca Estrada, LANL

What does the group think of the recommendations?

- Concern about enough NM high school students gaining technical training because of the state's population cliff and that many are moving into higher education.
- While we understand the focus of the recommendation, the group felt focusing on high school without considering articulation to post-secondary and workforce could further silo the system. Incentivizing employer engagement and cross-sector connection is encouraged.
- Need sustainability for the private sector.
- Need to ensure the three recommendations are future focused, including using LMI for job projection and wages.
- Concerns about New Mexicans leaving the state. We need to build programs that connect college to career options and to shift the narrative from Land of Enchantment to Land of Enchantment AND Opportunity.

Additional recommendations

Themes:

- Innovation
 - Technical talent pipelines
 - Systemic connections, coordination, and collaboration
 - Assets of our communities: cultural, language, and diversity
 - Community engagement and leadership
 - Cultural respect and equity in access
 - Diversity in economic growth. Thinking for today *and* tomorrow.
 - Ensure integration of CTE and core academics in public schools through comprehensive supports and accountability. Innovation Zone as model.
 - Engage students struggling in school, who have substance use disorder, or who have been adjudicated with workforce opportunities and learning opportunities.
 - Multiple on-ramps for youth, including workforce training
 - Intentional focus on connecting youth and private sector
 - Sustainability of programs and supports
 - Holistic approaches
 - Tribal partners need to be at the table
 - How can youth give input on programs designed to serve them?
-
- Need to increase transportation resources, especially in Los Alamos area.
 - Need to increase housing supports.
 - Need to increase access to childcare.
 - Articulation critical from high school curricula to community colleges and postsecondary, including in dual credit structure and in developing specific credentials and certifications focused on high school students and those re-entering the workforce. This needs to be closely aligned (and updated) to employer needs.
 - Ensure high school curricula include discrete employability skills such as problem solving, collaboration, project-based learning, communication, time management, critical analysis, listening, asking questions.

Resources or Data

- *Data*: State leaders are developing New Mexico Longitudinal Data System (NMLDS) or NMRISE to provide and analyze student data on educational achievement and employment outcomes from early childhood through the workforce, using unique student identifiers separate from social security numbers
- *Data*: Apprenticeship numbers through DWS on completers, job placements and other impacts
- *Data*: UNM Anderson Business School – long-term feasibility study on Innovation Zones
- *Resources*: Innovation Zones movement in NM, graduation profiles, capstones, connected learning, work-based learning (Be Pro Be Proud truck, pre-apprenticeships), high school career consultants
- *Resources*: 100 Percent New Mexico – community assessment on 10 key indicators; Thrive Survey that includes community schools and school-based health centers
- *Resources*: Other private sector interest and willingness to engage young people through having employers in schools
- *Resource*: WIN mobile unit in skilled trades

Key Players

- Community schools
- NM Public Education Department
- NM Higher Education Department
- NM Department of Workforce Solutions
- School district administrators
- Charter school representatives
- Community schools
- Chambers of Commerce and Industry/Union Representatives
- Career and Technical Education representatives
- Work-based learning representatives and WBL focused groups (e.g. Northern New Mexico Coalition for WBL)
- Special education administrators and teachers. DVR?
- Native American Chamber of Commerce and other tribal workforce leaders
- Youth voices, groups and councils (Taos Kids, Future Focused Education, Boys and Girls Clubs, Girls, Inc.)
- Local intermediaries
- Local Workforce Development Boards and Workforce Connection Centers

Appendix C: REDI Plan Participants

Name	Affiliation	Participation
Abeita, Monica	North Central NM EDD	REDI Summit-Broadband Roundtable REDI Summit-Renewables Roundtable
Allen, Paul	UNM Los Alamos	Los Alamos County SWOT Session
Antelles-Roberts, Patricia	Convivial Design Studio	REDI Summit-Broadband Roundtable
Baker-Wright, Toby	LANL Foundation	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Barbee, Julianna	SBDC, Northern NM College	Rio Arriba County SWOT Session
Brenner, Lisa	Sandoval Economic Alliance	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Cabral, Darien	RDC, San Ildefonso Services	REDI Summit-Renewables Roundtable
Camacho, Liz	City of Santa Fe	Santa Fe County SWOT Session
Chavez, Eric	US Senator Ben Ray Lujan's Office	REDI Summit-Broadband Roundtable
Connolly, Jacquelyn	Los Alamos Mainstreet & Creative District	REDI Summit-Housing Roundtable
D'Aguero, Marhsa	RDC	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Derkacs, Denise	Los Alamos County Councilor	REDI Summit-Housing Roundtable
Dillman, Edie	B.Public Prefab	REDI Summit-Housing Roundtable
Duran, Danielle	Los Alamos County	Los Alamos County SWOT Session
Duran, Shawn	Taos Pueblo	Taos County SWOT Session
Duran, Sunshine	Taos Pueblo Recovery Works	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Fant, Peter	San Ildefonso Services	REDI Summit-Renewables Roundtable Santa Fe County SWOT Session
Feltor, Ellyn	Los Alamos County	REDI Summit-Broadband Roundtable
Fitzgerald, Alex	Santa Fe County	Santa Fe County SWOT Session
Garcia, Delilah	North Central Regional Transit District	Rio Arriba County SWOT Session
Gerry, Dan	RDC	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Greene, Justin	Santa Fe County Commissioner	REDI Summit-Broadband Roundtable
Hess, Melinda	Convivial Design Studio	REDI Summit-Broadband Roundtable
Keith, Kathy	Los Alamos National Laboratory	REDI Summit-Renewables Roundtable Los Alamos County SWOT Session
Krish, Janice	Los Alamos County	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Hagaman, Tim	NM Economic Development Dept.	REDI Summit-Renewables Roundtable
Hand, Melanee	Los Alamos County	REDI Summit-Bus. Dev. Roundtable
Havemann, Suzie	Los Alamos County	REDI Summit-Renewables Roundtable

Hermann, Ryn	Los Alamos County Commerce & Development Corporation	Los Alamos County SWOT Session
Hyer, Chris	NM RETA	REDI Summit-Renewables Roundtable Santa Fe County SWOT Session
Ladd, Christy	Ohkay Owingeh	Rio Arriba County SWOT Session
Lavallee, Richard	RDC	REDI Summit-Bus. Dev. Roundtable
Linder, Peter	NM Highlands University	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Ludwig, Eleanor	NM Forest & Water Restoration Inst.	REDI Summit-Renewables Roundtable
Lujan, Tara	NM State Representative	REDI Summit-Renewables Roundtable
Lujan, Vernon	Taos Pueblo	Taos County SWOT Session
Lynne, Steve	Los Alamos County	Los Alamos County SWOT Session
Pascual Maestas	Town of Taos Mayor	Taos County SWOT Session
Majorey, Louis	RDC	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Marroquin, Audrey	UNM Los Alamos	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Martin, Michael	Northern NM College	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Matteson, Linda	Los Alamos County	REDI Summit-Renewables Roundtable
McDaniel, Lauren	Los Alamos Community Development Corporation	REDI Summit—Housing Roundtable
McLellan, Linda	RDC	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
MLellan, Red	RDC	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Meade, Michael	Positive Energy Solar	REDI Summit-Renewables Roundtable
Montoya, Denise	Northern NM College	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Montoya, Joseph	Santa Fe County	Santa Fe County SWOT Session
Moore, Eric	NM Office of Broadband & Expansion	REDI Summit-Broadband Roundtable
Mortillaro, Tony	North Central Regional Transit District	Rio Arriba County SWOT Session
Motilor, Tony	Contractor	REDI Summit-Housing Roundtable
Nelson, Jolene	RDC	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Olafson, Paul	Santa Fe County	Santa Fe County SWOT Session
Osborn, Dan	Los Alamos County	REDI Summit-Housing
Page, Cedric	RDC	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Quintana, Theresa	SKW	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Carla, Rachkowski	RDC	REDI Summit-Bus. Dev. Roundtable
Ramirez, Raughn	HELP NM-Title I	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable
Reagor, David	Los Alamos County Council	Los Alamos County SWOT Session
Renz-Whitmore, Eric	Santa Fe County	REDI Summit-Bus. Dev. Roundtable
Reza, Rose	Taos HIVE	Taos County SWOT Session
Roffman, Seth	Green Fire Times	REDI Summit-Renewables Roundtable

Ryti, Randall	Los Alamos County	Los Alamos County SWOT Session
Saenz, Allen	Los Alamos Network	REDI Summit-Broadband Roundtable
Sanborn, Erin	Kit Carson Electric	Taos County SWOT Session
Sanchez, Liana	Avanyu, LLC	REDI Summit-Broadband Roundtable
Sandia, Denayaa	Avanyu, LLC	REDI Summit-Broadband Roundtable
Salazar, Elmer	RDC	REDI Summit-Housing Roundtable
Sclachter, Jack	Los Alamos Jewish Center	REDI Summit-Renewables Roundtable
Simbama, Francisco	Santa Clara Pueblo Housing Authority	REDI Summit-Housing Roundtable
Smith, Jerry	Los Alamos County	REDI Summit-Broadband Roundtable
Ungerleider, Dan	Los Alamos County	REDI Summit-Bus. Dev. Roundtable Los Alamos County SWOT Session
Wadt, Bill	Los Alamos County Development	REDI Summit-Workforce Roundtable