

Kenai Peninsula Borough  
Grants Administration

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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Peter A. Micciche, Mayor

**FROM:** Elizabeth Hardie, Grants Administrator & Community Liaison

**DATE:** January 22, 2024

**RE:** FY24 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District report

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The FY24-2Q narrative and financial grant reports have been submitted for the Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District (KPEDD).



# Community & Fiscal Projects

144 N. Binkley Street, Soldotna, Alaska 99669 • (907) 714-2150 • (907) 714-2377 Fax

Mayor Peter A. Micciche

From: KPEDD Award Amount: \$175,000  
 Account: 100.94900.00000.43009 2023/2024 Senior Grant Program

Quarterly reports due on the 15th of each month following the quarter period end.

Submit Report To: Grants Administrator  
[grants@kpb.us](mailto:grants@kpb.us)  
 Kenai Peninsula Borough  
 144 N. Binkley St., Soldotna, AK 99669

Period of Performance covered by this report:  
 Start Date: 10/1/2023  
 End Date: 12/31/2023

**FINAL REPORT IS DUE BEFORE 07/10/24**

Cost Category	Authorized budget	Total expenditures from ALL prior reports	Expenditures to reimburse this period	Total expenditures to date	Balance of Funds
Personnel/Fringe	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 43,750.00	\$ 43,750.00	\$ 87,500.00	\$ 87,500.00
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ 175,000.00</b>	<b>43,750.00</b>	<b>\$ 43,750.00</b>	<b>\$ 87,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 87,500.00</b>

Expenditures this period to be reimbursed >>> \$ 43,750.00

**Progress Report:** Describe activities that have occurred during this reporting period. Describe any challenges you may have experienced, any foreseen problems, and/or any special requests. Attach additional pages.

Please see the attached narrative.

**Grantee Certification:** I certify that the above information is true and correct, and that expenditures are made for the purpose of, and in accordance with, applicable grant agreement terms and conditions.

Signature:  Date: 12/12/2023  
 Printed Name and Title: Tim Dillon, Executive Director

**Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District**  
**Kenai Peninsula Borough FY24 Qtr. 2 Report**  
**Account 100.94900.00000.43009**

During the second quarter of fiscal year 2024, KPEDD staff (1) continued developing the website, (2) hosted meetings between the U.S. Department of Energy and renewable energy developers, (3) Hosted a discussion between the regional City Managers and Kenai Peninsula Borough, (4) lead the Kenai Peninsula Broadband Taskforce meetings, (5) provided one-on-one consultation for local businesses, (6) worked with the Alaska Mariculture Cluster to provide capital investment opportunities for mariculture farmers and producers on the Kenai Peninsula, and (7) continued working through the staff transition during the project period.

1. Website development continued through the second quarter of FY24 as staff developed the platform layout, created content and narrative, identified data sets to be updated, and simplified site navigation. The new site will focus on recruitment and retention of workforce, provide necessary information for site selectors, identify resources for Kenai Peninsula businesses, steer foot traffic towards regional resource providers, outline the goals and partners for implementation of the federally approved Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, coordination between partners to lesson economic shocks and improve economic resilience, and provide placeholders for GIS mapping services built during the FY25 fiscal year through federal funding leveraged from this grant.
2. KPEDD hosted a private meeting between potential renewable energy providers and the U.S. Department of Energy to discuss investment options, the scope of the project, project partners, return on investment for customers, and visit the proposed site. Although this project is in the initial stages of investment, the project appears to be competitive in terms of ROI, making it a leading contender for approval. More details will be provided on the project once a determination is made by the agency.
3. KPEDD brought the City Managers together to identify community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. These quarterly meetings provide a platform to share ideas and approaches to community issues on sensitive topics including taxes, insurance, budgets, public infrastructure, obstacles to development, relationships with state and federal agencies, and resource gaps. The second meeting will be hosted on the 14<sup>th</sup> of this month to bring the Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor's office and City Managers together to discuss topics from the previous discussion.
4. Staff provided one-on-one consultation for regional businesses on the topics of licensing, incorporation, capital investment, market identification, site selection, planning, insurance, workforce development, and the creation of a new apprenticeship program. An estimated 40 businesses were assisted during the project period through tailored assistance and referrals to necessary resources.
5. KPEDD continued to lead the Kenai Peninsula Broadband Taskforce meetings with an end goal of equitable broadband infrastructure development tailored to individual community needs. These meetings have worked to provide a task driven framework for development opportunities for industry, Tribal, and municipality leaders to share areas of progress on project development, identify possible project partnerships for pursuit of funding, identify pathways to prioritize regional build-out, and receive updates directly from the State of Alaska Office of Broadband. Most recently, the FCC's broadband fabric maps have been historically problematic regarding

inaccurate depictions of broadband service levels— rural community services (served, underserved and unserved) through inaccurate or aged data. Focused outreach, education and dissemination of the mapping process result in the recent, highly accurate, relevant map that the FCC is currently utilizing. KPEDD works to communicate with community leaders, stakeholders, and members to participate in and understand the mapping challenge process to verify accuracy of service and create the most impactful infrastructure development projects. In addition to the facilitation of mapping accuracy for the FCC’s initiative, KPEDD has been working closely with the Office of Broadband, National Telecommunications and Information Administration – Tribal Connectivity Office as well as the USDA to comprehend regional project initiatives and identify network opportunities amongst the stakeholders, applicants and project developers. The active participation within the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the funding agencies and the grant providers will greatly benefit the Kenai Peninsula by leveraging the project funding strategically and more efficiently.

6. As a member of the governance committee for the Alaska Mariculture Cluster, KPEDD advocated for program changes to make funding more widely accessible for Peninsula Co-ops. As it stands, the funding available to oyster and kelp producers is a reimbursable grant requiring non-profit operations to front the money infrastructure development. KPEDD is advocating for a funding-first approach after application approval to increase program equity and build sustainability within the industry
7. KPEDD is currently in preparations for a leadership transition beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>. Cassidi Cameron will take on the role as KPEDD’s Executive Director upon the well-deserved retirement of Tim Dillon