

Kenai Peninsula Borough

Grants Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: Peter A. Micciche, Mayor

FROM: Elizabeth Hardie, Grants Administrator & Community Liaison

DATE: April 24, 2024

RE: FY24 – 3rd Quarter Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District report

The FY24-3rd Quarter 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 Non-areawide KPB Economic Development

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

Submit Report To:

Grants Administrator

grants@kpb.us

Kenai Peninsula Borough

144 N. Binkley St., Soldotna, AK 99669

Period of Performance covered by this report:

Start Date: 1/1/2024

End Date: 3/31/2024

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	\$ 87,500.00	\$ 43,750.00	\$ 131,250.00	\$ 43,750.00
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTALS	\$ 175,000.00	87,500.00	\$ 43,750.00	\$ 131,250.00	\$ 43,750.00

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:

Cassidi Cameron

Date:

3/23/24

Printed Name and Title

CASSIDI CAMERON, Executive Director

**Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District
Kenai Peninsula Borough FY24 Qtr. 3 Report
Account 100.94900.00000.43009**

1. Platform Development

Drawing off the Community Catalyst Program concept; the KPEDD team has identified and defined the critical elements of the website and the need to ensure that the website directly reflects, relates, and communicates KPEDD's mission, goals, and values. The website is to promote, connect, and serve all communities on the Kenai Peninsula by delivering community-specific, economically relevant, and valuable information in the form of geographic information systems platforms, in-person outreach and stakeholder engagement through regional resource and networking summits. The website design and layout will propel and unite our local leaders, business sectors, highlight regional assets, resources, showcase our current and potential industries, and bolster our economic infrastructure collectively by integrating useful, accessible, and compelling data, resources, and information into a concentrated datahub. The need for a comprehensive, in-depth, source of economically infused data, policy, and market specific information is critical for various aspects of expansion of industry, investment considerations, government planning, and project development.

Tasks Completed this Project Period:

- ARC GIS Business Analyst Software: implementation and configuration meeting, set up in the process and underway.
- Working with Martin Media on video/media content
- Working towards procuring DataFy a sales/demographic/data software that will aid in supporting communities, tourism, visitor statistics, and pursuit of grant and program funding based on data provided.
- Regional photo procurement underway.
- Board and staff bios and information page.
- Pages complete: Area Resource; regional networks, programming, and partnerships

Data, themes, and content include:

- Current website content topics and community highlights.
- KPEDD Projects and Highlights
- CEDS Showcase
- Community Highlights
- EDD, ARDOR and SOA info
- Partners, collaborations, networks
- Industry data: including GIS layered mapping- employment, labor market, housing, sales tax structure, household income statistics, public transportation services, community service locator, financial resource directory, tourism and visitor profiles etc.
- KPB's Regional Economic Infrastructure

2. Geographic Information System (GIS) Development

KPEDD met with the Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor and staff, and the Chambers of Commerce of Soldotna, Kenai, Homer and Seward to discuss a cooperative effort to improve the information available and combine marketing efforts across the Kenai Peninsula. KPEDD has signed a contract with Datafy, a place-based data platform, to increase the tourism and spending information available in each of the regions. KPEDD will also be signing a contract in the coming weeks for general economic data through ESRI/ARC to provide industry and quality of living information to municipalities and businesses in the region. Better data will increase the return on investment for marketing dollars spent not only on tourism, but also recruitment to fill Peninsula jobs.

3. Mariculture Industry Development: Alaska Mariculture Cluster

KPEDD staff met with numerous mariculture-related clients to advise on development strategies for the mariculture industry's growth. Staff also worked with Southeast Conference to navigate budget revision, internal audit, quarterly narrative reporting, governance committee meetings, and milestone review. Meetings with the Alaska Mariculture Alliance participants took place weekly in most cases to implement goals outlined in the GAP, identify stakeholders, and review component project RFPs alongside the Alaska Mariculture Alliance. Staff attended several sessions of governance committee meetings, and collaboration and planning efforts of a workforce development, business planning, and processing workshop to be held or promoted for Peninsula, collaboration is through Alaska Mariculture Research Training Center. Continuation of work with Kachemak Shellfish Mariculture Association RFP application for Equipment for mariculture development in addition to beginning steps to identify a viable pathway to relocate current FLUPSY license location; continuation of working with CRRC, Alutiiq Pride and Briana Murphy, the Peninsula's Mariculture Liaison. KPEDD Has secured the Alaska Blue Economy Center for IOF panel presentation; met and shared information with Kenai Processor about complementary operations relating to kelp processing, disseminated information with innovator regarding BBB AMC other species RFP application and proposal. Continuation of identification of regional assets related or potentially connected to mariculture, maintain, and cultivate partnerships by working to understand needs and priorities of participants and potential participants, ensuring sustainability as a priority through each component, and continuing to be a leader and advocate on the Kenai Peninsula for mariculture's potential.

Tasks Completed this Project Period

- Meetings with Regional Mariculture Liaison, Briana Murphy to discuss and plan outreach events in and around Kachemak Bay
- Outreach and educational sessions have been held in Seward already.
- Discussions and plans to coordinate with tribal and rural community leaders to identify mariculture opportunities and coordinate efforts to support mariculture goals.
- KPEDD and BBB AMC cluster and Mariculture Liaison have coordinated efforts to identify stakeholders and support participation for the upcoming Alaska Mariculture Training Center's introductory workshops for kelp farming and industry start-ups

- Cassidi attended the week-long Alaska Mariculture Conference in Anchorage in February. In addition to EDD meetings, and industry meetings, NOAA held a spatial mapping work session for its Aquaculture Opportunity Area Mapping initiative. Participation led to several new connections to regional stakeholders and reconnection with others that we have worked with recently and shared KPEDD updates.
- AMC BBB project highlight: <https://www.buildingbetterregionscop.org/blogs/an-ocean-of-opportunity-in-alaska/>
- One-on-one meetings with individuals (investors, innovators, processors, producers) interested in participating in the project and industry were held – several connections and partnerships were seeded during this period.
- KSMA Equipment RFP Application was selected for next phase; along with another KPB regional application. BBB funds are showing up on the Peninsula.

Deliverables in Process:

- State-wide Revolving Loan Fund
- Governance, Coordination and Outreach
- Workforce Development
- Marketing
- Green Energy
- Equipment and Technology

4. Resilience Planning and Resource Development

Identified key project development aspects and developed an implementation strategy for resiliency practices in business, contract schedule, and internal coordination to effectively fulfill project goals and deliverables. Identified community leadership entities, business leaders, and stakeholders, and coordinated and facilitated ongoing communications regarding projects. Engaged and communicated, information gathering, resource identification, and public awareness. KPEDD placed high importance on equity and transparency of project goals and community involvement and established a clear understanding of this project, identified the elements of critical and influential information to be gathered and assembled. KPEDD coordinated and combined our efforts from the website development overhaul to incorporate resilience resource tools/libraries and listings for entrepreneurs, businesses, industry analysis, public and private sector investors.

Begun planning efforts to coordinate with regional Chambers to collaborate on resource access sessions for their members. Sessions would be resiliency development specific and provide attendees with resources related to business operations, inventory management, financial reporting, capital access and programs, asset management, diversification, expansion, and supply chain management through local partners. We envision partnering with AK MEP, area lenders, chambers, municipalities, EDC, SBDC, KPC, AVTEC, manufacturers, and other experts to provide a robust experience.

Tasks Completed this Project Period:

- Meetings with local lenders on specific areas of support KPEDD can assist with and understand more to share and promote to individuals who reach out to us for information.
- Lunch and Learn Series/Meet and Greet Series:
March: Meet and Greet with Local Lenders on small business and commercial lending programs and how to submit a complete loan package
April: Local accountants provide specific business tax guidance to attendees.
May: MEP, KPEDD business resource and directory

5. Workforce Development

Coordinated efforts with aligned stakeholders, including the Department of Labor, AVTEC, Alaska Safety Alliance - Business Education Compact, Alaska Workforce Convening, KPBSD - CTE (Career and Technical Education) Advisory Committee, Department of Commerce, EDDs and ARDORs. Concentrated efforts are being made to coordinate the existing workforce development process and revamp it to meet the needs of employers and certification requirements, meeting the needs of the infrastructure workforce plans without duplicating existing efforts. Regional committees are being considered within secondary, post-secondary, industry, and government, to increase and streamline communication and workforce needs. Agencies are focused on technical assistance, project management, research, advocacy, and policy development. KPEDD prioritized creating and developing an independent, nimble workforce coordinator centrum to execute and facilitate workforce development plans and support training programs.

Areas of focus: recruitment, retention, and investment of employee base both in and out of state. Staff focused on the development of pathways to connect high school students to high-demand fields and training, facilitate apprenticeship programs, and develop incentive programs for training and continuing education opportunities.

Tasks Completed this Project Period:

- Industry Overview Forum will consist of a significant amount of workforce development plans/programs and sources – KPEDD staff have been working towards creating a direct line of access for individuals to learn and access these programs; while the focus during this month has been on the IOF coordination of workforce development, we are focused on sharing programs and information to our stakeholders and partners to increase participation in several of these programs.
- Met with BEC, KPBSD, KPC, and KPB on workforce topics and plans specific to Kenai Peninsula
- KPEDD has been engaged in SEC and Alaska Mariculture Cluster's has a workforce development component
- Office of Broadband Workforce Development Plan

6. Arctic Energy Ambassador Program

With the help of the regional Arctic Energy Ambassadors and support of DOE's Arctic Energy Office, this program will develop regional, place based and collaborative energy leadership in Alaska, along with resources and knowledge sharing partnerships in alignment with DOE's Arctic Energy Strategy and the nation's clean energy transition.

- **Goal 1:** Articulate community and regional energy needs through a cohort of local champions
- **Goal 2:** Connect stakeholders and promote professional and regional capacity development through ongoing DOE training and engagement.
- **Goal 3:** Provide regional technical assistance to advance project development.
- **Goal 4:** Develop regional or statewide projects with solutions to energy issues that could be replicated through the Arctic.
- **Goal 5:** encourage regional projects championed by Ambassadors to be vetted through an online energy project portal created better to connect stakeholders to funding opportunities and technical resources

Tasks Completed this Period:

- Participated in program onboarding, met with regional ambassadors, and learned of energy projects around the state
- Met with ORPC on possible collaboration with outreach and community coordination of tidal energy project (Federal investment could bring tidal device test site to Cook Inlet (ampproject.org))
- Coordinated meetings with HEA to discuss more in-depth the program mission and complimentary HEA initiatives
- Met with Marie Francis, Solar Program Manager for Tebugnha Foundation with Tyonek Native Corp on community solar projects and energy needs

7. Alaska Department of Transportation: Regional Transportation Planning Organizations in Alaska (RPO Pilot Program)

It is the intent of the legislature that the DOT increase consultation and collaboration with local municipalities by establishing RPOs to advance the identification and planning for locally-driven projects where there is both interest and capacity. Still in discussions on terms, expectations, and deliverables. A meeting is scheduled for the end of March to pick up discussions and updated information. EDDs met collectively and discussed having a consistent set of deliverables amongst all groups to create continuity of programs.

What is an RPO?:

- An organization that identifies local transportation needs
- Helps facilitate and develop the conduction of transportation planning.
- Assists local governments in identifying transportation priorities and goals.
- supports the statewide transportation planning process in non-metropolitan areas of the state.
- Serves areas with population sizes less than 50,000.
- Collaboration between DOT and RPOs:

- o Cooperate
- o Consult
- o Communicate