

Kenai Peninsula Borough

Grants Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: Peter A. Micciche, Mayor

FROM: Elizabeth Hardie, Grants Administrator & Community Liaison

DATE: July 17, 2024

RE: FY24 – 4th Quarter Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District report

The FY24-4th 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: 4/1/2024
 End Date: 6/30/2024

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

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: Date: 6/18/2024
 Printed Name and Title Cassidi Cameron, Executive Director

Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District
Kenai Peninsula Borough FY24 Qtr. 4 Report
Account 100.94900.00000.43009

1. Platform Development

Through the Community Catalyst Program concept; the KPEDD team has developed the critical elements of the website to reflect, relate, and communicate KPEDD’s mission, goals, and values. The website promotes, connects, and serves 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 supports local leaders, business sectors, highlights regional assets, showcases our current and potential industries, and bolsters 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. The platform itself is near completion, with an expected roll-out date of June 30th. Further plugins will be developed and incorporated over the course of FY25 through EDA funding and anticipated Borough match support.

Tasks Completed this Project Period:

- ARC GIS Business Analyst Software: Development of several maps using DOT, Census, and other sources of applicable layers.
- Video/media content developed through the 2024 Industry Outlook Forum
- Initial partnership discussion through 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, with procurement of service expected by June 30th.
- All website pages complete: general editing underway.

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 continued to meet 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 has also completed a contract 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

During the project period, staff supported and attended the aquatic farm tour hosted by regional mariculture liaison Briana Murphy. The tour provided an opportunity for coastal community representatives in Port Graham, Nanwalek, and Seward to connect with oyster and kelp producers. There were roughly 12 attendees from remote areas interested in the potential of oyster and kelp start-ups to diversify their economy and increase food security. 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

Tasks Completed this Project Period

- Liaison Briana Murphy reported contributions were solicited from APMI's experience in farming kelp and cultivating seed string at the hatchery stage. This report will be provided to congressional lawmakers to inform them of best practices in cultivation of seaweeds and to highlight areas where funding and legislative support may be needed to move the industry forward in an equitable way.

- Aquatic farm and familiarization tour was held in the beginning of May in Kachemak Bay with participants from Port Graham, Nanwalek, Ninilchik and others who spent the day
- HATCH Innovation Services toured Peninsula; they have been contracted by AMC to consult and advise on market development, sector insights, and potential for Alaska based on their experience and data collected.
- Finalized the budget revision request for FY25
- KSMA Equipment RFP Application was submitted for final phase consideration for FLUPSY

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

Ongoing efforts were made to Identify 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. Staff identified community leadership entities, business leaders, and stakeholders, and coordinated and facilitated ongoing communications regarding projects, as well as engaged in 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.

KPEDD continued 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:

- Website update and reformat

- CEDS Update, public comment period
- Planning Grant Kick Off meeting with EDA Directors; EDGE portal introduction and implementation for reporting
- CEDS Strategy Committee; creation, communication and roles for committee members, kick off meeting to be held June 24th

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; seeking ways to coordinate and collaborate with organizations to bolster workforce development programs, initiatives and conduct effective outreach within our communities.
- KPEDD has been engaged in SEC and Alaska Mariculture Cluster’s has a workforce development component
- Office of Broadband Workforce Development Plan
- Aligning our focus and effort for the Kenai Peninsula with SOA Workforce 2030 – The Alaska Plan

- Develop a workforce compatible with the diverse needs of Alaska’s employers and the workers.
- Build talent pipelines that recruit, educate, and train Alaskans for occupations in high demand.
- Reduce the outmigration of Alaska talent.
- Strengthen economic development through workforce development in every region

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 continue working to 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:

- Cassidi attended monthly DOE Ambassador meetings and presented on regional (CIRI) projects and initiatives
- In May Cassidi attended Governor Dunleavy’s Sustainable Energy Conference; presented to funders, leaders and federal delegation on goals and updates on regional needs.
- Outreach includes: Tyonek, Seldovia Village Tribe, Nanwalek Tribe, Port Graham, Ninilchik Traditional Council, Kenaitze Tribe
- Met with DOE Grid Deployment Office Tribal Liaison and Alaska Federation of Natives on Collaboration and Technical Assistance Concept

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

KPEDD is still in discussions on terms, expectations, and deliverables. EDDs met collectively and discussed having a foundational set of deliverables that were consistent amongst all groups to create continuity of programs. 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

2024 KPEDD INDUSTRY OVERVIEW (OUTLOOK) FORUM SUMMARY



- 121 registered participants
- 27 Subject Matter Experts covering 12 Critical Topics influencing Kenai Peninsula's Economic Fabric; solutions and models for replication
- 3 Food trucks!
- Bonus! Senator Sullivan stopped in and spoke to their work in Washington, DC