

Kenai Peninsula Borough

Grants Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: Peter A. Micciche, Mayor

FROM: Elizabeth Hardie, Grants Administrator & Community Liaison

DATE: October 30, 2024

RE: FY25 – 1st Quarter Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District (KPEDD) report

The FY25-1st 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

From: KPEDD **Award** Mayor Peter A. Micciche
Account: 100.94900.00000.43009 **2023/2024** \$175,000
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: 7/1/2024
End Date: 9/30/2024

FINAL REPORT IS DUE BEFORE 07/10/25

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

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: 9/9/24

Printed Name and Title Cassidi Cameron, Executive Director

Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District
Kenai Peninsula Borough FY25 Qtr. 1 Report
Account 100.94900.00000.43009

During the first quarter of fiscal year 2025 KPEDD staff (1) finalized the KPEDD platform in preparation for public launch, (2) hosted the CEDS Committee meeting to update strategies for goal implementation and prepare for the 2026 major plan rewrite, (3) Purchased the Datafy license and worked with regional chambers to increase ROI on tourism investments, (4) planned and prepared for the regional Resource Roundup event, (5) worked with partner organizations to support energy investments and diversification to increase grid resilience, (6) consulted local businesses seeking investments and growth strategies, (7) supported the emerging mariculture industry through program governance, resource connection, and educating the general public on opportunities for investment through a partnership with the World Wildlife Fund.

1. Research for the new KPEDD regional web-based platform was completed during the project period, gathering information on structure and information layout, programs capable of caring large amounts of data efficiently, design and quality, national plugins relevant to our region, sources of data helpful for site selectors and industry recruiters, content narrative, and overall layout. The platform is expected to be made public by the first week of October completed by fiscal year end, with plugins (such as layered GIS mapping and upgraded infographics) developed over the course of the fiscal year. The new site will be competitive with leading national community and economic development organizations, showcasing the quality of life and opportunities found in the Kenai Peninsula Borough.
2. During the reporting period, KPEDD met with members of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee, which include chairs from incorporated communities, industry, chambers, the hospital, and tribal entities. The goal of this small group is to adjust strategies and identify partnerships to meet the goals and objectives outlined in the CEDS report. The group will also help to increase stakeholder engagement for the next major plan re-write scheduled for 2026. The KPEDD CEDS is the only federally approved plan of its kind, and is required for federal investment spending in the region.
3. KPEDD purchased and designed the communication layout for the Datafy license between our organizations and the Chambers of Kenai, Soldotna, Homer and Seward. This license uses third party applications to track tourism levels, spending, and returns on community investment. Specific data include visitor days, visitor sources, repeat travelers, transportation, spending, trends over time, and help to measure the success of specific campaigns. KPEDD has access to all regional data while the Chambers are able to view and monitor their areas based on geofencing boundaries. KPEDD will routinely share findings and suggestions during city council meetings and assembly meetings.
4. KPEDD staff met with regional resource providers to prepare for a Resource Roundup event which will be held on September 20th in Soldotna. This event aims to support business development by meeting entrepreneurs and business owners to answer questions regarding training and workforce locators, business tools, technical assistance, safety certifications, supply

chain management, planning, and capital investment. Event partners include the Alaska Department of Labor and workforce Development, Alaska Small Business Development, and the Alaska Manufacturing Extension partnership.

5. As an Arctic Energy Ambassador for the Alaska Municipal League's Alaska Energy Hub, KPEDD is working to identify alternative sources of energy available to Kenai Peninsula Utility Co-operative, residents and businesses in an effort to improve grid resilience and decrease reliance on sole-source electricity. Alaska's climate, geography, and remote nature exasperate energy producers and increase utility costs. Research and development of emerging technologies may steady consumer costs, increasing development opportunities in the region. Solar and tidal energies are two approaches that can utilize existing resources to supply power for residents. KPEDD will continue to advocate for the Peninsula and work to identify emerging opportunities for infrastructure development.
6. Businesses continued to contact KPEDD during the project period for technical assistance regarding product development, investment funding, and points of contact to develop training opportunities based on emerging technologies. staff meet with business owners in-person and online to identify approaches to expand their operations and diversify their products.
7. During the month of August, KPEDD hosted a video showing and Q&A to members of the public, in partnership with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Kachemak Kelp representatives Evie Witton and Kathryn Carovano. WWF is one of the world's leading conservation organizations, working in nearly 100 countries. At every level, WWF collaborates with people around the world to develop and deliver innovative solutions that protect communities, wildlife, and the places in which they live. The film, "Portrait of a Seaweed Farmer" highlighted the opportunities associated with Kelp farming, including carbon sequestration, reduced methane emissions when used for animal feed, increases in farming output when used to diversify minerals and nutrients in soil, and habitat creation for marine life. Nick Mangini, a kelp farmer from Kodiak, also helped to answer questions regarding kelp processing and product development. KPEDD will continue to support this emerging cluster in hopes of further diversifying the mariculture industry, increasing food and ecosystem resilience, and building material exports based on unique geographic opportunities found only in Alaska coastal communities.