



AGENDA
Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District
Board of Directors Meeting - Friday, November 15, 2024, at 1:00 pm PT

Remote Attendance Link:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82922778261>

In Person Meeting Locations:
Mendocino Coast Health Care District
775 River Drive, **Fort Bragg**, CA 95437
and
Sonoma County Economic Development Board (707) 565-7170
141 Stony Circle, Suite 110, **Santa Rosa**, CA 95401

CALL TO ORDER by Paul Garza, Chairperson

Item 1 Swearing In of Board Reappointments made to the SMEDD Board of Directors by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors at their Regular Meeting of November 5, 2024.

- Oath of Office - Lisa Badenfort, Sonoma County for term 10/14/2024 - 10/13/2028
- Oath of Office - Jeff Kelly, Sonoma County for term 10/14/2024 - 10/13/2028

ROLL CALL by Norma Alley

- Chairperson Paul Garza
- Vice Chairperson Jeff Kelly
- Board Member Lisa Badenfort
- Board Member Robin Bartholow
- Board Member Tim Karas
- Board Member Craig Schlatter
- Board Member Nicholas Schwanz
- Board Member Anna Shaw

Vacancies:

- Board Member At-Large - Vacant Seat Board Member At-Large - Vacant Seat

AGENDA CHANGES AND DELETIONS - To Current Agenda Only

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

CEREMONIAL MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION - Action Item

Presentations

- Item 2** Proclamation Recognizing Robin Bartholow for her service as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District during the period July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024
- Item 3** Proclamation Recognizing Jeff Kelly for his service as Treasurer of the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District during the period June 1, 2022, to June 30, 2024

PUBLIC COMMENT - Open time for Public Expression

Time reserved for members of the public to speak on matters not otherwise appearing on the agenda.

INFORMATIONAL ITEM

Introduction to Agenda and Staff Report structure.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Matters listed under the Consent Calendar are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion and one vote. Unless otherwise requested by a Board Member, there will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Calendar and will be considered separately.

There will be one opportunity for public comment on all consent items. Comments are limited to 3 minutes each, and the Chairperson may limit this time if reasonable under the circumstances.

Item 4 Approve Meeting Minutes:

- September 20, 2024

Item 5 Approval of Disbursements and Checks Register as of October 31, 2024

Item 6 Approve Submission of Partnership Planning Grant for 4/1/2025 - 3/31/2028 grant period, Due December 15, 2024

Item 7 Report on Required Grant Match Effort by Counties of Mendocino and Sonoma - Cash Contributions and In-Kind Staffing Contributions

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION - Action Items

Item 8 Consider Board Retreat Logistics and Approve Facilitation

Item 9 Consider CEDS Update Working Group

Item 10 Receive an Update on California Jobs First: Redwood Region RISE: North Bay Working Group

Item 11 Discuss and Consider Recruitment and Appointment of a SMEDD-Appointed At-Large Member

DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT UPDATES

- U.S. Economic Development Administration's Peer Review Meeting was held on Tuesday, September 3, 2024. The focus of the review was the Planning and Partnership Grant #ED22SEA3020033, which supports the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The current grant period 7/1/2020 - 6/30/2025 will end one quarter early on March 31, 2025. This revises the Planning and Partnership Grant's Completion Deadline. Going forward, all new grants have a start date of April 1. SMEDD Inflation adjustment request.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- NCRP RFP for Project Technical Assistance
- Jobs First Catalyst Funds
- EDA PWEAA Assistance
- Jobs First - [Tribal Investment Initiative](#)
- Jobs First - Implementation Funds - release solicitation proposal

Letters of Support Issued & Outcomes

Request From	Topic/Project	SMEDD Letter Issued to Requestor	Status of Grant Award
Northern Circle Indian Housing Authority	Elder Village with Community Center - Ukiah	9/16/2024	Under Review -
Mendocino Community Health Clinic (MCHC)	1 Madrone Health Clinic in Willits CA	7/23/24	Under Review -
Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District (SMART)	Transit and Intercity Rail Capital (TIRCP)	7/23/2024	Awarded -
Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District (SMART)	Connecting Cloverdale to the Bay – Equitable Transportation Access & Resilience Project	2/26/2024	Denied -
Regenerative Forest Solutions	Woody FeedStock Pilot Project (CalFire)	9/27/2023	Awarded -
Regenerative Forest Solutions	Woody FeedStock Pilot Project (Bay Area Council)	9/27/2023	Awarded -
Mendocino Forest Products	Biomass-to-Hydrogen Grant Application	9/15/2023	Awarded -
West Business Development Center	CalOSBA Blue Economy iHub	8/31/2023	Denied -
Regenerative Forest Solutions	Woody FeedStock Pilot Project USDA Forest Service	8/9/2023	Awarded -
Regenerative Forest Solutions	NCRP Woody FeedStock Pilot Project	8/9/2023	Awarded -
Sonoma County Meat Company	USDA Local Meat Capacity Grant	6/21/2023	Awarded -
Noyo Harbor	Noyo Harbor District Port Infrastructure Development	4/24/2023	Denied -

UPCOMING EVENTS THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST - *not necessarily SMEDD connected*

- **November 21, 2024** [Fall Economic Perspective](#), Sonoma State University, CA

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS OR COMMENTS

Time reserved for members of the Board to report on AdHoc Committee activities and to speak on matters not otherwise appearing on the agenda. No Actions.

ADJOURNMENT by Paul Garza Jr., Chairperson

For a copy of Board Packet materials, please visit smedd.org or email Abigail Scott (abigail@smedd.org).



Proclamation Honoring Robin Bartholow

WHEREAS, the Sonoma-Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) Board of Directors recognizes and honors Robin Bartholow for her eight years of dedicated service to the District, during which she provided steadfast guidance through significant transitions, always advocating for the economic vitality and sustainability of the region; and

WHEREAS, during her tenure as SMEDD Board Chair from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, Robin skillfully led the completion of the SMEDD's CARES Act Supplemental Work Plan, ensuring the impactful deployment of critical resources to support economic recovery efforts throughout Sonoma and Mendocino counties; and

WHEREAS, Robin played a pivotal role in convening the 2024 Biomass Utilization Symposium, creating a platform that united key stakeholders, industry experts, and local leaders to explore sustainable biomass solutions and economic opportunities that benefit the communities within the district; and

WHEREAS, Robin has been an advocate for Sonoma County's agricultural community throughout her career, previously serving as Deputy Executive Director at the Sonoma County Farm Bureau, where she championed the interests of agriculture, and more recently, as Director of Sustainability at Goodwill Industries, where her efforts focused on community wellbeing and environmental sustainability; and

WHEREAS, Robin's ongoing commitment to enhancing economic opportunities, coupled with her dedication to supporting resilient and sustainable communities, has profoundly benefited SMEDD's mission and strengthened partnerships across the district;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sonoma-Mendocino Economic Development District Board of Directors extends its sincere appreciation and heartfelt gratitude to Robin Bartholow for her outstanding service, visionary leadership, and enduring contributions to the economic prosperity and sustainability of our communities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this proclamation is issued with our deepest respect and appreciation on behalf of the Sonoma-Mendocino Economic Development District, recognizing Robin's remarkable impact on our region.



Proclamation Honoring Jeff Kelly

WHEREAS, the Sonoma-Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) Board of Directors recognizes and honors Jeff Kelly for his four years of dedicated service to the District, during which he provided steadfast guidance through significant transitions, always advocating for the economic vitality and sustainability of the region; and

WHEREAS, the Sonoma-Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) Board of Directors wishes to specifically recognize the invaluable service and dedication of Jeff Kelly's service as the SMEDD Board Treasurer. Jeff assumed the duties of Acting Treasurer as of June 1, 2022, on behalf of the SMEDD Board, and upon the conclusion of the transfer of duties from the County of Sonoma to the SMEDD, was appointed the SMEDD Treasurer on September 22, 2024, a service performed by Jeff through October 13, 2024. The Board of Directors recognizes and appreciates that the Treasurer services have been provided by Jeff to the District in addition to his service as a member of the Board of Directors.

WHEREAS, during his tenure as the SMEDD Treasurer, Jeff provided instrumental leadership in guiding the District through a period of significant transitions, lending his expertise to ensure stability and strategic direction in SMEDD's financial planning and management; and

WHEREAS, Jeff oversaw the successful completion of the SMEDD's CARES Act Supplemental Work Plan, demonstrating a strong commitment to leveraging federal resources to support economic recovery and resilience across Sonoma and Mendocino counties; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his role as Treasurer, Jeff has been a dedicated advocate for home builders and buyers throughout the region, utilizing his expertise as a program manager and consultant to champion affordable housing, sustainable growth, and economic opportunities for district residents; and

WHEREAS, Jeff's steadfast commitment to enhancing the economic wellbeing of communities within SMEDD's jurisdiction has left a lasting impact on the region, promoting both stability and opportunity for future growth;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sonoma-Mendocino Economic Development District Board of Directors extends its deepest appreciation to Jeff Kelly for his exemplary service, financial stewardship, and unwavering dedication to the economic health of our region, and hereby honors his contributions as Board Treasurer.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this proclamation is issued with sincere gratitude and respect on behalf of the Sonoma-Mendocino Economic Development District for Jeff Kelly's lasting impact on our communities and his legacy of service.



**Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District
Board of Directors Regular Meeting
September 20, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.**

**Meeting was held virtually over Zoom and
In Person Meeting Locations:**

Mendocino Coast Health Care District, 775 River Drive, **Fort Bragg**, CA 95437

and

Mendocino County Executive Office, 501 Low Gap Road, **Ukiah**, CA 95482

and

Sonoma County Economic Development Board Room - 141 Stony Circle, Suite 110, **Santa Rosa**, CA 95401

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Garza called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Item 1 Swearing In of New Board Appointment made to the SMEDD Board of Directors by the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors at their Regular Meeting of September 10, 2024, and Swearing In of New Board Appointment made to the SMEDD Board of Directors by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors at their Regular Meeting of September 10, 2024.

Clerk of the Board Alley provided the Oath of Office to Craig Schlatter and Nicholas Schwanz. Director Schlatter and Director Schwanz introduced themselves.

ROLL CALL

Board Present:	Paul Garza, Chair	Jeff Kelly, Vice Chair and Treasurer
	Lisa Badenfort	Robin Bartholow
	Craig Schlatter	Nicholas Schwanz
	Anna Shaw	

Board Absent: Tim Karas

Board Vacant Seats: One Seat - SMEDD Appointed At-Large Seat

Management Team:

Joshua Metz, District Manager/Economic Development Advisor

Tracy Fuller, Fiscal Agent/Economic Development & Finance Advisor

Bradley Johnson, Sonoma County Economic Development Board Management Analyst

Anna Macken, Mendocino County Administrative Analyst

Norma I. Alley, MMC, Clerk of the Board

Abigail Scott, Economic Development Advisor

AGENDA CHANGES AND DELETIONS

There were no changes or deletions to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Director Bartholow, seconded by Director Badenfort, to approve the agenda. Motion was approved by a 6 Yes/0 No/1 Abstain (Schwanz)/1 Absent (Karas)/1 Vacant roll call vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Garza called for public comment. Seeing no one come forward, he closed public comment.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Item 2 Approve Meeting Minutes: April 19, 2024, and July 19, 2024

Item 3 Approval of Disbursements and Check Register as of August 31, 2024

Item 4 Receive and File Summary and Financial Reports for the U.S. Economic Development Administration's Planning and Partnership Grant #ED22SEA3020033

Item 5 Receive and File Summary and Financial Reports for the U.S. Economic Development Administration's CARES Act Grant #ED20SEA3070045

Item 6 Approve Closeout of the U.S. Economic Development Administration's Recovery and Resiliency CARES Act Grant #ED20SEA3070045

Item 7 Receive and File amended 2024 Board of Directors Meeting Calendar amending the 2024 Meeting Calendar with a specific amendment for the convening of the September 2024 and November 2024 Meetings, and establishing a tentative 2025 Board of Directors Meeting Calendar

Chair Garza called for public comment. Seeing no one come forward, he closed public comment.

A request was made to pull Item 6 for discussion.

MOTION: Director Badenfort, seconded by Vice Chair Kelly, to approve the Consent Calendar Items 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7. Motion was approved by a 5 Yes/0 No/2 Abstain (Schwanz/Shaw)/1 Absent (Karas)/1 Vacant roll call vote.

Chair Garza requested an update on the County's match statements and receiving them on a regular basis. District Manager/Economic Development Advisor Metz fielded the inquiry and provided a brief update.

MOTION: Director Shaw, seconded by Vice Chair Kelly, to approve the Consent Calendar Item 6. Motion was approved by a 7 Yes/0 No/1 Absent (Karas)/1 Vacant roll call vote.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

Item 8 Appoint a SMEDD Treasurer

Chair Garza introduced the item and announced Vice Chair/Treasurer Kelly would not be seeking reappointment of his seat, therefore an appointment of a new Treasurer needed to be made today in order to have continuity of business upon vacancy of his seat.

Discussion ensued amongst the Board regarding the role and responsibility of the Treasurer. Fiscal Agent/Economic Development & Finance Advisor Fuller provided context to GC §6505.5 and the SMEDD Bylaws regarding the discussion.

Director Shaw volunteered to serve.

Chair Garza called for public comment. Seeing no one come forward, he closed public comment.

MOTION: Director Bartholow, seconded by Vice Chair Kelly, to appoint Director Shaw as Treasurer. Motion was approved by a 7 Yes/0 No/1 Absent (Karas)/1 Vacant roll call vote.

Item 9 Authorize formation of an Ad Hoc Committee to review proposals from external Audit Firms to perform an audit of the SMEDD's financial records. Delegate to the Ad Hoc Committee the task of choosing an Audit Firm. Authorize the Board Chair to execute an Agreement for Services with the chosen Audit Firm

Fiscal Agent/Economic Development & Finance Advisor Fuller provided a report and fielded inquiries from the Board.

Chair Garza called for public comment. Seeing no one come forward, he closed public comment.

Treasurer Shaw and Director Schwanz volunteered to serve on the Ad Hoc Committee.

MOTION: Director Bartholow, seconded by Director Badenfort, to appoint Treasurer Shaw and Director Schwanz to an Ad Hoc Committee, to review proposals from external Audit Firms to perform an audit of the SMEDD's financial records, choose an Audit Firm, and authorize the Board Chair to execute an Agreement for Services with the chosen Audit Firm. Motion was approved by a 7 Yes/0 No/1 Absent (Karas)/1 Vacant roll call vote.

Item 10 Receive an Update on California Jobs First: Redwood Region RISE; North Bay Working Group

District Manager/Economic Development Advisor Metz, Sonoma County Economic Development Board Management Analyst Johnson, and Mendocino County Administrative Analyst Macken provided an update.

Item 11 Discuss and Consider Recruitment and Appointment of a SMEDD-Appointed At-Large Member

Chair Garza introduced the item and general discussion commenced amongst the Board. Consensus was

reached to make the appointment a priority for the Board.

DISTRICT MANAGER’S REPORT

UPDATES

- U.S. Economic Development Administration’s Peer Review Meeting held on Tuesday, September 3, 2024.
- Upcoming Board Seats Requiring County Attention
 - Expiring Terms
 - Jeff Kelly – October 13, 2024
 - Lisa Badenfort – October 14, 2024

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- North Coast Resource Partnership Request for Proposals for Project Technical Assistance
- EDA Build to Scale
- EDA PWEAA Assistance
- Small Business Administration Regional Innovation Clusters
- California Jobs First: Catalyst Funds; Tribal Investment Initiative

LETTERS OF SUPPORT ISSUED & OUTCOMES

District Manager/Economic Development Advisor Metz updated the Board on general matters of the District.

UPCOMING EVENTS THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST

- October 8-10, 2024, California Economic Summit, Sacramento, CA
- October 10, 2024, Redwood Coast Region Economic Summit, Eureka, CA
- October 22-24, 2024, FIRA-USA Agricultural Robotics Show, Woodland, CA
- November 21, 2024, Fall Economic Perspective, Sonoma State University, CA

District Manager/Economic Development Advisor Metz announced upcoming events.

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS OR COMMENTS

Chair Garza requested the Vice Chair appointment and a regular schedule approval be on the next meeting agenda. The desired expectation would be for the CEDS Committee to meet at least twice a year.

Director Schwanz asked for guidance on roles and responsibilities as a Director and suggested a discussion on the vision of the Board. Chair Garza directed staff to add a discussion regarding SMEDD Board vision to a future agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Garza adjourned the meeting at 2:46 p.m.

APPROVAL:

ATTEST:

Paul Garza, Jr., Chair of the Board

Norma I. Alley, MMC, Clerk of the Board



Changes since last transmittal*

SONOMA MENDOCINO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
Disbursements / Check Register
Payments Through October 31, 2024

Transmittal on November 15, 2024, to the Board of Directors at their Board Meeting

Check No.	Amount	Date	Paid to (Payee)	Description
*CHANGES SINCE LAST TRANSMITTAL:				
Bank Bill Pay	\$5,517.88	10/23/2024	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects June 2024
PREVIOUSLY REPORTED ACTIVITY:				
1300	\$2,956.50	1/4/2023	William Adams; Johnson and Thomas LLC	Legal Services
1301	\$28,280.22	1/4/2023	US Dept of Commerce / NOAA	Reimbursement to Grantor (EDA) of unexpended Partnership Planning grant funds: Grant No. ED17SEA3020055; Period 7/1/2017 - 6/30/2022
1302	\$20.00	3/1/2023	Streamline	Website Platform Service - February 2023
1303	\$28,303.55	3/17/2023	County of Sonoma	Sonoma County staff reimbursement for services for Partnership Planning grant funds: Grant No. ED17SEA3020055; Period 7/1/2017 - 6/30/2022
1304	\$225.00	3/17/2023	Marie Jones Consulting	Provided CEDS Project Prioritization Services
1305	\$6,786.95	7/12/2023	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects December 2022
1306	\$8,426.75	7/12/2023	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects January 2023
1307	\$10,000.00	8/11/2023	AgInnovations	Ag Innovation Hub Brainstorming Workshop 5/30/2023
Bank Bill Pay	\$1,097.66	12/4/2023	West Business Development Center	EDA Round Table, M. Petrillo, Expenses Supplemental Grant
	\$5.95	1/22/2024	District's Bank	Banking Fees - Bill Pay monthly service charge
Bank Bill Pay	\$229,872.66	2/15/2024	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects December 2022 - December 2023
	\$30.00	2/15/2024	District's Bank	Banking Fees: Wire Fee
Bank Bill Pay	\$4,704.80	6/20/2024	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects January 2024
Bank Bill Pay	\$14,557.43	6/20/2024	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects February 2024
Bank Bill Pay	\$9,826.24	6/20/2024	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects March 2024
Bank Bill Pay	\$13,900.90	6/20/2024	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects April 2024
Bank Bill Pay	\$16,658.53	7/16/2024	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects May 2024 \$15,908.91 + 5 very small invoices for January - March
Bank Bill Pay	\$2,560.09	7/16/2024	Thatcher Hotel	Biomass Symposium Hosting Services
	\$5.95	7/22/2024	District's Bank	Banking Fees - Bill Pay monthly service charge
	\$5.95	8/20/2024	District's Bank	Banking Fees - Bill Pay monthly service charge



DATE: November 15, 2024
TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Bradley Johnson, County of Sonoma - Special Projects Analyst
SUBJECT: Approve Submission of Partnership Planning Grant for 4/1/2025 - 3/31/2028 Grant Period, Due December 15, 2024

STATEMENT OF ISSUE: The purpose of this item is to request approval for the submission of the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District's (SMEDD) Partnership Planning Grant application to the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the grant period from April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2028. The application is due by December 15, 2024.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Approve submission of SMEDD's Partnership and Planning Grant application to the EDA for the 4/1/2025 – 3/31/2028 grant period.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS:

If awarded: This grant will provide \$420,000 in funding and in-kind services over three years (April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2028) to support SMEDD's strategic economic development initiatives. \$210,000 will be federal funds and \$210,000 will be in kind staffing services provided evenly by Sonoma and Mendocino Counties.

BACKGROUND:

SMEDD is responsible for the management and maintenance of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) process, which includes convening regional stakeholders, aligning economic development initiatives, and ensuring compliance with EDA requirements. The proposed Partnership Planning Grant will provide essential funding to support these activities over the next three years.

DISCUSSION:

The Partnership Planning Grant will allow SMEDD to address critical regional economic development needs identified in the CEDs. Key activities under the grant will include:

- **Annual CEDs Updates:** Completed by May 30 each year, these updates will incorporate stakeholder feedback and data to ensure the CEDs reflects regional economic priorities.

- **Bi-Monthly Regional Stakeholder Newsletter:** If awarded, the first issue under this grant will be published on June 30, 2025, followed by bi-monthly issues to keep stakeholders informed about regional initiatives, funding opportunities, and project updates.
- **Quarterly Stakeholder Convenings:** Beginning in July 2025, these meetings will facilitate alignment of regional projects with CEDS goals and enable collaborative partnerships among public and private sectors.
- **Project Repository Database:** Launching April 30, 2025, this database will serve as a centralized repository of regional projects and will be updated in conjunction with CEDS activities.

The grant also includes \$180,000 in federal funding that will be used for contracted professional services during the duration of the grant. \$150,000 of the funds will be used to engage district management services from a contracted firm or consultant with expertise in complex and key economic areas, including Ag-Tech, Biomass Utilization, and Sustainable Energy. \$30,000 of the contracts which will support SMEDD in developing a 5-year CEDS revision that addresses regional challenges and opportunities through robust stakeholder and community engagement.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve submission of the Partnership Planning Grant application for the 4/1/2025 – 3/31/2028 grant period to the Economic Development Administration.
2. Modify and approve the submission of the application.
3. Other approaches may be developed following Board deliberations.
4. Decline to act.

RECOMMENDATION for Alternative 1:

Move to approve the submission of the Partnership Planning Grant application to the U.S. Economic Development Administration for the grant period April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2028.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Planning Grant Form ED 900
2. Planning Grant Budget SF424A
3. SMEDD Planning Grant Budget Narrative



Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District Draft 2025-2028 Partnership and Planning Grant Application

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Scope of Work

B.1. Describe the scope of work for the proposed EDA investment, including a list of project tasks to be undertaken.

List the specific tasks/activities that will be undertaken as a result of this investment.

Applicants for Partnership Planning Assistance should provide a narrative on the economic development activities that will be undertaken, which must include managing and maintaining the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) process.

This EDA investment will empower SMEDD to advance regional economic development through strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, and the comprehensive management of the CEDS process. The proposed work will include the following primary tasks:

1. Management and Maintenance of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Process

- a. **Annual CEDS Update:** Gather and integrate feedback from local industry and sector stakeholders, the CEDS strategy committee, and/or committed project partners to ensure the CEDS remains aligned with evolving regional priorities and projects. This will involve facilitating roundtables, one-on-one interviews, digital surveys, and possibly sector specific events to understand the latest challenges and opportunities facing stakeholders.
- b. **Project Repository Expansion:** Regularly solicit and update a repository of regional projects that align with CEDS goals, supporting the district's strategic economic development goals and tracking project outcomes.
- c. **2027 CEDS Five-Year Revision:** Complete the CEDS five year revision of the district's CEDS due in 2027. This task will partially fund necessary activities to collect, analyze, draft, and integrate districtwide data, stakeholder feedback, and goals into the revision.

2. Stakeholder Engagement and Alignment

- a. **Industry and Sector Convening:** Regularly engage stakeholders—including businesses, local governments, CEDS Strategy Committee, tribes, nonprofits, and community organizations—through quarterly convenings to align individual and regional projects with CEDS objectives. This engagement will focus on identifying shared priorities, collaborative opportunities, and regionally impactful projects.
- b. **Feedback Collection for CEDS Update:** Circulate surveys to ensure that community perspectives and emerging trends are integrated into the CEDS updates.

3. Development and Dissemination of District Newsletter

- a. **Monthly Resource Newsletter:** Establish and distribute a bimonthly newsletter that acts as a regional resource. Content will include updates on funding and job opportunities, project highlights, and industry-related events, increasing the visibility and awareness of regional economic development initiatives.

4. Capacity Building and Support for Project Development



- a. **Identification and Support of Regional Projects:** Develop SMEDD’s capacity to help stakeholders identify how their projects that align with CEDS goals, providing technical assistance as needed for project planning and funding applications.
- b. **Tracking and Reporting on Project Impacts:** Implement and manage a structured process to monitor, report, and analyze the outcomes and impacts of projects supported by SMEDD under the CEDS.

B.2. Describe the specific deliverables/outcomes that the project will produce and the primary beneficiaries or audience of those deliverables.

Please note that deliverables are defined as the specific outcomes that will come from the project and differ from information on project tasks/activities requested in B.1. Project tasks/activities requested in B.1 should be reported as process steps that will be achieved to reach the final project while deliverables/outcomes detailed in B.2 are the final product produced.”

1. Annual CEDS Update Report

- a. **Deliverable:** Comprehensive annual reports detailing updates on and to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), informed by stakeholder feedback and recent data on economic conditions within the district. These reports will highlight new or adjusted regional projects, emerging economic challenges, and opportunities identified throughout the year.
- b. **Beneficiaries:** Local governments, tribes, -economic development agencies, private sector partners, and community organizations who rely on the CEDS to guide economic strategies and secure funding.

2. Project Repository Database

- a. **Deliverable:** A centralized, publicly accessible project repository listing active and proposed regional projects that align with CEDS priorities. This database will include project descriptions, key stakeholders, funding status, and projected impacts, allowing for better coordination, planning, and collaboration across the region.
- b. **Beneficiaries:** Project developers, grant funders, grant seekers, and stakeholders interested in collaboration and investment opportunities within the region.

3. 2027 Five-Year CEDS Revision

- a. **Deliverable:** An updated 5-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy that serves as a strategic roadmap for economic development across Sonoma and Mendocino counties.
- b. **Beneficiaries:** Policymakers, economic developers, industry partners, local agencies, municipalities, tribes, and community organizations needing a comprehensive framework to guide decision-making and strategic plan development.

4. Monthly Regional Stakeholder Newsletter

- a. **Deliverable:** A monthly digital newsletter distributed to an opt in email list, featuring updates on district projects, funding opportunities, job postings, upcoming events, and industry trends. The newsletter will be a key communication tool to keep regional partners informed and engaged.



- b. **Beneficiaries:** businesses owners, nonprofits, tribes, local government officials, workforce development agencies, and community members interested in staying updated on regional economic development news.
5. **Stakeholder Convening Summaries and Feedback Reports**
- a. **Deliverable:** Documentation from stakeholder and sector convenings and feedback sessions, including summaries of discussions, identified challenges, opportunities, and proposed actions. These summaries will serve as a formal record to guide future planning and annual CEDS updates. They will also provide opportunities for making connections with economic development funding opportunities or partnerships.
 - b. **Beneficiaries:** Community leaders, local sector/industry leaders, policymakers, and stakeholders

B.3. Identify the proposed time schedule for the project, including specific project milestones.

1. **Annual CEDS Update**

- a. **Completion Date:** Annually on May 30 (2025, 2026, 2027, and 2028).
- b. **Description:** Gather and integrate feedback from local industry and sector stakeholders, the CEDS strategy committee, and/or committed project partners to ensure the CEDS remains aligned with evolving regional priorities and projects.

2. **Newsletter Development and Distribution**

- a. **Completion Date/Schedule:** First Issue will be released no later than June 30, 2025, Bi-monthly after initial release (August, October, December, etc.)
- b. **Description:** Distribute a bimonthly newsletter that acts as a regional resource. Content will include updates on funding and job opportunities, project highlights, and industry-related events, increasing the visibility and awareness of regional economic development initiatives.

3. **Quarterly Stakeholder Convenings**

- a. **Completion Date/Schedule:** Beginning July 2025, held quarterly (October 2025, January 2026, April 2026, etc.)
- b. **Description:** Regularly engage stakeholders—including businesses, local governments, CEDS Strategy Committee, tribes, nonprofits, and community organizations—through quarterly convenings to align individual and regional projects with CEDS objectives. This engagement will focus on identifying shared priorities, collaborative opportunities, and regionally impactful projects.

4. **Project Repository Database Launch and Management**



- a. **Completion Date:** April 30, 2025 initial launch and regular maintenance will be managed concurrently with annual CEDS updates.
- b. **Description:** Launch and maintain a centralized database of regional projects aligned with CEDS priorities, with quarterly updates to include new projects and track progress.

5. **2027 CEDS Five-Year Revision**

- a. **Completion Date:** September 30, 2027.
- b. **Description:** Complete a five-year CEDS revision based on updated regional goals, SWOT, economic analysis, stakeholder input, resiliency plan, and projects to guide regional economic development.

B.4. Describe how the proposed project aligns with one or more of EDA's investment priorities. Current EDA investment priorities. Applicants must identify all relevant investment priorities with which the project aligns with and describe how the project advances each relevant priority (ies).

This Project aligns with multiple of the EDA's investment priorities. Through the various means of regional economic development partnership and planning mentioned above, the SMEDD will be able to advance the EDA's priorities in the Sonoma-Mendocino region.

1. **Equity**

- a. **Advancing Opportunities for Underserved Populations:** SMEDD will engage a wide array of stakeholders in underserved rural communities within Sonoma and Mendocino Counties, including tribes, small-medium scale farmers, agricultural workers, and minority-owned businesses that traditionally lack access to economic development resources. By incorporating insights from these groups into the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and prioritizing projects that meet their needs, SMEDD will support equitable economic development.

2. **Recovery & Resilience**

- a. **Enhancing Regional Economic Resilience:** By convening stakeholders, generating visibility on funding opportunities, and promoting a centralized Project Repository Database, SMEDD will identify and encourage projects and priorities that diversify the economic base and reduce vulnerability to climate disruptions.

3. **Workforce Development**

- a. **Addressing Skill Needs:** SMEDD's partnerships will include educational institutions and workforce training providers to align workforce development initiatives with current and future skills needs in sectors aligned with the CEDS.

4. **Technology-Based Economic Development**

- a. **Supporting Ag-Tech Innovation:** SMEDD's exploration of the feasibility for an Ag-Tech Innovation Hub in the region is directly aligned with the EDA's focus on fostering technology-based economic development. The project will encourage the use of



technology in agriculture to enhance productivity, support sustainable practices, and develop high-skilled, well-paying jobs.

5. **Environmentally-Sustainable Development**

- a. **Promoting Green Processes and Climate Resiliency:** The CEDS will prioritize projects that support environmentally sustainable practices, including the development of green and blue economies that promote climate resiliency. SMEDD will use its regular stakeholder convenings and CEDS updates to identify needs and solutions for green and blue economy development by identifying infrastructure, capacity, workforce, funding, and technical assistance needs.

Economic Development and Impact

D.1. Current Economic Conditions - Area of Impact. Briefly describe the economic conditions of the estimated area of impact with a focus on available data describing the level of distress, if applicable.

This should also include a concise overview of the economic development needs, area's workforce, industry clusters, main economic drivers, challenges, and assets. Describe the economic adjustment problems or economic dislocations the area is experiencing (or is likely to experience in the next 24 months). Relevant data may be drawn from the regional CEDS, <https://eda.gov/resources/tools/>, as well as other sources. You'll be asked to provide more details about this in Section H. For revolving loan fund applications, please include information on borrowers and industry sectors that the loan fund is anticipated to target.

The Sonoma-Mendocino region faces ongoing economic challenges, particularly in population decline. The area's population declined by 2.3% (13,422 people) from 2018 to 2023 and is expected to decrease by an additional 1.7% by 2028 (according to lightcast.io). This trend signals potential impacts on labor availability and industry expansion/retention. This is further seen in lagging job growth considering pandemic recovery, with a 2.1% job loss from 2018 to 2023, contrasting with the national growth rate of 4.3%. Despite this, the region shows projected job growth of 15,193 positions over the next five years (lightcast), indicating industry interest in continuing to grow in the region.

Workforce Characteristics: Labor force participation has seen a drop from 62.0% to 60.2% between 2018 and 2023, which is likely a lagging result from the COVID 19 pandemic. Education levels are slightly above national averages, with 21.9% holding a Bachelor's degree and 9.4% an Associate's degree. This educational profile supports advanced roles but also indicates potential skill gaps in specialized sectors; such as, manufacturing and trades.

Industry Clusters and Key Economic Drivers: The leading industries by Gross Regional Product are Manufacturing, Health Care and Social Assistance, Government, Retail Trade, Construction, Professional, Services, Wholesale Trade, Real Estate, Tourism, Finance, and Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing. These industries account for nearly 87% (\$33.1 Billion) of the regions total Gross Regional Product (\$38.1 Billion).



Main Challenges: The aging population, with a high retirement risk, may exacerbate workforce shortages. Additionally, the region’s average wages per job fall short of the national average by approximately \$4,400 annually, posing further challenges for attracting and retaining talent. These challenges to attracting and retaining skilled and available workforce are further exacerbated by the region’s relatively high cost of living, which is upwards of 30% higher than the Nation (lightcast.io).

Regional Assets: Educational institutions such as Mendocino College, Santa Rosa Junior College and Sonoma State University support the workforce pipeline and have strong partnerships with the local economic development agencies, including the SMEDD. The relatively low crime rates and existing infrastructure serve as further economic assets for attracting residents and businesses to the region. Additionally, the region’s geography is uniquely positioned near the Bay Area, and directly in the heart of the north coast. This provides the region’s businesses and communities unique access to industries that utilize natural resources and technology. The top industries by employment concentration in the region are Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/& Hunting, Construction, Arts/Entertainment/ and Recreation, Manufacturing, and Utilities (geothermal energy).

D.2. Explain how the proposed EDA investment addresses the economic development needs identified in D.1

1. **Mitigating Population and Workforce Decline**
 - a. SMEDD will continue to strengthen industry engagement and support workforce development initiatives by connecting local educational institutions, businesses, and government agencies to funding, partnership, strategic planning, and technical assistance opportunities through the CEDS process. Quarterly stakeholder convenings and a centralized Project Repository Database will encourage resource-sharing and project alignment.
2. **Job Growth by Diversifying Economic Drivers**
 - a. By supporting the development of a regional emerging sectors such as Ag-Tech, the blue economy, green energy, tourism, manufacturing, agriculture, and other industries identified through the CEDS process, SMEDD aims to diversify the regional economic base. Feasibility studies and strategic planning around these existing and emerging sectors will expand opportunities for economic development.
3. **Addressing the Aging Workforce**
 - a. The partnership and planning project will support workforce training initiatives targeting younger demographics, as well as reskilling programs for older workers nearing retirement but seeking work. Highlighted in SMEDD’s newsletter, website, and CEDS project repository, these programs will address skills mismatches and boost participation in essential and emerging sectors.
4. **Leveraging Regional Assets and Educational Resources**
 - a. Through stakeholder convenings, strategic planning, and the Project Repository, SMEDD will leverage partnerships with educational institutions like Mendocino College, Santa Rosa Junior College, and Sonoma State University to align training programs with industry needs. The bi-monthly newsletter will also promote job training and career pathways, helping residents access local employment resources.



5. Building Economic Resilience

- a. SMEDD's CEDS process will emphasize economic resilience. Both the annual and five-year updates to the CEDS will ensure regional strategies remain responsive to emerging challenges and opportunities.

D.4. How does the proposed project align with the regional CEDS? Applicants should identify the specific CEDS strategy(s) that the project helps advance and explain how the project supports the identified goal(s).

This project and organization are directly responsible for updating, implementing, and maintaining the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD).

Economic Impact of the Project

E.1. Provide a clear and compelling justification for the long-term potential economic impact of the proposed project, through anticipated job creation or retention, private investment leveraging, number of businesses or collaborations supported, or other appropriate measures.

All job and private investment estimates should reflect the anticipated impact within nine years of the potential EDA investment and applicants should provide documentation or third-party data to substantiate claims.

This project is for developing and managing partnerships and strategic planning initiatives throughout the region. The economic impacts of the project are difficult to measure prospectively. However, looking at the performance of SMEDD's partnership and planning initiatives over the past 5 years, SMEDD has been involved in at least \$17 million in awarded funds from various agencies to regional partners. One of these investments alone (\$5 million), to a local value-added meat products producer, will result in the following economic impact: 43 regional jobs supported in agriculture, food product manufacturing, and grocery/retail, \$22 million in output, and \$760,000 in annual federal, local, and state tax revenue. The SMEDD's partnership and planning objectives empower local economic development and impacts through connecting businesses and agencies to resources and technical assistance.

Capacity and Administration

F.1. List and describe the strategic partners and organizations that will be engaged in this project.

Describe any third-party organizations, including governmental agencies, that will be directly engaged in supporting the proposed project, and explain how each partner will be engaged in the project.

The Sonoma County Economic Development Collaborative and Mendocino County Economic Development will both be providing in kind staff capacity for this project. The Special Projects Analyst



from the Sonoma County Economic Development Collaborative (EDC) will manage regionally relevant economic development activities in Sonoma County, including stakeholder engagement, coordinating partnership meetings, and preparing summary reports and narratives required for grant compliance and CEDS updates. The Administrative Analyst 2 from Mendocino County Economic Development will focus on similar activities in Mendocino County but will additionally manage fiscal reporting and oversight of financial administration for the district. Both positions will convene public and private stakeholders, collaborate with contractors on outreach, district partnership and planning efforts, data studies, and ensure adherence to grant reporting requirements. Minimal in-kind hours will be provided by the Director of Special Projects and Partnerships at the Sonoma County EDC and the Executive Division Manager for the Mendocino County Economic Development. Both organizations are County Government organizations separate than the SMEDD, but partners of the Joint Powers Authority forming the SMEDD.

F.2. Applicant's organizational capability

Briefly describe your organization's capability to administer, implement, and maintain the project, including prior experience with federal awards. List any awards received from EDA in the last five years, along with the relevant federal award ID numbers, if known.

The SMEDD has administered numerous federal awards including two previous planning and partnership grant awards (Grant Numbers: ED17SEA3020055 & ED22SEA3020033). Through the previous award cycles, the SMEDD has demonstrated increased planning and partnership activity and administrative capacity. Utilizing the CEDS, contracted associates, and staff resources, the SMEDD has implemented strategic partnership and planning activities in the region. The in-kind staff serving as the matching funds for this grant have robust experience in the reporting and administrative requirements for partnership and planning awards.

F.3. Applicant's staff capacity

Identify the key staff members who will be responsible for implementing the project and briefly describe how their expertise and experience qualifies them for the project. State whether you will administer the award yourself or contract with a third party for grant administration.

The Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) will implement this project using a blend of in-kind staff contributions and contracted consultants.

Key staff members include:

- **Special Projects Analyst (Sonoma County Economic Development Collaborative)**
This role is currently occupied by Brad Johnson. He has been working with the SMEDD since 2020 and has robust institutional experience with the agency. During his tenure, he has experience managing the board of directors, drafting, and submitting progress report and CEDS updates, managing contracts for CEDS revisions and consultant support, providing technical assistance for grant applications and strategic plans, and facilitating stakeholder conversations on CEDS aligned topics and sectors. He will focus on managing Sonoma County's economic development activities relevant to the CEDS, including stakeholder engagement, and coordinating partnership meetings. For this project, he will also be responsible for preparing progress reports and CEDS update reports.



- **Administrative Analyst 2 (Mendocino County Economic Development)**

This position is currently occupied by Anna Macken. She will lead similar activities in Mendocino County while also leveraging her education (MBA) and professional experience in overseeing fiscal reporting and financial management for the district. The Administrative Analyst 2 will ensure financial compliance (SF -425 reports), maintain reporting accuracy, manage necessary audit contracts, and coordinate closely with district stakeholders to advance CEDS goals across both counties.

Utilizing their roles and experience in economic development for Sonoma and Mendocino Counties, both analysts will work closely on convening public and private stakeholders, managing data collection and studies, supporting contractors on outreach, and ensuring that the projects align with the CEDS. Their efforts will be guided by executive staff in each county—namely, the Director of Special Projects and Partnerships at Sonoma County EDC and the Executive Division Manager for Mendocino County Economic Development—who will provide oversight.

Consultant Support

To supplement staff capacity, SMEDD’s budget allocates \$180,000 over the three-year grant period for contracted services. Federal funds will engage consultants with targeted economic development expertise in strategic areas essential to the CEDS, such as Ag-Tech, Biomass Utilization, Sustainable Energy, the Blue Economy, and Economic Resilience. The consultants will support strategic planning facilitation, stakeholder engagement, and the development of complex regional projects. Additionally, consultants will play an integral role in drafting the CEDS update in 2027.

Regional Eligibility

H.1. Explain how the estimated area of impact defined in section C.2 above meets EDA’s distress criteria as defined in the applicable NOFO.

EDA will review and evaluate documentation submitted by the applicant to verify eligibility.

Utilizing the EDA sponsored, Stats America Measuring Distress Tool, the whole region does not meet a distress threshold of elevated relative unemployment or suppressed relative per capita income. Regarding this project application, the SMEDD is not asking for reduced match considerations based on this distress analysis. It should be noted that there are five separate EDA identified opportunity zones in the region that will benefit from this project. Additionally, the census tracts in the region vary widely in unemployment rate and per capita income; with some tracts having upwards of 20% unemployment (2022 5-year ACS) and as low as \$23,600 per capita income (2022 5-year ACS).

Attachment 2

BUDGET INFORMATION - Non-Construction Programs

OMB Number: 4040-0006
Expiration Date: 02/28/2025

SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY

Grant Program Function or Activity (a)	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (b)	Estimated Unobligated Funds		New or Revised Budget		
		Federal (c)	Non-Federal (d)	Federal (e)	Non-Federal (f)	Total (g)
1. 2025-2028 Partnership Planning Program		\$ 210,000	\$	\$	\$	\$ 210,000
2. 2025-2028 Partnership Planning Program Matching Funds			210,000			210,000
3.						
4.						
5. Totals		\$ 210,000	\$ 210,000	\$	\$	\$ 420,000

SECTION B - BUDGET CATEGORIES

6. Object Class Categories	GRANT PROGRAM, FUNCTION OR ACTIVITY				Total (5)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	
	2025-2028 Partnership Planning Program Federal Share	2025-2028 Partnership Planning Program Match Funds			
a. Personnel	\$	\$ 160,000	\$	\$	\$ 160,000
b. Fringe Benefits		50,000			50,000
c. Travel					
d. Equipment					
e. Supplies					
f. Contractual	180,000				180,000
g. Construction					
h. Other	9,000				9,000
i. Total Direct Charges (sum of 6a-6h)					\$
j. Indirect Charges	21,000				\$ 21,000
k. TOTALS (sum of 6i and 6j)	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
7. Program Income	\$ 210,000	\$ 210,000	\$	\$	\$ 420,000

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SECTION C - NON-FEDERAL RESOURCES

(a) Grant Program		(b) Applicant	(c) State	(d) Other Sources	(e)TOTALS
8.	2025-2028 Partnership Planning Program	\$ 210,000	\$	\$	\$ 210,000
9.	Matching Funds	210,000			210,000
10.					
11.					
12. TOTAL (sum of lines 8-11)		\$ 420,000	\$	\$	\$ 420,000

SECTION D - FORECASTED CASH NEEDS

	Total for 1st Year	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
13. Federal	\$ 70,000	\$ 17,500	\$ 17,500	\$ 17,500	\$ 17,500
14. Non-Federal	\$ 70,000	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500
15. TOTAL (sum of lines 13 and 14)	\$ 140,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000

SECTION E - BUDGET ESTIMATES OF FEDERAL FUNDS NEEDED FOR BALANCE OF THE PROJECT

(a) Grant Program		FUTURE FUNDING PERIODS (YEARS)			
		(b)First	(c) Second	(d) Third	(e) Fourth
16.	2025-2028 Partnership Planning Program	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	\$
17.					
18.					
19.					
20. TOTAL (sum of lines 16 - 19)		\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	\$

SECTION F - OTHER BUDGET INFORMATION

21. Direct Charges:	189,000	22. Indirect Charges:	21,000
23. Remarks:			

Attachment 3

SONOMA MENDOCINO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT FY 2025– FY2027 EDA PLANNING GRANT BUDGET NARRATIVE

Match Fund Allocations to Personnel

The budget allocates \$160,000 in kind matching funds over the 3-year duration of the grant period by way of two key personnel salaries. This in-kind staff will support the implementation of the Sonoma Mendocino Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The **Special Projects Analyst** from the Sonoma County Economic Development Collaborative will manage regionally relevant economic development activities in Sonoma County, including stakeholder engagement, coordinating partnership meetings, and preparing summary reports and narratives required for grant compliance and CEDS updates. The **Administrative Analyst 2** from Mendocino County Economic Development will focus on similar activities in Mendocino County but will additionally manage fiscal reporting and oversight of financial administration for the district. Both positions will convene public and private stakeholders, collaborate with contractors on outreach, district partnership and planning efforts, data studies, and ensure adherence to grant reporting requirements. Their collective efforts will proper financial management, facilitate the execution of CEDS goals, and maintain effective partnership between the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) board, contractors, and stakeholders. Additionally, these staff members' efforts will be overseen by executive staff in each respective County to ensure alignment between the district and their supporting organization. Minimal in-kind hours will be provided by the **Director of Special Projects and Partnerships at the Sonoma County EDC** and the **Executive Division Manager for the Mendocino County Economic Development**.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Complementary to the in-kind staff salary, \$50,000 of fringe benefits for this project will be included as an in-kind contribution to the grant. Fringe benefits include, but are not limited to medical, dental and vision plan options, 403(b)/401(k), and life insurance options provided to staff members employed by the County of Sonoma and the County of Mendocino. Staffing that is dedicated to this project that are employed by the County of Sonoma include The Sonoma County Economic Development Collaborative's Director of Special Projects and Partnerships and Special Projects Analyst. Staffing that is dedicated to this project that are employed by the County of Mendocino include Executive Division Manager for the Mendocino County Economic Development and The Administrative Analyst 2.

CONTRACTUAL

The budget allocates \$180,000 over the three-year grant period for contractual services to enhance the District's capacity to implement the Sonoma Mendocino Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). These federal funds will be used to engage consultants with specialized expertise in economic development areas aligned with CEDS goals, including strategic planning for emerging industries such as Ag Tech, Biomass Utilization, Sustainable Energy, the Blue Economy, and Economic Resilience. Consultants will also assist in drafting and updating the CEDS in 2027 to ensure it reflects current regional priorities and opportunities. By leveraging these external experts, the District will be able to pursue more complex projects, foster stronger stakeholder partnerships, engage in broader networks, and effectively advance its strategic objectives. Additionally, specialized expertise will support facilitating and clerking compliant and effective Board and Committee Meetings, ensuring a well-organized, transparent, and Brown Act-compliant publicly accessible meeting process.

Other Costs

The Budget allocates \$9,000 to the other costs category and will be charged to the federal funds portion of the grant. The primary costs incurred in this category will be for the appropriate attainment of insurance ([2 CFR § 200.447](#)), professional services ([2 CFR § 200.459](#)) for organization support, web publication and printing ([2 CFR § 200.461](#)) for outreach activities, and training and education costs ([2 CFR § 200.473](#)) for better CEDS implementation, administration, and development. Those costs will be expended from the federal monies and will include: appropriate insurance attainment required by the award, professional legal services to review contracts and documentation necessary to implement this project, financial institution costs, and single page audit (if required).

Indirect Costs

The SMEDD organization is electing the 10% de minimis rate for indirect charges. At this rate the three-year total amounts to \$21,000.



Counties of Mendocino and Sonoma Required Match Summaries

Cash Contributions and In-Kind Staffing Contributions
Partnership Planning Grant No. ED22SEA3020033

Table 1. County of Mendocino: October 22, 2022*, to November 8, 2024

Mendocino Staff	Hours	Wage + Benefit	Amount
Anna Macken	309.9	\$82.48	\$26,147.84
Kelly Hansen	24	\$80.45	\$2099.63
Xuyen Mallela	13.15	\$167.97	\$4498.46
Brittney O'Farrell	1	100.07	100.07
SUBTOTAL FY 23/24 In-Kind Contribution To Date	361.8		\$32,846.00
SUBTOTAL FY 22/23 Cash Contribution			\$35,000.00
GRAND TOTAL	361.8		\$67,846.00

Table 2. County of Sonoma: October 22, 2022*, to September 30, 2024

Sonoma Staff	Hours	Wage + Benefit	Amount
Bradley Johnson	885.25	\$51.52	\$45,608.08
Ethan Brown	177.75	\$97.45	\$17,321.74
Lauren Cartwright	180.75	\$83.79	\$15,145.04
Katherine Dipasqua	70.00	\$83.79	\$5,865.3
TOTAL	1,313.75		\$83,940.16

Table 3. Required Match % Satisfied, Grant Period: July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2025

County	Total Match Required	Total Contribution to Date	% Satisfied
Mendocino	\$105,000	\$67,846.00	65%
Sonoma	\$105,000	\$83,940.16	80%

*Grant Award Date



DATE: November 15, 2024
TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Anna Macken, County of Mendocino - Economic Development Administrative Analyst
SUBJECT: Consider Board Retreat Logistics and Approve Facilitation

STATEMENT OF ISSUE: The purpose of this item is to discuss and approve Board retreat logistics regarding date, location, whether or not to engage a retreat facilitator, and if so, to choose a facilitator.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Authorize the SMEDD Team to:

- engage one of the responding firms to facilitate a Board Retreat to be held at the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Hopland Research and Extension Center or a similar venue,
- tentatively calendar the retreat for Friday, February 21, 2025, and
- conduct outreach as needed.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS:

Costs for the Retreat are expected to be \$12,000 if a facilitator is used, and would include costs for rental of the meeting location, possibly catering, professional facilitation, and the SMEDD Team time to facilitate the meeting.

1. Facilitation costs:
 - a. Option A: Ag Innovations
 - i. \$ 7,442
 - ii. \$ 10,863
 - b. Option B: RGS
 - i. \$8,500
 - ii. \$10,000

BACKGROUND:

At the Board meeting on September 20, 2024, the concept of a Board retreat for the purpose of strategic thinking around the vision for the SMEDD's future and identifying the SMEDD's unique value proposition to the region were discussed during the District Manager's Update. The item is now being presented formally for consideration.

Items that have been identified needing Board discussion and approval are Board retreat logistics, review retreat facilitation proposals, choose a facilitator for the retreat, and provide direction to the SMEDD Team. Recommended action is to approve Board retreat logistics including date, location, and facilitators, direct staff to coordinate board retreat logistics and engagement of a facilitator, review two submitted proposals for facilitation and vote to select one of the facilitator proposals.

DISCUSSION:

Discussion of planning for a board member strategic retreat with facilitation for refining focus and actionable goals for the SMEDD during the next 3-year grant cycle.

The SMEDD is in the process of applying for a new cycle of planning grant funding which will provide \$210,000 for three years. During this time the 5-year revision and update to the CEDS document will need to be completed. Given the financial constraints of a \$70,000 annual SMEDD budget, a Board retreat is proposed to facilitate focus and implementation of attainable goals within budgetary constraints, and explore options for additional funding to increase the scope of engagement by the SMEDD.

The proposed date is Friday, February 21 2024, from 10-3pm. The proposed location is the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Hopland Research and Extension Center. Other location options may be suggested.

Two proposals have been submitted to the SMEDD for facilitation of the Board retreat. They are included as appendixes to this agenda item.

The first is from Ag Innovations and proposes two options, at \$7,442 and \$10,863. The second is from RGS and proposes two options, at \$8,500 and \$10,000.

ALTERNATIVES:

1: Authorize the SMEDD Team to engage one of the responding firms to facilitate a Board Retreat, to be held at the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Hopland Research and Extension Center or a similar venue, to tentatively calendar the retreat for Friday, February 21, 2025, and to conduct outreach as needed.

2: Consider, modify, and authorize the SMEDD Team to engage one of the responding firms to facilitate a Board Retreat, to be held at the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Hopland Research and Extension Center or a similar venue, to tentatively calendar the retreat for Friday, February 21, 2025, and to conduct outreach as needed.

3: Other approach(s) may be developed after public comments and Board deliberations.

4: Decline to act.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Ag Innovation Facilitation Proposal
- B. RGS Facilitation Proposal



November 8, 2024

To: Bradley Johnson
Special Projects Analyst
141 Stony Circle, Ste 110
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
Bradley.Johnson@sonoma-county.org

Re: Proposal, Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District Strategic Planning Board Retreat Facilitation

Dear Bradley,

Thank you for taking the time to talk with us about your plans for SMEDD's upcoming Strategic Planning Board Retreat. We would be excited to work with you to support strategic direction and relationship building for SMEDD Board and staff. This letter outlines our understanding of the project and provides an estimate of costs. Please take a look and let us know if this matches your specifications for the project, including the budget.

We always consider proposals such as this as the starting point of a dialogue and we look forward to discussing the project further. We are often able to add additional services for a modest cost and can similarly suggest streamlining that can reduce costs to fit in your budget.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Very warmest,
Bonnie Guttman
Executive Director
Ag Innovations
bonnie@aginnovations.org

SMEDD Strategic Planning Board Retreat Background

The SMEDD Board of Directors is planning on holding an in person Board retreat in February 2025 with the goal of aligning around a direction for SMEDD on how best utilize its role as an economic development organization, its strategic plan, and limited budget to best provide value to the region. The Board recently welcomed three new board members and is actively recruiting for a fourth new member. The Board retreat is an opportunity to unify Board members around their shared assets, vision, and purpose. It is also an opportunity to discuss and provide direction for organizational development in the short and long term that would align SMEDD's assets with the current strategic plan.

Project Objectives

- 1) Board members understanding each other, and the expertise and other strengths they bring
- 2) Clarify and re-affirm vision for SMEDD, drawn from CEDS process
- 3) Discuss board purpose and how the board sees its role
- 4) Discuss different financial models to support SMEDD work, in alignment with CEDS and board interests
- 5) Identify strategies to provide best value and realize vision with limited resources

Ag Innovations' Approach

Ag Innovations is a 501c3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to facilitate collaboration among diverse groups to develop holistic solutions to our most complex agricultural, natural resource and environmental challenges. Through the skilled use of process and facilitation, we help stakeholders create the new ideas, actions, and will needed for decision-making that supports the best possible future.

We serve our community by convening and facilitating 1) transformational collaboratives that help leaders think beyond their disciplines and unlock new ideas; 2) stakeholder engagement, public input, and planning, which helps improve the plans and policies that allow for a better future; and 3) capacity building including strategic planning, systems thinking and leadership development.

Ag Innovations takes a consensus-building and systems approach that focuses on the best of what is, and helps an organization align towards a shared future direction. We will support SMEDD in articulating the legal, political, environmental, economic and social landscape it is in, identifying its vision and determining the best strategies to get it there. Our facilitation is engaging, interactive, and results oriented, and will help the organization move sure footed into its future.

Ag Innovations Work Plan

Option 1: Retreat Design and Facilitation

We will work with SMEDD staff to design and facilitate an interactive, results-oriented strategic planning session with the Board of Directors and staff.

Activities

- Planning/design meetings with SMEDD
- Prepare for strategic planning meeting (facilitators agenda, meeting materials)
- Facilitate strategic planning retreat with Board and staff
- Provide edit of meeting record, including review of the basic strategic plan
- Debrief meeting with SMEDD to discuss key take-aways and next steps from strategic planning meeting
- Review of a detailed meeting record for the strategic planning retreat, and review of basic strategic plan developed by SMEDD.

Assumptions

- Five 1-hour planning meetings with SMEDD plus facilitator prep and follow up
- One 1-hour debrief meeting with SMEDD plus facilitator prep and follow up
- Six hour strategic planning retreat, plus facilitator set up and clean up
- Ag Innovations is responsible for:
 - planning meeting agendas and facilitation.
 - reviewing appropriate topic material in preparation for planning meetings and the strategic planning retreat.
 - developing an agenda for the strategic planning retreat taking advantage of best practices for accomplishing the meeting objectives, the resources of your organization, and the talent and insight of the Board and staff. We will create an agenda with detailed facilitation/program directions, as well as a participant agenda to use with your Board and staff.
- SMEDD is responsible for:
 - coordinating planning meeting times, with input from Ag Innovations.
 - all logistics associated with the planning of the strategic planning meeting.
 - taking the lead on note taking for the strategic planning meeting and creation of a strategic plan. Ag Innovations will provide one edit of the meeting record and review of the strategic plan.

Deliverables

- Planning meeting agenda
- Strategic planning retreat agenda

Option 2: Meeting Design, Facilitation, and Development of Meeting Results

This option includes everything in Option 1, plus the development of a detailed meeting record of the strategic planning retreat.

Activities

- All activities in Option 1, plus

- Development of a detailed meeting record for the strategic planning retreat, and development of a basic strategic plan intended for an internal audience.

Assumptions

- This option includes time for Ag Innovations' staff team coordination and preparation, including Project Coordinator staff participation in 1 planning meeting and debrief meeting with SMEDD.
- Assumptions are the same as Option 1, except that Ag Innovations will be responsible for taking the lead on note taking for the strategic planning retreat instead of SMEDD.
- Ag Innovations will work with SMEDD to develop the meeting record.
- Ag Innovations will develop a basic strategic plan intended for an internal audience.

Deliverables

- Deliverables included in Option 1
- Meeting record, outlining Board vision, with clear outcomes and next steps
- Basic strategic plan

Your Team

These services will be provided by Nicolia Mehrling, Lead Facilitator. Genevieve Taylor, Principal Facilitator will provide strategic consultation during project initiation, and behind the scenes guidance on agenda design and the development of the strategic plan. A project coordinator will be provided if option 2 is chosen.

Project Team Bios

Nicolia Mehrling, Lead Facilitator: Nicolia's career has focused on cross-sector collaboration, food system network building and community-based conflict resolution. At Ag Innovations, she conducts public outreach and community engagement with the wide spectrum of farmers and farming, alongside water and planning agencies, environmental interests, tribes, and farmworkers in the Tulare Subbasin, based in Tulare County, and the Putah Creek region in Solano County. She also facilitates countywide watershed and fire resiliency efforts in Lake County.

Before joining Ag Innovations, Nicolia directed the Community Mediation program at Six Rivers Dispute Resolution Center, specializing in developing and leading training in both conflict resolution and communication for public facing government staff. Nicolia brings over five years of expertise in facilitation, mediation, and program management. She managed cases for the USDA's Certified Agricultural Mediation Program, covering issues including wetlands, organic compliance, agricultural labor housing, and pesticide management. Nicolia also facilitated the development of FEMA-approved Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans, and supported the Oregon Community Food Systems Network as well as regional food systems coalitions through network building, strategic planning, and facilitation. Nicolia currently serves as Board Vice-Chair for Six Rivers Dispute Resolution Center, which serves counties in Oregon and Washington states.

Genevieve Taylor, Principal Facilitator: Genevieve brings 20 years of experience to the work of facilitation, collaboration, leadership, strategic planning and conflict resolution. Genevieve became a senior facilitator at Ag Innovations in 2015, and facilitated collaborative work, networks in food systems and water, strategic planning with a wide range of partners, and disadvantaged community engagement.

She was Executive Director of Ag Innovations from 2018-2024, and while in that position was proud to support the team in their work on ag viability, pest management, fire resiliency, water stewardship, food systems and food distribution. Genevieve believes that vibrant collaboration is the key to unlocking solutions to the complex and interconnected challenges around our natural and working landscapes and is known for thriving networks, dynamic bridge building, and the ability to affect meaningful change.

Prior to Ag Innovations, Genevieve was Vice President at Global Genesis, a consulting firm specializing in organizational development. In this role she facilitated inventive group processes, and supported organizations with strategic planning, teambuilding, mission and vision development, and leadership development.

Additional Provisions

Contracting Agent

Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD), with [NAME] as the point of contact for the project and for billing.

Termination

Either party may end this agreement with 30 days of written notice. In the event such notice is given, SMEDD shall not be bound to pay any fees or expenses for any work performed after the termination date and Ag Innovations shall stop work and take all reasonable steps to preserve and protect all work products produced to date.

Independent Organizations

SMEDD and Ag Innovations are independent entities and are not engaged in an employee-employer or agency relationship of any kind for any purpose whatsoever. Neither party shall not have any power or authority to create any obligations, expressed or implied for the other party.

Indemnification

SMEDD agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Ag Innovations, and Ag Innovations agrees to indemnify and hold harmless SMEDD and their respective employees from any and all liabilities, costs, and expenses (including, without limitation, attorney's fees and expenses) incurred or suffered by reason of, or in any way relating to this project, other than as judicially determined to be caused by SMEDD or Ag Innovations, respectively, own bad faith or willful misconduct.

Confidentiality

Ag Innovations agrees that it shall hold all confidential information received from SMEDD in strictest confidence and shall use the same solely for the purpose in this Agreement, and further agrees that it shall not make disclosure of any such confidential information to anyone without the written approval of SMEDD.

SMEDD recognizes that a significant aspect of Ag Innovations' performance under this Agreement is gaining and keeping the trust and confidence of all stakeholders, and that a significant aspect of Ag Innovations' performance under this agreement is working in partnership with SMEDD and sharing relevant information.

Accordingly, Ag Innovations shall make all reasonable efforts to persuade the participants in this process to give permission to Ag Innovations to share all information with SMEDD, but Ag Innovations shall not be required to disclose to SMEDD or third parties any information, oral or written, provided to Ag Innovations in confidence during or relating to performance of this agreement, unless authorized by the

party providing the confidential information. All of Ag Innovations' notes, memoranda, documents, and recollections about performance of this Agreement and documents given to Ag Innovations by a stakeholder shall be the sole property of Ag Innovations.

Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest

Ag Innovations staff adheres to a clear conflict of interest policy. Under this policy, Ag Innovations staff must show any actual or potential conflicts of interest about any contract, subcontractor consulting agreement. Ag Innovations has reviewed the available information about the project with respect to potential conflicts of interest. We have found no actual or potential conflicts of interest. We reserve the right to resign from this engagement at any time if conflicts of interest arise or become known to us that, in our judgment, would impair our ability to perform objectively.

Impartiality

Ag Innovations staff has no position on the issues under consideration and will not take a position on the issues or options under consideration. Ag Innovations staff will remain impartial – not favoring any particular outcome or one member or interest.

Fees and Payment

Ag Innovations is pleased to extend a 10% nonprofit discount to our rates.

Ag Innovations agrees to provide the services described below, not to exceed that budget limit, depending on whether option 1 or option 2 is selected. Please see a detailed budget at the end of this document.

Work will commence upon receipt of a 50% deposit, with the remaining 50% paid upon project completion.

Travel costs are estimated only, and will be invoiced the month after they are incurred. Mileage will be billed using the federal mileage rate. Care will be taken to ensure reasonable costs.

Sonoma Mendocino Economic Devt District		Session: February 21, 2025; December 2024 - March 2025								
PROJECT: SMEDD 6 hour Strategic Planning Session *Nonprofit 10% discount applied to rates		Principal Facilitator		Lead Facilitator		Project Coordinator		TOTAL		
		2025 Rate	\$250	2025 Rate	\$159	2025 Rate	\$109			
Activities	Assumptions	Hours	Cost	Hours	Cost	Hours	Cost	Hours	Cost	
Option 1 - Design and Facilitation of Meeting										
Planning meetings with SMEDD, including prep	Assuming 5 1-hour meetings + 1 hour prep/followup	2	\$500	10	\$1,588		\$0	12	\$2,088	
Design of meeting		2	\$500	16	\$2,540		\$0	18	\$3,040	
Facilitation of 6-hour Session	Assuming 6 hour meeting, plus setup and takedown	0	\$0	8	\$1,270		\$0	8	\$1,270	
Provide edit of meeting record, including review of basic strategic plan	Assuming meeting record and basic strategic plan developed by SMEDD	1	\$250	4	\$635		\$0	5	\$885	
Debrief meeting to discuss key take-aways and next steps	1 hour meeting, + 1 hour prep/followup	0	\$0	1	\$159		\$0	1	\$159	
Subtotal TASK 1		5	\$1,250	39	\$6,192	0	\$0	44	\$7,442	
Option 2 - Develop detailed meeting record										
	In addition to Option 1									
Ag Innovations team coordination, including participating in 1 planning meeting w SMEDD		2	\$375		\$0	4	\$437	6	\$812	
Take notes at Strategic Planning meeting			\$0		\$0	8	\$873	8	\$873	
Develop detailed meeting record and basic strategic plan	MF review time is included above		\$0	2	\$318	12	\$1,310	14	\$1,627	
Participate in debrief call			\$0		\$0	1	\$109	1	\$109	
Subtotal TASK 2		2	\$375	2	\$318	25	\$2,729	29	\$3,421	
TOTAL LABOR Option 1 + 2		7	\$1,625	41	\$6,509	25	\$2,729	73	\$10,863	
TOTAL LABOR Option 1 ONLY									\$7,442	
Other Direct Costs (ODC)										
	UOM							Qty	Unit Rate	Total Cost
Photocopying b/w	lot							100	\$ 0.20	\$ 20.00
Photocopying color	lot							0	\$ 1.00	\$ -
Supplies/materials	lot							1	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
Lodging (current federal rates)	night							0	175	\$ -

Sonoma Mendocino Economic Devt District		Session: February 21, 2025; December 2024 - March 2025							
PROJECT: SMEDD 6 hour Strategic Planning Session *Nonprofit 10% discount applied to rates		Principal Facilitator		Lead Facilitator		Project Coordinator		TOTAL	
		2025 Rate	\$250	2025 Rate	\$159	2025 Rate	\$109		
Activities	Assumptions	Hours	Cost	Hours	Cost	Hours	Cost	Hours	Cost
Tolls	lot							1	6 \$ 6.00
Meals & Incidentals	ea							1	25 \$ 25.00
Mileage for Option 1	mile							150	\$ 0.6200 \$ 93.00
Mileage for Option 2	mile							30	\$ 0.6200 \$ 18.60
									\$ -
									Subtotal Other Direct Costs \$ 212.60
									TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET - Option 1 ONLY \$7,566
									TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET - Option 1 + 2 \$ 11,075.84



PROPOSED

Board Retreat Facilitation

for



Scope

The SMEDD Board has been engaged in an ambitious, comprehensive economic development strategy led by four core themes: economic diversification, human capital, innovation and entrepreneurship, and inclusive economic development.

The Board has an interest in developing a strategic plan framework during a meeting on February 21, 2025, that will be used as a map to guide the organization in the future. Additionally, the Board has experienced a transition, having recently gained three new Board members. This retreat is expected to build a connection with the agency as well as between Board members.

Option One: Retreat Design and Facilitation

It is assumed that the meeting on February 21 will result in:

- 5 – 7 high-level strategies that will be used by staff to create more specific, detailed objectives
- Ideas on how success will be measured
- Clarity on the Board's role
- Board members having a better understanding of each other's strengths and interests re: SMEDD

RGS will:

Work with the SMEDD Executive Director, staff and relevant contractors to design and facilitate a strategic planning meeting by:

- Reviewing all relevant information/documentation (e.g. background information and current strategic plan)
- Getting clarity on the "level" and length of the desired strategic plan
- Working with SMEDD and relevant contractors to plan a meeting agenda that is results-driven and interactive

Deliverables:

- Meeting agenda
- Meeting facilitation
- Edited meeting recording
- Debrief with Executive Director

Fee for Option One: **\$8,500 flat fee**

Scope

Option Two: Meeting Design, Facilitation and Development of Meeting Results

In addition to the above, RGS will provide meeting agendas, facilitation of staff in development of strategic objectives and next steps. It is assumed this will be done in a virtual environment.

RGS will:

Facilitate up to 8 hours of meetings with SMEDD staff to develop tangible objectives and next steps that support strategies developed by the Board. Meeting time can be used in periods that work for staff (e.g. four 2-hour meetings).

Deliverables:

- Staff meeting prep, agendas and meeting follow up
- Final preparation of strategic plan that includes high level strategies, objectives and next steps

Fee for Options One and Two: **\$10,000 flat fee**

Fees

Option One	\$8,500
Option One and Two	\$10,000

Both options include two strategic planning consultants. Fees above are flat fees. Billing for option one will be done at the end of the facilitated retreat. Billing for post-retreat facilitation will be done when the final strategic plan is delivered. RGS will pass along travel expenses (flights, mileage) to the District at the IRS rate and without markup.

* See next page for assumptions.

Assumptions

RGS cost estimates, rates, and scope assume:

- Services contracted take place in 2024 and in the first quarter of 2025
- SMEDD’s vision statement will be revisited but not rewritten
- Consultants will have access to the Executive Director to discuss/identify meeting outcomes and the final strategic plan
- SMEDD will provide the final graphic design of the plan

RGS is also available and willing to perform additional on-call work for the District at hourly rates on an as-needed basis upon a request by the District.

Rates

Title	Hourly Rate
Agency Executive	\$216
Strategic Services Consultant	\$186
Senior Advisor	\$157
Advisor	\$135
Technical Specialist	\$119
Administrative Specialist	\$106

Our Team



Chris Sliz
Strategic Services Consultant
Organizational Development
team lead

As an organizational development consultant Chris has worked extensively with both local government and non-profit agencies. She has facilitated strategic planning, led complex problem-solving sessions, and mediated conflicts.

Chris' ability to establish a team environment of openness and participation assists groups in delivering key results in limited periods of time.

Chris has a bachelor's degree in human resources organizational behavior, an advanced certificate in organizational development and a certificate in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion from e-Cornell.



Tom Schwedhelm
Strategic Services Consultant

Tom has held several leadership positions in local government, including Police Chief, Council Member and Mayor. Tom has led several successful government/non-profit regional partnerships to address pressing community issues such as housing for all, homelessness, violence prevention, and water supply issues.

Tom's ability to keep groups focused on the big picture is a key skill in driving results in a team environment.

Tom has a bachelor's degree in business management, and master's degree in psychology – organizational development.

RGS is a California Joint Powers Authority (JPA) serving the needs of public agencies—cities, counties, special districts, and other governmental entities, since 2002.

RGS works collaboratively with public agencies, providing a ready source of skilled and effective administrative best practices and support for operational delivery. RGS currently serves approximately 125 public agencies.



www.rgs.ca.gov



DATE: November 15, 2024
TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Anna Macken, County of Mendocino - Economic Development Administrative Analyst
SUBJECT: Consider CEDS Update Working Group

STATEMENT OF ISSUE: The purpose of this item is to discuss re-convening the CEDS Update Working Group (formally known as the CEDS Strategy Committee). The Management Team is seeking the Board's input and direction with respect to the Strategy Committee's composition and the establishment of a budget for convening(s) of the Committee.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Authorize the SMEDD Team to conduct outreach as needed to fill Strategy Committee vacancies, re-convene the CEDS Strategy Committee, and adopt a budget of \$5,000.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS:

Possible administrative costs for meeting location, staff time to facilitate meeting(s).

BACKGROUND:

The SMEDD has facilitated the CEDS Strategy Committee as part of the annual CEDS Update to provide insight into current CEDS projects, and related projects, with the goal of informing the SMEDD's efforts to support and promote CEDS implementation. The CEDS Update Strategy Committee is composed of industry specialists, project stakeholders, business owners and community members that broadly represent the economic interests of the region.

The SMEDD Strategy Committee work will inform the CEDS during the next Partnership Planning Grant cycle, which begins on April 1, 2025. The CEDS Strategy Committee has historically met quarterly, although the CEDS Strategy Committee last convened October 2023. There has been limited engagement with the Committee since then. Strategy Committee membership has traditionally been ten seats, and members are listed below. There are two vacant seats.

First	Last	Organization/Affiliation	Industry	County
John	Bailey	University of California Hopland Research and Extension Center	Education	Mendocino
Devon	Boer	Mendocino County Farm Bureau	Agriculture	Mendocino
Grant	Davis	Sonoma County Water Agency	Utility	Sonoma
Paul	Garza	Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District	Economic Development	Mendocino
Patrick	McDonell	Legal Aid of Sonoma County & Los Cien	Youth and Latino Community Leader, Workforce Housing	Sonoma
Lisa	Schaffner	NC Builders Exchange	Construction	Sonoma
David	Smith Ferri	Dry Creek Rancheria	Tribes/Tourism	Sonoma
Ananda	Sweet	Santa Rosa Metro Chamber	Business	Sonoma
<i>Vacant</i>				
<i>Vacant</i>				

DISCUSSION:

There are two open seats on the Committee. The SMEDD Team would like to fill these openings in advance of any convenings. There may be a need to replace other members who have changed circumstances since the last convening(s).

The SMEDD Team is currently recommending the establishment of a budget limit of \$5,000. A small budget may be needed for venue and/or catering costs, audience interaction technology (cameras, microphones), software (ex. SLIDO), et cetra.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1:** Authorize the SMEDD Team to conduct outreach as needed to fill Strategy Committee vacancies, re-convene the CEDS Strategy Committee, and adopt a budget of \$2,000.
- 2:** Consider, modify, and authorize the SMEDD Team to conduct outreach as needed to fill Strategy Committee vacancies, re-convene the CEDS Strategy Committee, and adopt a budget of \$2,000.
- 3:** Other approach(s) may be developed after public comments and Board deliberations.
- 4:** Decline to act.



DATE: November 15, 2024
TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Josh Metz, SMEDD District Manager
Bradley Johnson, Sonoma County Economic Development Board, Management Analyst
Anna Macken, County of Mendocino Economic Development, Administrative Analyst
SUBJECT: Receive an Update on California Jobs First: Redwood Region RISE; North Bay Working Group

STATEMENT OF ISSUE: The purpose of this item is for the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) Board of Directors to receive an update on respective regional efforts and progress on the California Jobs First Initiative.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Receive and file.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS:

There are no anticipated financial impacts for this item.

BACKGROUND:

During the February 16, 2024, April 19, 2024, and July 19, 2024, September 20 2024, SMEDD Board of Directors meetings, the SMEDD management team provided the Board with an overview and update on the CA Jobs First (previously known as CERF) initiative. The overview and update included the following:

- Regional Representation: Mendocino County is represented by the Redwood Region RISE Coalition. Sonoma County is represented by the Bay Area Jobs First Collaborative.
- Both counties have participated in a solicitation for regional projects for their respective regions to be funded by Catalyst Funds* at \$9 million per region.
- Each region is guided by the principle to create high wage, climate resilient, and sustainable jobs.

*The Catalyst Program reserves funds for each California Jobs First region to bridge the gap between each region’s Jobs First Strategy and implementing projects designed to achieve outcomes that align with those strategies. Catalyst funds will support each region’s Jobs First Collaborative to invest in sector specific pre-development activities, enabling regions to take projects from exploratory and last-mile to ready-to-go projects that can access local, state, and federal government funds, as well as private and philanthropic investments.

Mendocino County is part of Redwood Region RISE (Resilient Inclusive Sustainable Economy), which is a regional community coalition of close to a thousand members working together to develop a 10-year vision that aims to bring good, sustainable jobs to Tribal Lands, Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, and Mendocino Counties - through the California Jobs First (previously known as Community Economic Resilience Fund [CERF]) initiative.

The Sonoma County EDB has been working with a subregional round table under the Bay Area Jobs First Collaborative. This sub regional roundtable includes Sonoma and Marin Counties. The Subregional roundtable collected projects that meet the fundamental industry and vision priorities. Projects must promote the growth of sustainable, climate forward, high wage, and high growth jobs.

DISCUSSION:

Mendocino County - Redwood Region RISE

Mendocino County is part of Redwood Region RISE comprising Tribal Lands, Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, and Mendocino Counties. The [RFP for the Catalyst Funding](#) is set to be released on November 15th. There \$9 million in catalyst funds for the Redwood Region RISE.

Redwood Region RISE has completed the two year planning phase of their process which supported research, data collection, interviews and convening stakeholders to create a community driven [10-year regional development strategy](#).

The main sectors of the regional strategy are:

- Arts, Culture and Tourism Strategy
- Health and Caregiving Strategy
- Renewable and Resilient Energy
- Working Lands and Blue Economy

Key enablers identified are:

- Broadband
- Entrepreneurship
- Food Security and Access
- Housing

Board members are encouraged to share the RFP for Catalyst funding within their networks, apply for projects within their organization or consider proposing a project through SMEDD for submission.

Sonoma County - Bay Area Jobs First Collaborative

There is no update since the last Board of Directors meeting. The Sonoma County EDB submitted a project proposal for \$300,000 to fund an Ag-Tech Innovation Hub Feasibility Study for the North Bay that will leverage the May 2023 SMEDD Ag-Tech Brainstorming Session. The feasibility study would investigate key partnerships, regionally unique focus areas, functions, services, phasing options and location alternatives for a potential North Bay Ag-Tech Innovation Hub. Additionally, the feasibility study will include a pilot project that will analyze the reuse and repurpose of the Manzana facility that is scheduled to be vacated in 2026. The facility currently employs 180 people and is the primary market

provider for Sonoma and Mendocino Apple growers. The Bay Area Jobs First Collaborative is expected to announce awards some time in November.

Economic Development Finance (EDF) Working Group

Regional Government Services, under a separate service contract with the Arcata Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) serving as the Redwood Region RISE Fiscal Agent, is facilitating the Redwood Region RISE Economic Development Finance (EDF) Working Group. The EDF Working Group is occurring in two phases with Phase 1 undertaken from January 2024 to June 2024, and Phase 2 following directly through December 2024. Additional information is readily available to the public at the following website: <https://ccrp.humboldt.edu/edf-working-group>

In support of the Educational and Capacity Building Efforts, the following Expert Sessions were hosted and made available to Working Group members. Recordings and slide shows from these meetings are available on the EDF Website: <https://ccrp.humboldt.edu/edf-working-group>.

11/06/24 – Expert Session on CDBG

This expert session focused on uses and requirements for HCD’s CDBG funding opportunities, and their role in advancing economic development goals. The session provided valuable insights and guidance on leveraging CDBG as part of a capital stack for project implementation.

- Kelly Hansen, Administrative Analyst, County of Mendocino
- Jeff Lucas, Principal, Community Development Services

ALTERNATIVES:

1: Receive and file the California Jobs First: Redwood Region RISE; North Bay Working Group; EDF Working Group update, give direction to staff to create and submit an application to the Redwood Region Rise Catalyst Funding opportunity.

2: Consider, *modify*, and approve the recommendation for the District to receive and file the California Jobs First: Redwood Region RISE; North Bay Working Group; EDF Working Group update

3: Other approach(s) may be developed after public comments and Board deliberations.

4: Decline to act.

RECOMMENDATION for Alternative 1:

Move to:

- Receive and file an Update on California Jobs First: Redwood Region RISE; North Bay Working Group; EDF Working Group



DATE: November 15, 2024

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Josh Metz, Regional Government Services, District Manager
Tracy Fuller, Regional Government Services
Bradley Johnson, Sonoma County Economic Development Board, Management Analyst
Anna Macken, Mendocino County, Administrative Analyst II

SUBJECT: Discuss and Consider Recruitment and Appointment of a SMEDD-Appointed At-Large Member

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

The purpose of this item is to update the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) Board of Directors on the status of Board recruitment efforts in Mendocino and Sonoma counties, provide an update on County processes, and recommendations to fill the At-Large board positions.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS:

There are no anticipated financial impacts.

BACKGROUND:

The SMEDD Board has nine seats. One seat is currently vacant. The remaining vacant seat is a singular At-Large seat to be appointed by the Board of Directors of the SMEDD. The purpose of this item is to provide the SMEDD Board with the opportunity to discuss and take action as may be appropriate to fill the vacant At-Large seat that must be appointed by the SMEDD Board of Directors.

Section "4.b)c." of the Joint Powers Agreement contains the following guidance:

"The District Board shall have the authority to appoint one Director who shall be selected from the private sector representing the business community."

DISCUSSION:

The SMEDD has posted the vacancy on the SMEDD web page, and invites interested individuals to apply. The Board may wish to personally recruit candidates.

If the SMEDD Board would like to recruit with an application process, an application form could be based upon the existing forms used by the Counties. The At-Large vacancy could be publicized either with an

application deadline or as “open-until-filled”. At this point, vacancy has been publicized without any deadlines for submittals.

The SMEDD Board should discuss a process and timeline for recruiting and filling the vacant At-Large seat, which is the Board’s only At-Large seat and the only seat appointed directly by the SMEDD Board.

ALTERNATIVES:

1: Discuss and Consider Recruitment and Appointment of a SMEDD-Appointed At-Large Member. Provide Direction to the General Manager if appropriate.

2: Consider, *modify*, and approve the recommendation to Discuss and Consider Recruitment and Appointment of a SMEDD-Appointed At-Large Member and of Members Appointed by the Mendocino and Sonoma County Boards of Supervisors. Provide Direction to the General Manager if appropriate.

3: Other approach(s) as may be developed after public comments and Board deliberations.

4: Decline to act.

RECOMMENDATION for Alternative 1:

- Discuss and Consider Recruitment and Appointment of a SMEDD-Appointed At-Large Member. Provide Direction to the General Manager if appropriate.