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Connecting the dots

Serving San Juan, McKinley, and Cibola County Governments for 40 years!

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 1

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SPOTLIGHT ON SAN JUAN COUNTY

Energizing the Four Corners Economy

There's a pot full of energy, ideas, and strategies brewing in the Four Corners region. Drawing from conversations and collaborations on designing a unique San Juan Basin response to the "Triple E" challenge of balance Environment, Energy, and the Economy, many San Juan County leaders are brimming with ideas about taking the Four Corners Region economy to the "next level."

The local governments and legislators, as well as college, civic and business leaders in the San Juan Basin, have intensified their focus on making the Four Corners a natural gas technology center for the country.

At the summer meeting of the Interim Legislative Committee on Economic & Rural Development held at San Juan College Farmington City Councilor Jason Sandel, also a principal of Aztec Drilling, recently pushed for greater utilization of natural gas as a major energy component in the San Juan Basin — including converting and amending gasoline outlets to compressed and/or liquid natural gas products.

The use of compressed natural gas or liquefied natural gas in transportation is also gaining strength in neighboring counties. Exciting dialogue is taking place with colleagues across the border in Durango and La Plata County. And in McKinley County, Gallup City Councilor Yogash Kumar is leading the conversation on fleet conversion to natural gas fuel.



4CED: The COG Luncheon Showcase

Four Corners Economic Development, Inc. is being showcased at this year's Annual COG Luncheon, held at San Juan College in Farmington on September 25th.



John Byrom
Board President



Ray Hagerman
CEO

4CED was formed in 2012 as an evolution and expansion of San Juan Economic Development Service (SJEDS), and as an outgrowth of the privately-funded local think tank group known as "E>P" (from the formula: "the Economy [E] must grow faster than the Population [P].") Under the leadership of SJEDS Chair Sally Burbridge of Aztec, 4CED, Inc. was established as a new 501(c)(6) nonprofit corporation, with SJEDS maintaining its 501(c)(3) status under a new name, 4 Corners Economic Development Foundation. John Byrom of DJ Simmons, Inc. currently serves as Board President.

In Spring 2013, Ray Hagerman was hired as the first CEO of 4CED, and he has "hit the ground running" in leading the charge toward a sustainable economic future for the Four Corners.

Cooperating on Water

The COG has been in consultation with San Juan County and with representatives of the City of Bloomfield, Farmer's Mutual Ditch Company, Lower Valley Water Users Association, Northstar Mutual Domestic Water Association, and East Culpepper Flats on financing and organizational solutions to meeting water infrastructure needs in these communities.

The many water users in the San Juan Basin face the imperative of seeking new water solutions, with significant movement toward the regionalization of local water systems.

“GETTING HIP” FEEDBACK

“This is so much useful information and such good questions”

“Thank you for all the of the valuable information. I will utilize it all”

“[This] was a good seminar, [it] was very informative. I appreciate the fact that I now have very much needed contact information...”

“... assisted with... a clear understanding of process of projects...”

“Getting HIP”: Planning Your “Highly Investable Projects”

In late June, the COG hosted the “Getting HIP” Workshop at the Cibola County Convention Center in Grants. The day-long workshop was held at the Cibola County Convention Center with kind welcoming remarks by County Commission Chair Ed Michaels, Mayor Joe Murrietta, and State Senator Clemente Sanchez. More than 60 representatives from Northwest New Mexico governments heard presentations from not only the Council of Governments staff, but also from USDA, New Mexico Finance Authority including the Water Trust Board, the Environment Department, and consultant, Wilson & Company.

Making Your Project “HIP”...

So, how do take your project from ordinary to extra-ordinary and more importantly, funded? Firstly, Deputy Director Evan Williams advises that you’ve got to **prepare, have a “game plan” and “know the game”**. Preparation should include developing and utilizing your plans such as Strategic Plan, Comprehensive Plan, Growth Management Plans, etc. Also, you **must develop your Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP) and submit it to the State, annually**. You’ve also got to have your Budgets and Audits in order; maintain a good track record, and do your homework. Your game plan should include developing an Action Plan and/or a Project Prospectus with a budget. Ask yourself if your project can be and should be phased? Develop a strategy on working through the process for funding,



working with consultants, getting support through resolutions, letters of support, petitions or testimonials. **Most importantly, be your own best advocate for your project!**

Another important piece to help you get your project funded? **Know where to go for help.** Know who the technical assistance providers are in the region.

In playing the game, you’ve got to know the game. **Know where the resources are:** Know the Legislative Capital Outlay Process, Tribal Infrastructure Fund, Water Trust Board, New Mexico Finance Authority, Federal Highway Administration, and others.

Where Can I Get More Info?

- Projecteering help on COG website: www.nwnmcog.com/projecteering.html.
- Look for our Workshop next year!
- Ask a COG Planner!



A full house of Getting HIP participants listen as Jeff presents.

Real Water for Real People in Real Time



In late July, the entire COG staff had a rare opportunity to tour one of the largest federal public projects in recent New Mexico history. The **Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project**, though in discussion and planning for 60 years, began the first phases of construction more than a year ago. One of the phases of construction is happening just north of Gallup along Highway 491, and the COG staff took up the offer by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) to tour the construction site from Twin Lakes to Tohlokai Hill, where 48-inch pipelines were being placed in the ground and in some places encased in concrete. BOR Engineers Patrick Page and Tig Haley provided a great review, Q & A session, and tour of the project for the COG staff. [The BOR offers a weekly tour of the project, which can be arranged by contacting BOR's Patrick Page]. According to Mr. Page, cost estimates for building the Navajo-Gallup Project are now at \$1.01 billion. COG Executive Director Jeff Kiely, who for 17 years assisted former COG Director Patty Lundstrom in staffing the NGWSP Steering Committee, also provided a historical overview of the COG's role over the past 20+ years.



Cibola County:

Planning Grant to Update Ordinances



Cibola County was recently awarded a \$45,000 Community Development Block Planning Grant (CDBG) to update its Comprehensive Plan and related ordinances.

The County's current 20-year Comprehensive Plan, facilitated by the COG and adopted by the County in 2003, serves as a 'map' of what the County saw as its needs and priorities 10 years ago. The County is now ready to move forward with a new update of its comprehensive plan, which will include updating the Subdivision Ordinance (adopted in 1997) and crafting a new Land Use Ordinance.

The Land Use ordinance will address growth and development concerns in the County's unincorporated areas. The majority of Cibola County residents live in rural areas, but development outside incorporated areas has gone unregulated and has left the County without the legal authority to address activities that may be considered undesirable or even destructive to the general public, such as: junk cars and trash, antiquated subdivisions, incompatible land uses, inadequate public infrastructure, development impact in environmentally sensitive areas, lack of building & site design standards, poor access to private lands, and threats to significant historical and archeological resources,

Other areas of concern include: growth patterns in unincorporated areas leading to uncontrolled and unenforceable conditions like inadequate road networks, inadequate or illegal storm water drainage and storm control, and illegal access to both private and public lands.

Jeff Kiely elected 2nd Vice President of the National Association of Development Organizations

Washington, DC – Northwest New Mexico COG Director **Jeff Kiely** was elected 2nd Vice President of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) on August 27, 2013 at the association's Annual Business Meeting, held in conjunction with NADO's 46th Annual Training Conference in San Francisco, CA.

Kiely has worked with the Northwest New Mexico COG for nearly 24 years, starting in 1990 as planning director for the regional substance abuse prevention initiative "Northwest New Mexico Fighting Back" funded by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, followed by 17 years as the COG's Deputy Director and his appointment in Spring 2010 as the organization's Executive Director.

During this time with the COG, Jeff has been active in both NADO and the COG's statewide association, the New Mexico Association of Regional Councils (NewMARC).

The Northwest COG, along with 6 other regional planning councils in the State, is designated by the State of New Mexico as a "regional planning district" and by the US Economic Development Administration as an "economic development district" (EDD).



NADO Executive Director Joe McKinney stated, "We are honored to have Jeff Kiely serve as Second Vice President of NADO. He brings a wealth of expertise, knowledge and leadership on regional community and economic development issues to the national level. Most importantly, he is focused on helping our nation's local communities pursue comprehensive regional strategies for remaining economically competitive in today's rapidly changing global environment. As such, he is an articulate champion of rural and small town America."

Other officers elected for the 2013–2014 term were: President Peter Gregory, Executive Director, Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission, Woodstock, VT; 1st Vice President Terry Bobrowski, Executive Director, East Tennessee Development District, Alcoa, TN; Treasurer Lynne Keller Forbes, Executive Director, South Eastern Council of Governments (SECOG) in Sioux Falls, SD; and Secretary Doug Elliott, Executive Director, East Central Iowa Council of Governments, Cedar Rapids, IA.

NADO's Immediate Past President, John Leonard, Executive Director of the Southern Georgia Regional Commission in Valdosta, GA, also serves on the Executive Committee. This summer John taught a course in China on local governments and regional planning councils.



2013 Cibola County Local Governments Roundtable

On September 10th, Cibola County's local governments, the Village of Milan, City of Grants, and Cibola County, met at one table with the COG to discuss projects with area-wide impact. The event was held at the Small Business Development Center and hosted by the Cibola Communities Economic Development Foundation Executive Director **Eileen Yarborough**. (*Special thanks to Eileen for her assistance in getting this important day to happen.*) In addition to Eileen, participants included: Milan Village Manager Marcella Sandoval and Projects Coordinator Vicki Gonzales; Grants City Manager Paul Peña and Projects Officer Jim Fisk; Cibola County Projects Coordinator, Judy Horacek; and COG Director Jeff Kiely, Deputy Director Evan Williams and Associate Planner Marco Pablo.

The group listed and reviewed some regional priorities such as: Broadband, Library/Training & Lifelong Learning Center, the Riverwalk Legacy Trail, Grants Wastewater Treatment Plant Im-

provement, Cibola County Governmental Complex Renovation, Milan Farm, the Drainage Master Plan Implementation, and the Rail Spur Infrastructure Development.

It was agreed to prioritize and cross-list these projects on the local ICIPs, where appropriate, and in next year's ICIP cycle, to even better coordinate the co-listing of these inter-community priorities to send a strong and concerted message to funders. The top 3 local government priorities will be included in the Legislative Forum to be held this Fall. It was also agreed to plan and host a "**Funders' Forum**" where these top projects can be presented to various Federal and State funding agencies (e.g. USDA, EDA, NMFA, Capital Outlay, CDBG, etc.).

The COG presented information on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) planning grant, and requirements for eligibility for CDBG Construction grants. Each government noted the need to update their Comprehensive Plans.

Bluewater Village: A Plan for Water Improvements

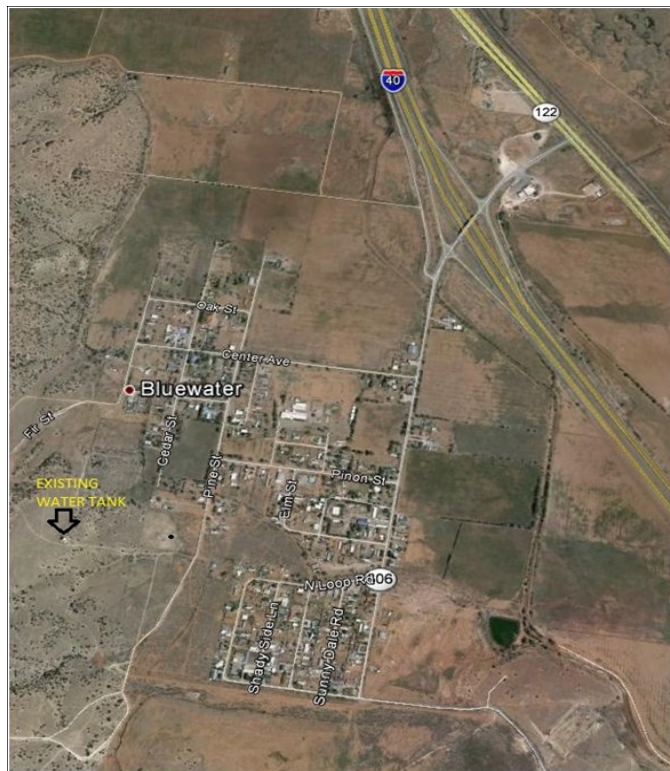
Bluewater Village, located northwest of the Grants-Milan area, is a community of 628 residents (2010 Census), with an elementary school, a fire station, and a community center. Historically an agricultural-based community, the need for water is essential for the health, life and vitality of this quiet, sleepy village located along the equally historic Route 66 highway. The Village also owns and operates its own drinking water system and has 180 service connections.

Unfortunately, within this past year the system's only water well failed, resulting in the community's application to repair the well and an opportunity to improve the system. In October 2012, the New Mexico Finance Authority awarded the Water & Sanitation District a \$50,000 planning grant.

The Village is currently in the RFP process to develop and design plans for Water System Improvements. The current system is approximately 50 years old and has high levels of arsenic based on the New Mexico Environment Department's (NMED) pending changes in drinking water standards. When new regulations go into effect, the Village will be out of compliance. The Village is currently working closely with NMED to ensure compliance with state and federal drinking water rules and regulations.

The grant will be used to prepare a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) for Bluewater Village Water & Sanitation District. The PER will include a

needs assessment, and Asset Management Plan, and an Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Plan for the water system. Further, the project specific planning needs will provide alternative for a new well site location, a Site Evaluation, Hydrological investigation, Water hook-up alternatives with other providers and/or sources, and Land negotiations.



Cont'd Cibola County Roundtable from Page 4

COG Deputy Director Evan Williams also pointed out that a good strategy will include a scope-of-work or "drill-downs" that would really help in Milan and Grants.

In Milan, the recommendation was to include infrastructure planning and site development engineering for the Milan Farm as a centerpiece of the Milan Comprehensive Plan update.

In Grants, a recreation & open space master plan in conjunction with their Comprehensive Plan. There may be some economies-of-scale and coordination efficiencies by utilizing the same consultant for Milan and Grants.

Cibola County, which was funded at \$45,000, has contracted with a firm to provide a Comprehensive Plan update, as well as to create Cibola County's first Land Use Ordinance and update the County's Subdivision Regulations.

The COG also presented information on the new partner-

ship with Paladin Data Solutions to pilot the development of a dynamic project collaboration website known as "Panoramic." The Panoramic program will provide an excellent platform for overlaying Comprehensive Plan goals, land use boundaries, and tracking project implementation progress.

The Cibola Communities Economic Development Foundation also discussed the Grants Downtown Theater Improvement Project. COG staff assisted in researching the New Mexico Historic Theatre Program, which has funded several improvements throughout the State. As a privately-owned theatre, the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) would be needed to access governmental funding. Ultimately, New Mexico Economic Development Secretary Jon Barela prioritizes funding for improvement projects.

Overall, it was a successful meeting and promises to be a great vehicle for continued collaboration.

News from the RTP0: A Hot Potato Summer

Plan Updates Galore

The summer months were busy for the NWRTPO! Going forward, NMDOT has engaged us to work with them on a number of Plan Updates:

- the statewide LRTP (**Long Range Transportation Plan**), which will also include the RTP0's own regional Plan update;
- the statewide **Freight Plan** (*of great interest to our region's communities*),
- a new **Policy & Procedures Manual** (*which will better define the relationship and roles between the NMDOT and statewide MPO's & RTP0's*),
- the statewide **Rail Plan**, and
- the roadway **Functional Classification** statewide.

The NWRTPO is working fervently working on these plans and so far, some of these efforts are close to completion. However, others may require the next two years to complete.

Change can be Good...

The NMDOT is promoting a new process for requesting new transportation infrastructure projects. This will entail a new first step, a "**Project Feasibility Form**" (PFF), which will precede submission of the currently-required "Project Identification Form" (PIF). The PIF is then submitted for inclusion in the annual RTIPR (Regional Transportation Improvement Program Recommendations) document, which leads to local project submission into the NMDOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The new Feasibility step will help ensure that submitted projects can achieve "shovel ready" status upon award of funding.

MAP-21, TAP and Other Funding Opportunities

The new MAP-21 Transportation Bill has reduced 90 previous discretionary funding programs down to 30. Among these "merged" programs are 12 Enhancement programs like the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) and Scenic Byways, which were rolled into a single program now called "**Transportation Alternatives Program**" or TAP.



The NWRTPO has collaborated with NMDOT in the rollout of the TAP funding opportunity, with proposals due by October 1.

There are three competitive proposals within the region, all competing for a total of \$777,056 for FY2014 and FY2015 (\$388,528 per year). The projects include a Scenic Turnout & Overlook project in Acoma, the Riverwalk Bike & Pedestrian Trail in Grants, and Downtown Pedestrian Improvements in Gallup.

A pot of funding for Safe Routes to School is also available and proposals are due by September 30. A



www.nmsaferoutes.com

Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) opportunity (\$14.4 million available to New Mexico) is expected to announce an RFP from Oct. 1, 2013 to Jan. 3, 2014. For more information on the FLAP opportunity: www.cflhd.gov/programs/flap/nm.

Lastly, an opportunity for **Recreational Trails** funding will be available in the near future. It is not anticipated to be available until Federal FY2014 (starting October 2013).

Fostering Good Program Management

Earlier this summer, the NMDOT Planning Department conducted a long-awaited program audit of the Northwest RTP0 program. We are proud to report that this review went exceptionally well — so well, in fact, that there were several "best practice" citations noted from the review.

Other Worthy Notables for the RTP0

- On June 5th, the NWRTPO hosted a **Statewide RTP0 Roundtable** at the Pueblo of Laguna's Route 66 Casino west of Albuquerque.
- A formal bidding process began for two Interpretive Kiosks that will be installed on behalf of **Trail of the Ancients Byway** at the Northwest New Mexico Visitor Center in Grants and

NWRTPO News (continued from Page 6) ...

the Manuelito Visitor Center east of Gallup.

- RTPO staff and Committee members participated in an **ADA compliance** (handicap accessibility) training by NMDOT on August 20 at the Gallup Chamber.
- RTPO staff also attended an LTAP (DOT Local Technical Assistance Program) **Traffic Monitoring** Training on August 27-28 in Albuquerque.
- A statewide **RPO/MPO Summit** was held at Mid-Region COG in Albuquerque on September 14.
- Upcoming training opportunities include: the **"Every Day Counts"** webinar on September 24 at the DOT District-6 office in Milan. The webinar will focus on more effective and efficient project development.
- RTPO staff prepared and submitted a **TIGER 5** (ARRA stimulus funding) application on behalf of the City of Gallup's Allison Corridor project. The COG also provided letters of support for TIGER 5 applications submitted by the Pueblos of Acoma and Laguna.
- The NWRTPO provide staff support and technical assistance to Transportation Commissioner Jackson Gib-

son on advocating for funding for next-phase 4-lane construction of the **US 491 corridor**. The next phase of construction will be from Sheepsprings to Naschitti.

Northwest New Mexico Recognition

The August 2013 "TRIP Report" for August 2013, a national publication, identified "The Top 50 Transportation Projects to Support Economic Growth and Quality of Life in New Mexico," which included 3 Northwest New Mexico projects in the Top 10:

- #1) US-491 four lane reconstruction from Twin Lakes to Naschitti,
- #2) US-64 reconstruction from Farmington to McGee Park, and at,
- #9) The 4-lane roadway with bike/pedestrian amenities over the Animas River for Pinon Hills Boulevard in Farmington.

The TRIP Report list can be found at:
<http://www.tripnet.org/docs/>

Internship: COG Program Achieves Mutual Benefits

Your Council of Governments revived the **COG Internship Program** this past summer. Advertisements and invitations were extended to our network of member governments, partners, and friends about the COG's **10-week Internship Program**. Several impressive and exceptional applications were received and interviews were conducted. In early June, first-year University of New Mexico Law School student **Jay C. McCray** began with the COG. Jay C. immediately jumped into the swing of things at the COG by helping to prepare for the RTPO program audit by the New Mexico DOT, helping to prepare for our "Getting HIP" workshop in late June, and researching COG history, and writing pieces for the COG's Annual Report, as well as many other assignments. Jay C. writes of his experience with the COG: "*The NWNMCOG Internship Program provided a great*

opportunity to learn about public service and empowering the communities of northwest New Mexico."



Thank you for all the help Jay C.!! We wish you the best in Law School and look forward to seeing the amazing things you'll be doing in Northwest New Mexico in the future!!!



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**“Leading the Field
to Empower Communities
& Move the Region**

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Important Dates	Date	Place
COG Annual Board Meeting & Luncheon	September 25	Farmington
All Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plans (ICIP) due to DFA-Local Government	September 30	Santa Fe
2013 NM Planning Conference: Planning Across Boundaries... With Many Visions	October 2-5	Farmington
Northwest RTPO Meeting	October 9	Aztec
Joint RTPO/MPO Meeting	October 21	Albuquerque
NM Infrastructure Finance Conference	October 22-24	Isleta Pueblo
Veteran's Day Holiday COG Offices Closed	November 11	Gallup
Northwest RTPO Meeting	November 13	Grants
NADO Executive Committee	November 17-20	Washington, DC
Thanksgiving Day Holiday Weekend COG Offices Closed	November 28-29	Gallup
Northwest RTPO Meeting	December 11	Gallup

Notes from the Director

Dear Friends of the Northwest New Mexico Region,

Over 20 years ago, with Patty Lundstrom at the helm, the COG began chairing the inter-agency Steering Committee for the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project. The goal and motto — adopted by Senator Jeff Bingaman — was “Real Water for Real People in Real Time.” This project would at last implement the “single solution” for sustainable water supply for the eastern reaches of the Navajo Nation and the City of Gallup and its neighbors, namely: a surface water supply, drawn from New Mexico’s share of water from the San Juan River system.

It took until Spring of 2009 for this project to actually become authorized for funding and construction by the US Congress, basing the \$1 billion price tag on a negotiated settlement of water rights between the Navajo Nation, the State of New Mexico and the US Government.

Imagine the emotions as the COG staff conducted a site visit this summer to the pipeline construction site north of Gallup — where the first allocation of Federal funding was being tapped to build the first phases of this project. Truly a moment of seeing a special place where Dream meets Reality.

Our summer has been busy across other initiatives, too. In economic development, we strengthened ties with our three local

economic development partner agencies: Cibola Communities Economic Development Foundation ([Eileen Yarbrough](#), Executive Director); Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation ([Patty Lundstrom](#), Executive Director; [Michael Sage](#), Deputy Director); and Four Corners Economic Development, Inc. ([Ray Hagerman](#), CEO; [Julie Rasor](#), Administrative Director). We also reached out in partnership to our friends across our northern border, Region 9 Economic Development District of Southwest Colorado ([Ed Morlan](#), Executive Director; [Laura Lewis Marchino](#), Deputy Director).

We continued to provide statewide leadership in developing the statewide “Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy” (CEDS), under funding to our statewide association New-MARC from the US Economic Development Administration, and with the assistance of the Arrowhead Center at New Mexico State University. My work also involved extensive collaboration with the Legislature’s Interim Job Council.

In June we helped host the nation’s COGs in Santa Fé for NADO’s Summer Board Retreat.

A lot going on ... as we all pull together to...

Move the Region!

Jeff Kiely, Executive Director

