



ECONOMIC RECOVERY & RESILIENCY PLAN



FOR SANDOVAL, BERNALILLO, VALENCIA, TORRANCE, & SOUTHERN SANTA FE COUNTIES

FEBRUARY 2023

MRWM



HATCHFORM



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GLOSSARY

ABQ	Albuquerque	FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
ADUS	Accessory Dwelling Units	FPF	Fire Protection Fund
AFRL	Air Force Research Laboratory	GRT	Gross Receipts Tax
APA	American Planning Association	HAF	Homeowner Assistance Fund
AREA	Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance	HHS	Health and Human Services Department
ARPA	American Rescue Plan	HUD	Department Housing And Urban Development
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs	IAD	New Mexico Indian Affairs Department
BIPOC	Black, Indigenous, and People of Color	IBIP	Indian Business Incubators Program
BLM	Bureau of Land Management	IPCC	Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
BOR	Bureau of Reclamation	LANL	Los Alamos National Laboratory
BRIC	Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities	LEADS	Local Economic Assistance & Development Support Program
CAP	Collateral Assistance Program	LIHEAP	Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant	LQ	Location Quotient
CEC	Commission for Environmental Cooperation	MEP	Manufacturing Extension Partnership
CEDS	Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy	MFA	Mortgage Finance Authority
CEDS	Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy	MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
CEERP	Center for Energy and Environmental Policy Research	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
CNM	Central New Mexico Community College	MRA	Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency
CRS	Community Rating System	MRCOG	Mid Region Council of Governments
CTA	Community Technical Assistance	MSL	Microgrid Systems Laboratory
DOIT	Department of Information Technology	NABDI	Native American Business Development Institute
DOT	Department of Transportation	NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
EDA	Economic Development Administration	NFPA	National Fire Prevention Association
EDR	Economic Dependency Ratio	NM DHSEM	New Mexico Department of Homeland Security Emergency Management
EJ4CLIMATE	Environmental Justice and Climate Resilience Grant Program	NM IDEA	New Mexico Industrial Development Executives Association
EMIFPA	East Mountain Interagency Fire Protection Agency	NM TAP	New Mexico Broadband Technical Assistance Program
EMNRD	New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department	NM TAP	New Mexico Technical Assistance Program
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	NM TECH	New Mexico Institute of Mining And Technology
EPSCOR	Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research	NMCC	New Mexico Community Capital
ESI	Energy Sovereignty Institute	NMDA	New Mexico Department of Agriculture
ETA	Energy Transition Act	NMEDD	New Mexico Economic Development Department
ETIPP	Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership Project	NMMS	New Mexico MainStreet Program
EVEDA	Estancia Valley Economic Development Association	NMSU	New Mexico State University

NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service	SEAX	Sustainable Economy Advisory Committee
NREL	National Renewable Energy Laboratory	SET FORCE	Sustainable Economy Task Force
NSF	National Science Foundation	SMART	Sustainable, Modular, Adaptive, Resilient, and Transactive
OBAAE	Office of Broadband Access And Expansion	SNL	Sandia National Laboratories
OBAE	Office of Broadband Access And Expansion	UNM	University of New Mexico
RDBG	Rural Business Development Grant	USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
RDC	Regional Development Corporation	USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
RDC	Regional Development Corporation	USGS	United States Geological Survey
SAFER	Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response	WAP	Weatherization Assistance Program
SBA	Small Business Administration	WEP	Rural development water and environmental program
SBDC	Small Business Development Center	WHTF	Housing Trust Funds
SCORE	Service Corps of Retired Executives	WUI	Wildland Urban Interface
SEA	Sandoval Economic Alliance		
SEAC	Sustainable Economy Advisory Committee		

Economic Dependency Ratio: According to the ‘How to use and interpret Esri’s US Economic Dependency Ratio’ storymap, the economic dependency ratio (EDR) “provides quick and useful measures to better understand an area’s relationship between non-workers and the employed population. Non-workers include children, the unemployed population, and those that are not in the labor force (i.e., individuals that are not working or actively searching for work). Children are defined as the population under 16 years of age. Economic Dependency Ratios can be used to measure the financial pressure on the working population of a community or the potential for more individuals to enter the workforce as they age and/or labor force dynamics shift. The higher the ratio, the more non-workers there are relative to the number of workers.” (Esri Data Development 2022). For more information, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/mr3n2ykp>

Location Quotient: According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, location quotients (LQs) are “ratios that allow an area’s distribution of employment by industry, ownership, and size class to be compared to a reference area’s distribution. The U.S. is typically used as the reference area for LQs (and that is the case with LQs in this document). If an LQ is equal to 1, then the industry has the same share of its area employment as it does in the

nation. An LQ greater than 1 indicates an industry with a greater share of the local area employment than is the case nationwide. For example, Las Vegas, NV, will have a LQ greater than 1 in the Leisure and Hospitality industry because this industry makes up a larger share of the Las Vegas employment total than it does for the nation as a whole.” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2022). For more information, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/yckthva5>

Economic Base: Industries and businesses in a given area that draw in money from outside of the area are called economic base businesses. The jobs that these industries and businesses create or retain because of this money are called economic base jobs.

Labor Force Participation Rate: The proportion of the population ages 15 and older that is economically active and includes all people who supply labor for the production of goods and services during a specified period.

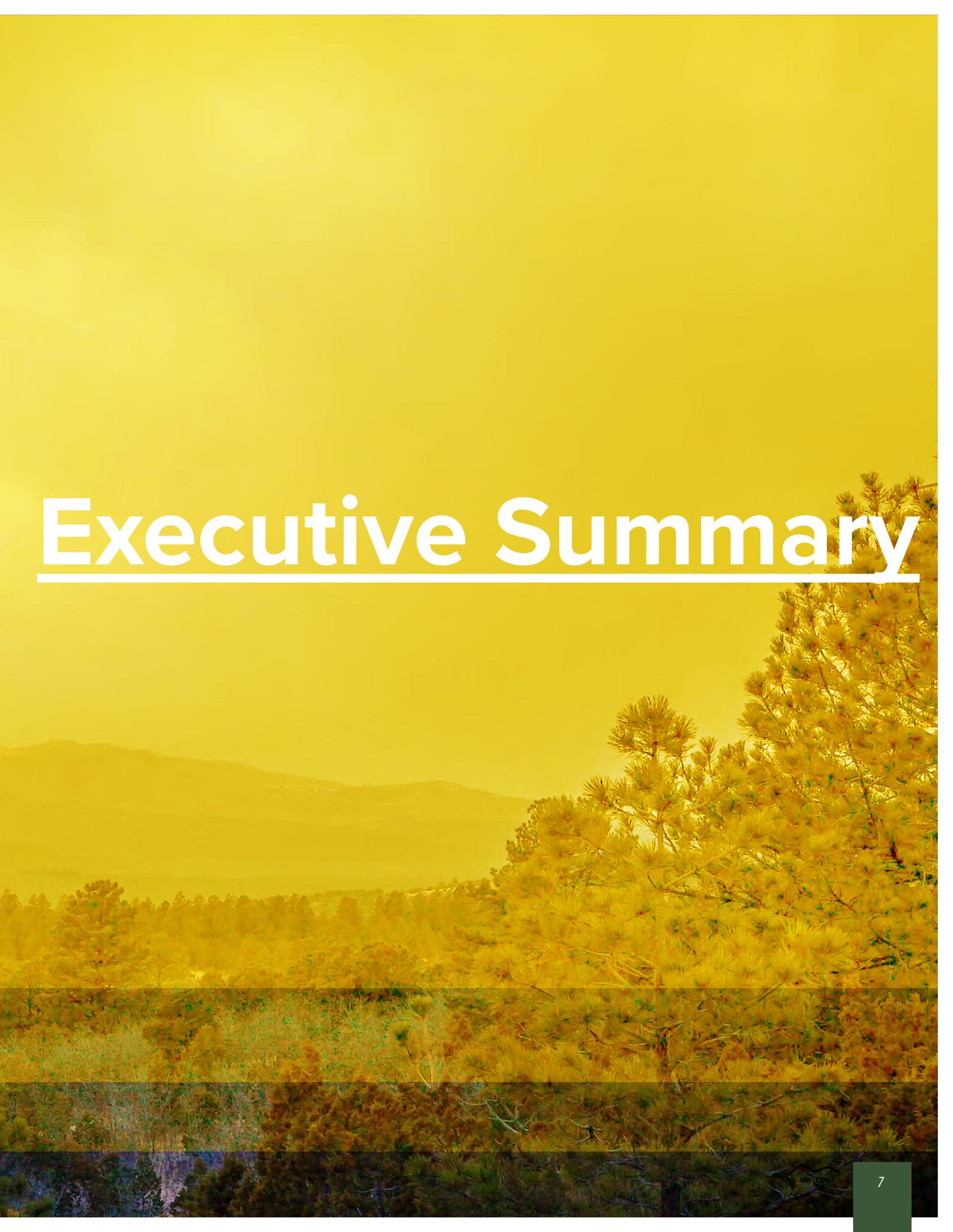
Occupation vs. Industry: An occupation is the job that someone performs while an industry denotes a classification of a business. For instance, someone who’s occupation is accountant may work in a number of different industries.



ECONOMIC RECOVERY & RESILIENCY PLAN

FOR SANDOVAL, BERNALILLO, VALENCIA, TORRANCE, & SOUTHERN SANTA FE COUNTIES





Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Economic resilience is the ability to prevent, withstand, and quickly recover from major economic disruptions and can even lead to avoiding shocks altogether. Significant economic disruptions caused by the recent pandemic have negatively impacted communities in the Mid-Region. The pandemic has exposed and exacerbated underlying inequities, lack of opportunities, and insufficient access to resources in communities that were already disadvantaged. The Economic Recovery and Resiliency Plan, the Plan, identifies strategies to help communities build capacity, increase equity, and access the full potential of their social, human, and economic capital. This will enable communities to foster a healthy economy and be more resilient moving forward. Creating a proactive plan for surviving future disruptions is essential to success.

PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

This Plan explores events and disasters that may cause disruption in the economy and addresses how events, including the COVID pandemic, expose and exacerbate social and economic weaknesses. The Plan provides goals, strategies, and priorities to reduce the impact of disasters on communities and to improve their economic resilience to hazards and changing conditions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Over 400 government officials, industry representatives, and community stakeholders participated in the planning process. The Mid-Region communities recognize their potential for economic recovery and the threats and challenges that exist, including the inevitability of future

natural and man-made disasters. To develop a stronger, more resilient economy, communities must address the threats that currently limit their economy while looking ahead to challenges on the horizon.

The key goals that emerged over the course of developing this Plan include:

1. *Collaborate and coordinate with communities in the region to address common threats and challenges. Specifically, rural communities will benefit from collaborating with their neighbors to jointly achieve their goals.*
2. *Diversify the economy to reduce single industry dependence and to create economic drivers that are more resilient to downturns.*
3. *Address limitations associated with water resources and foster sustainable economic development patterns by linking resources and growth.*
4. *Address the lack of reliable broadband internet in rural communities, and identify resources to assist local businesses in creating a successful online presence.*
5. *Enable rural communities to build operational capacities to apply for more funding, and/or create external resources that support communities applying for funding.*
6. *Address aging and insufficient infrastructure, particularly in rural communities.*

7. Address crime and safety, particularly in urban communities.

8. Address the affordable housing crisis in both urban and rural communities.

9. Prepare for future wildfires and cascading hazards, like flooding, to mitigate and prevent severe impacts.

10. Address invasive species and range productivity issues, and develop farming practices that can adapt to drought conditions.

the starting point of the Resilience Roadmap. The [“Resilience Roadmap” on page 30](#) of this Plan provides a list of goals, strategies, projects, partners, and funding sources to address each priority area.

In addition, the [Appendix](#) includes a Resilience Scorecard based on the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR’s). The Resilience Scorecard is a tool for communities in the Mid-Region to evaluate themselves and monitor and review their progress in implementing the resiliency strategies identified in this Plan. The goals, strategies, and proposed tools contained in this Plan are a starting point for communities to become more robust and make the Mid-Region a welcoming and healthy place for current and future generations.

RESILIENCE ROADMAP

This Plan lays out a Resilience Roadmap for communities to use along their journeys toward greater resilience and more robust economies. The first step is to identify what threats and challenges the Mid-Region economies face. The most critical threats and challenges for each of the specific areas, or Community Clusters, are then identified as Priority Areas. These create

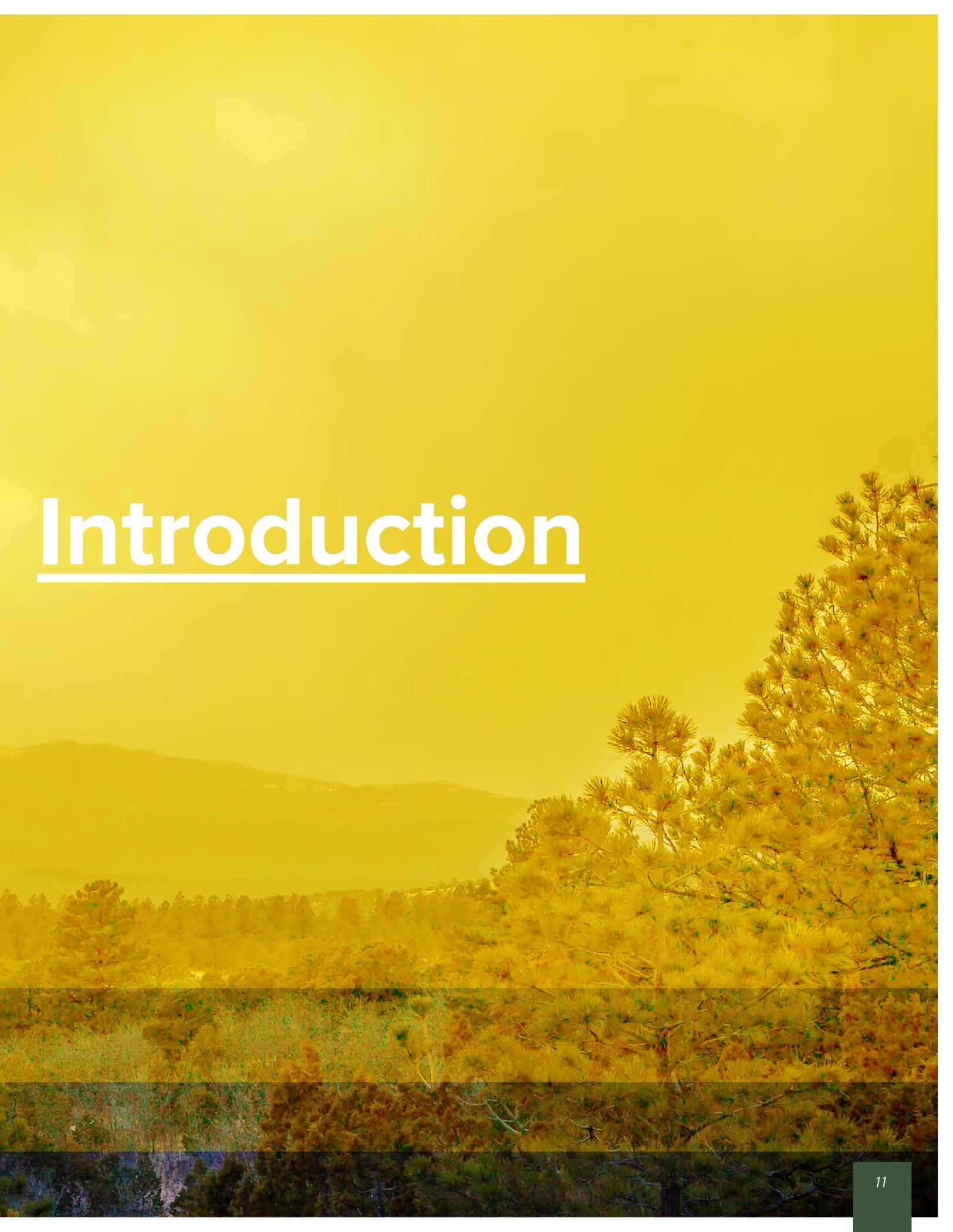
FIGURE 1.
RESILIENCE READINESS ROADMAP



ECONOMIC RECOVERY & RESILIENCY PLAN

FOR SANDOVAL, BERNALILLO, VALENCIA, TORRANCE, & SOUTHERN SANTA FE COUNTIES





Introduction

INTRODUCTION

The Economic Recovery and Resiliency Plan, the ‘Plan’, is a tool developed to help communities served by the Mid-Region Council of Governments achieve resiliency and build stronger and healthier economies. This section of the Plan provides general project information, background on resiliency, and guidance to communities about how to implement this Plan. It also describes the process through which this Plan was developed.

COVID IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY

The economy in New Mexico, as in other parts of the country, was negatively impacted by the COVID pandemic. Between February and September of 2020, New Mexicans lost 64,300 jobs, a 7.4% decrease in overall employment, according to the ‘COVID Economic Crises by State’ (2021) report.¹ The overall unemployment rate in New Mexico jumped in the Spring of 2020 from 4.8% in February to 11.9% in April. The rate began to fluctuate with the opening and closing of the local economy, and by September, it dropped to 9.4%, after reaching a high of 12.4% in June².

In 2019, the Small Business Administration (SBA) counted a total of 154,804 small businesses in New Mexico. These employed 53.3% of all New Mexicans.

Small businesses are defined as firms employing fewer than 500 employees.

The same report counted a total of 154,844 small businesses in 2021, which accounted for the employment of 54.4% of the working-age population in New Mexico.

1. Michael Ettlinger, “COVID Economic Crises by State,” University of New Hampshire, 2021.
2. New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, “New Mexico Labor Market Review September 2020,” New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, Volume 49 No. 9 Published October 30, 2020.

FIGURE 1. SMALL BUSINESS PROFILE

	2019	2021	Net Increase
Small Businesses	154,804	158,844	4,040
Small Business Employees	334,945	343,648	8,703
Small Business Employees %	53.3%	54.4%	0.1%

Source: Small Business Administration (2019,2020)

The data shows that net business creation has increased since the pre-pandemic year of 2019 in New Mexico. In interviews facilitated for this Plan, business owners mentioned that there was an uptick in the creation of new businesses. Net new business creation, however, hides the stories of long-time businesses that had to close during the pandemic, impacting the cultural landscape of many places in the region.

For many businesses, including those launched during the pandemic, 2022 has been an exceedingly difficult period to navigate. High inflation, recession signals, tight labor markets, inventory and supply chain issues, and an increasing cost of capital have created a business climate where uncertainty reigns. This may lead to a corrective period where new businesses close and hiring becomes easier – but that is speculative.

What is certain is that many smaller communities in the region were able to sustain their small businesses, especially retail and food service businesses, through strong local efforts. During interviews with county economic development professionals, these efforts coupled with CARES Act grant funding to businesses were touted as bright spots during the pandemic. In many ways

this created an environment where more rural businesses were able to weather the pandemic while their urban counterparts were forced to close.

Remote and work from home policies that started at the onset of the pandemic and continue to this day have taken a toll on downtown merchants in Albuquerque who depend on daily foot traffic. Coupled with rising crime rates, the lack of downtown workers significantly prolonged the pain of the pandemic and is still felt acutely.

The impact of COVID on tribal communities throughout New Mexico was profound. Many tribal industries relied heavily on tourism and outside patrons to support them. For example, Tribal Gaming in NM generated roughly \$1.8 billion in revenue in 2016. It supported a total of 15,000 jobs according to an report published by the University of New Mexico³. All tribal gaming-related businesses were closed starting in March 2020 and remained closed for an extended period accounting for significant losses in revenue.

While most industries, schools, and higher education institutions switched to online delivery of their services, tribal and rural communities were often left out. An estimated 80 percent of tribal individuals living on tribal land lack reliable broadband access. Approximately 20 percent of New Mexico households do not have an internet connection, with the lowest rates experienced in rural communities, according to the Rural Infrastructure Needs Study issued by the New Mexico Legislative Council Service in 2021. The study further details that even households that have an internet connection may not have sufficiently fast speeds to work, learn, or access services from home.

During stakeholder meetings, communities cited the lack of reliable internet as a significant barrier to economic opportunities and prosperity. Specifically, tribal areas were closed to the public during the pandemic, barring them from continuing

3. G. Sanchez et al., "COVID-19: The Economic Impact and the Economic Well-Being of Tribal Communities in New Mexico," University of New Mexico, 2020.



INTRODUCTION

crucial business activities. In addition, many tribal businesses did not have an online presence or the ability to establish one. As a result, businesses in these communities were completely cut off from their customer base. Communities in other areas, specifically in rural New Mexico, saw broadband, or the lack thereof, as a major concern that needs to be prioritized to support the local economy.

The COVID pandemic has created serious challenges to educational outcomes for Native American students and learners in households that lack appropriate internet access. The New Mexico Public Education Department identified 23,398 Native American students in the New Mexico public school system who needed broadband capabilities and devices.

From what we learned through existing reports, stakeholder interviews, and anecdotal evidence, the lack of reliable broadband, internet illiteracy, and lack of online marketing capabilities were among the major threats to local economies, particularly in rural and Native communities.

The COVID pandemic has highlighted existing inequalities, as highlighted in the example above. For our communities to be more resilient, it is important to recognize our shortcomings and work jointly to address them. Economic resilience is the ability to prevent, withstand, and quickly recover from major disruptions. The Economic Development Administration (EDA) defines this resilience by three primary attributes:

- *the ability to recover rapidly from a shock;*
- *the ability to withstand a shock;*
- *and the ability to avoid the shock altogether.*

This Plan is intended to help communities in the Mid-Region work towards greater economic resilience. The Plan is intended for use by local officials, community leaders, and community governing body staff to guide the implementation of strategies to create economic resilience and, by doing so, make the community stronger. The Plan was developed in close collaboration with community and industry leaders capturing threats and challenges identified by stakeholders.

HOW WE BUILD RESILIENCE

Economic resilience is achieved when:

1. *The community has identified threats and challenges that disrupt their economy.*
2. *The community has identified strategies to address the disrupter.*
3. *The community has connected with partner agencies and organizations with whom they may work together.*
4. *The community has a built and natural environment and community services that accommodate the future needs, it can withstand disrupters, and it offers a high quality of life.*
5. *The community has an economy that is sustainable and offers equal opportunities to all.*

WHY RESILIENCE MATTERS

There are many threats and challenges to economies served by the Mid-Region Council of Governments. COVID has highlighted how unanticipated events can disrupt local economies and bring communities to a standstill. It has also illustrated the benefits of a regional approach to addressing future challenges. Many of the existing challenges and potential future threats described in this Plan will require working collaboratively and identifying regional priorities.

In addition, resilience not only means being well prepared to withstand shock, but ideally having the ability to avoid the shock altogether. For a community to be prepared, it is crucial to consider a broader definition of preparedness. Traditionally, infrastructure resilience has been the focus of resilience and recovery plans, as it was understood to act as a physical barrier with the potential to fend off threats. However, it is now understood that preparedness should go beyond infrastructure improvements and include:

social capital and community capacity, the built environment, and the economy as a whole. These pillars need to be equally prepared to withstand a sudden disruption to the local economy. To be economically successful, the community must be prepared for unexpected events and must be able to recover quickly.

COVID along with wildfires that occurred in 2022 (both events that occurred while this Plan was being prepared), have illustrated how important it is to design, plan, and implement in order to be proactive rather than reactive.

The Mid-Region has significant social capital and community capacity, though much of it is focused on the Albuquerque Metro area. Many smaller communities struggle to find the resources to apply for funding that will support community preparedness. Thus, this Plan focuses on smaller rural communities to help them more effectively prepare.

FIGURE 2.
RESILIENCE READINESS ROADMAP



INTRODUCTION

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The MRCOG commissioned MRWM, an Albuquerque-based landscape architecture and planning firm, to develop this Plan. MRWM was supported by HatchForm, a Santa Fe-based economic development firm, ESP Associates, a national engineering firm, and RS21, an Albuquerque-based data analysis and visualization firm.

The project was funded by the Economic Development Administration, as part of the CARES Act, to provide planning and technical assistance in response to the COVID Pandemic. The Plan is a tool for creating economic and social resiliencies and empowering local communities to withstand future threats.

The Plan is an addendum to the Mid-Region of New Mexico Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). CEDS's are updated every five (5) years, with the last update completed in 2020. The latest update, however, did not include the impact of COVID on local economies. This Plan looks at the various impacts COVID has had on the economy and creates strategies for greater resilience. In addition to the impact of COVID, this Plan looks at other potential disruptions to allow communities to be proactive rather than reactive.

WHO IS PART OF THE MID-REGION?

The Mid-Region includes Sandoval, Bernalillo, Valencia, Torrance, and southern Santa Fe counties. This plan encompasses all of the communities within the region, as identified in [“Figure 4. Mid-Region - Community Cluster Areas” on page 17.](#)

COMMUNITY CLUSTERS

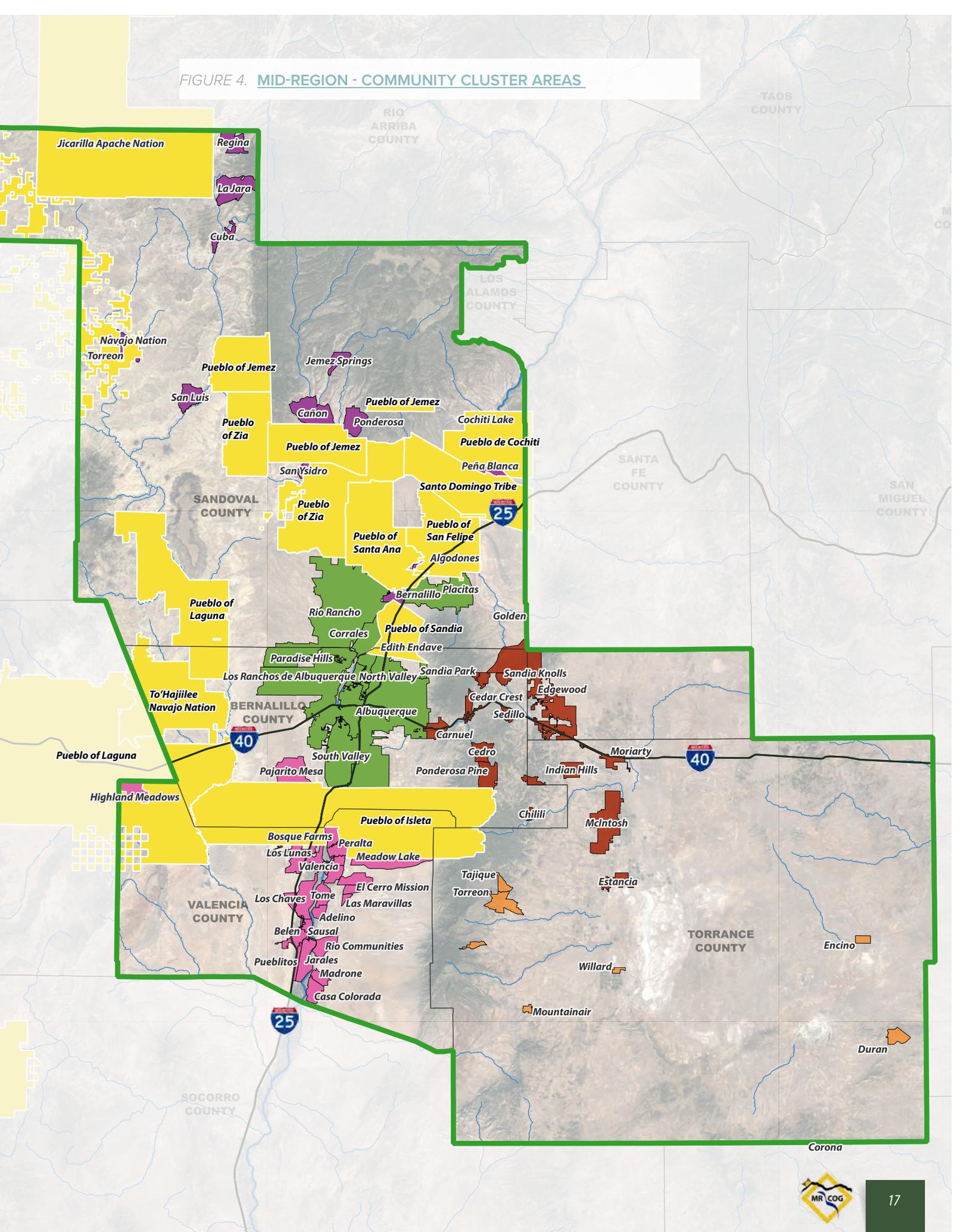
For the purpose of this Plan, the Mid-Region is divided into specific areas called Community Clusters. [“Figure 4. Mid-Region - Community Cluster Areas” on page 17](#) identifies these clusters: **(1)** Native American Communities Cluster, **(2)** Sandoval Cluster, **(3)** East I-40 Cluster, **(4)** Torrance Cluster, **(5)** Valencia Cluster, and **(6)** the ABQ Metro Cluster. Communities were assigned to clusters based on geographic location as well as similarities in economic activities and/or reliance on one another.

LEGEND

-  Native American Communities Cluster
-  Torrance Cluster
-  East I-40 Cluster
-  Valencia Cluster
-  Sandoval Cluster
-  ABQ Metro Cluster



FIGURE 4. MID-REGION - COMMUNITY CLUSTER AREAS



ECONOMIC RECOVERY & RESILIENCY PLAN

FOR SANDOVAL, BERNALILLO, VALENCIA, TORRANCE, & SOUTHERN SANTA FE COUNTIES





Plan Development Process

PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

PLANNING PROCESS

FIGURE 5.
PLANNING PROCESS

In late 2021, the Mid-Region Council of Governments commissioned MRWM to develop this Plan. A team of engineers, economists, and planners, as well as a local data science company, supported this project. Each team partner was tasked with a specific part of the Plan development. The engineering partners assessed natural and man-made threats and helped develop associated goals and strategies. The economist contributed to an industry survey and economic assessment. The planners coordinated community outreach and the planning process. The data science company facilitated the strategy workshop.

The project team developed the Plan in close collaboration with the community. The feedback from industry leaders, community leaders, and the general public shaped the list of threats, goals, and strategies and framed the Resilience Roadmap.

The project team hosted fifteen meetings and one workshop and talked to approximately 400 people. Two public meetings were held in each Community Cluster, supplemented by a survey.

The following pages summarize the outcomes of the sessions. A complete list of meeting notes, polling results, and presentations is located in the [Appendix](#). The following section provides a summary of the outcomes from the sessions.

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

The project started with a stakeholder meeting for each cluster. Stakeholders included elected officials, community administration staff, and industry leaders. During each meeting, the group identified threats, opportunities, and challenges and discussed how the community responded to



the challenges that COVID created. The meetings were held virtually, and participants used an instant polling tool to contribute their feedback with both multiple-choice and open-ended questions.

The challenges and threats identified during these meetings informed the second phase of outreach and the final Resilience Roadmap. [“Figure 6. Polling Results from Stakeholder Meetings”](#) illustrates the threats each community identified. This information can be accessed in the [Appendix](#).

FIGURE 6.
POLLING RESULTS FROM STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

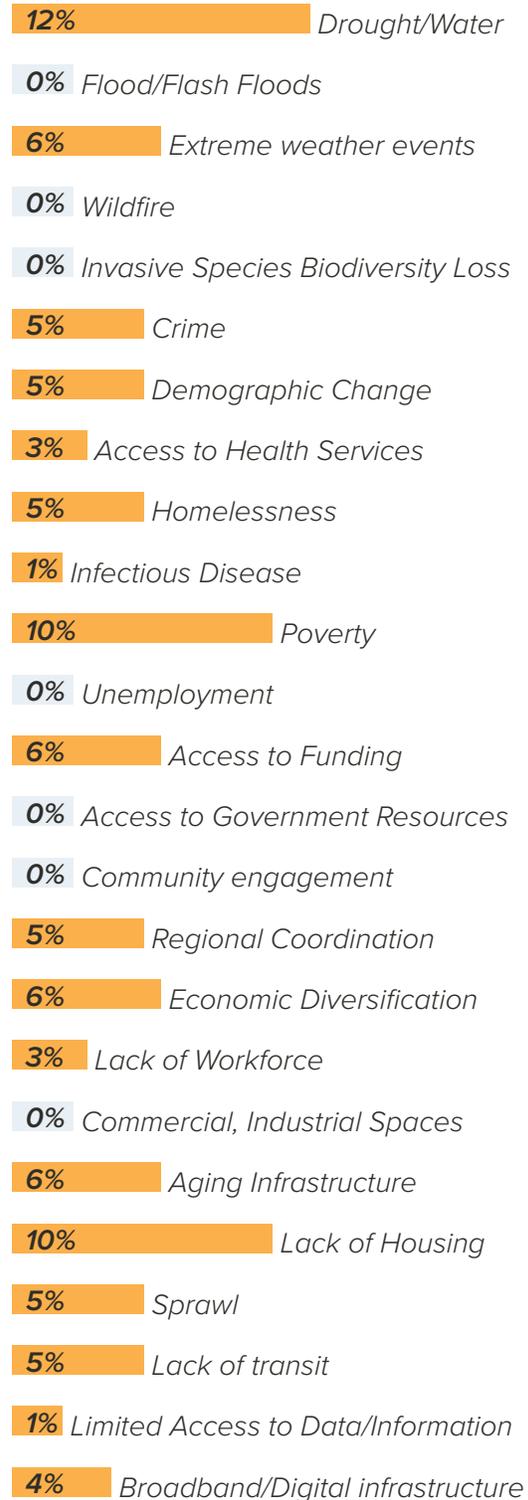
	NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES	SANDOVAL	VALENCIA	TORRANCE	EAST I-40	ABQ METRO
<i>Drought/Access to Water</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Heat Island Effect</i>						✓
<i>Demographic Changes / Aging Population</i>		✓	✓			
<i>Lack of Transit</i>						✓
<i>Wildfire</i>				✓	✓	
<i>Access/Appropriate Health Services</i>			✓			✓
<i>Economic Instability</i>					✓	
<i>Crime/Public Safety</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Lack of Reliable Broadband</i>	✓					
<i>Lack of Economic Diversification</i>	✓					
<i>Off-Jurisdictional Site(s)</i>	✓					
<i>Threat of Invasive Species</i>					✓	
<i>Lack of Operational Capacity</i>	✓		✓			✓
<i>Access to Resources</i>					✓	
<i>Lack of Workforce</i>				✓		
<i>Lack of Leadership</i>					✓	✓
<i>Lack of Public Participation</i>						✓
<i>Sprawl</i>					✓	✓
<i>Access to Funding</i>	✓	✓				
<i>Aging Infrastructure</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	
<i>Visual Deterioration</i>			✓			
<i>Lack of Available Building Space</i>			✓			

STRATEGY AND DISCOVERY WORKSHOP

The Strategy and Discovery Workshop built on the results of the first round of stakeholder meetings, the economic conditions analyses, and the hazard assessments. The goal of the meeting was to prioritize threats and challenges and then develop strategies to address these priorities. Participants prioritized their top nine threats and challenges, as identified in [“Figure 7. Prioritization Results from Strategy Workshop.”](#)

Breakout groups went through a process called Design Thinking. A detailed summary and introduction to the Design Thinking process is located in the [Appendix](#). Each of the three groups worked to identify strategies for three of the prioritized threats.

FIGURE 7. PRIORITIZATION RESULTS FROM STRATEGY WORKSHOP



PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Public meetings concluded the community input gathering phase of the Plan. For this task the project team either held a traditional public meeting, attended an existing event, or scheduled a virtual meeting. The goal of this task was to inform the general public about the project, get their input on the threats and challenges, and further develop a list of priorities for each cluster.

Over 300 people participated in voting for their priorities during these meetings. Priorities varied amongst the communities. Overall, the following received the most votes: Drought/Access to Water (264); Crime and Safety (221); Affordable Housing (178); and Wildfires (173), as identified in [“Figure 8. Priority threats and challenges from public meetings.”](#)

Community members also prioritized threats and challenges in terms of need for most immediate mitigation. The input was used to develop the final list of priorities, located in [“Resilience Roadmap” on page 30](#). The top three threats and challenges that communities identified at the public meetings are listed below:

Native American Communities

1. Drought/Access to Water
2. Crime/Safety
3. Poverty

Sandoval Cluster

1. Drought/Access to Water
2. Wildfire
3. Affordable Housing

East I-40 Cluster

1. Drought/Access to Water
2. Poverty
3. Affordable Housing

Torrance Cluster

1. Drought/Access to Water
2. Crime/Safety
3. Wildfire

Valencia Cluster

1. Drought/Access to Water
2. Crime/Safety
3. Insufficient Community Engagement

ABQ Metro Cluster

1. Drought/Access to Water
2. Crime/Safety
3. Affordable Housing



FIGURE 8. PRIORITY THREATS AND CHALLENGES FROM PUBLIC MEETINGS

	Threats & Challenges	Native American Communities	Sandoval	East I-40	Torrance	Valencia	ABQ Metro
Natural Systems	<i>Drought/Access to Water</i>	11	29	48	9	14	105
	<i>Flood/Flash Floods</i>	0	1	0	0	1	2
	<i>Wildfire</i>	4	15	33	5	4	75
	<i>Invasive Species</i>	4	3	3	0	1	4
	<i>Lack of Biodiversity</i>	0	5	5	0	2	13
	<i>Erosion</i>	0	5	2	0	2	6
	<i>Extreme Weather Events</i>	1	5	9	0	0	13
Social & Public Health	<i>Crime/Safety</i>	11	6	30	8	8	98
	<i>Demographic Change</i>	1	1	3	0	2	5
	<i>Poverty</i>	11	8	39	2	5	54
	<i>Infectious Disease</i>	2	0	1	0	1	5
	<i>Access to Health Services</i>	1	3	34	2	3	53
Economic	<i>Unemployment</i>	10	1	9	2	0	16
	<i>Lack of Economic Diversification</i>	5	2	9	0	1	11
	<i>Lack of Workforce</i>	9	1	7	4	1	22
Community Capacity	<i>Lack of Regional Coordination</i>	2	3	3	0	1	4
	<i>Lack of Operational Capacity</i>	5	2	1	0	0	2
	<i>Insufficient Community Engagement</i>	2	5	12	0	6	15
	<i>Limited Access to Funding/Resources</i>	3	5	3	2	2	9
Built Environment	<i>Lack of Commercial, Industrial Spaces</i>	0	0	0	0	0	2
	<i>Aging Infrastructure</i>	1	4	3	0	1	14
	<i>Affordable Housing</i>	6	15	37	0	1	78
	<i>Sprawl</i>	0	0	7	0	2	9
	<i>Lack of Transit</i>	0	1	5	0	2	14
	<i>Lack of/or Unreliable Broadband</i>	7	5	0	4	2	6
	<i>Limiting Zoning Regulations</i>	0	1	0	0	1	4

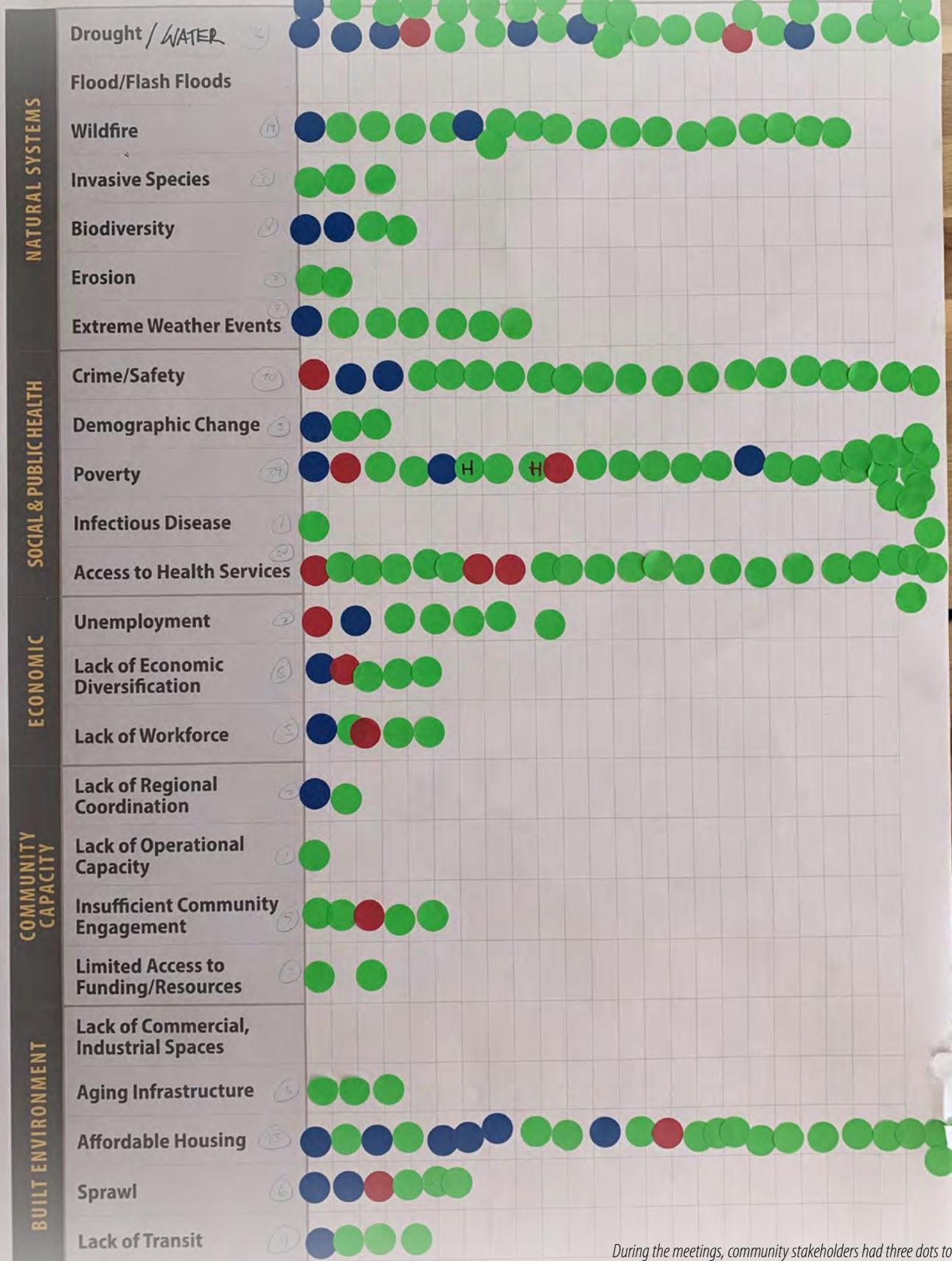
These final priorities reflect information obtained through the community feedback, the hazard assessment, and the analysis of economic conditions.





PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

SELECT THE THREAT/CHALLENGE THAT SHOULD BE PRIORITIZED



During the meetings, community stakeholders had three dots to identify their top three priorities. This image shows the results from the Downtown Albuquerque Farmers Market



A mother explaining the different threats and challenges to her daughter during the Farmers Market in Cedar Crest



Stakeholders outreach at the Rio Rancho Yard Sale at Cabezon Park



Results from Rio Rancho Yard Sale



Stakeholders outreach at the Downtown Albuquerque Farmers Market



Stakeholders outreach at the Rio Rancho Yard Sale at Cabezon Park



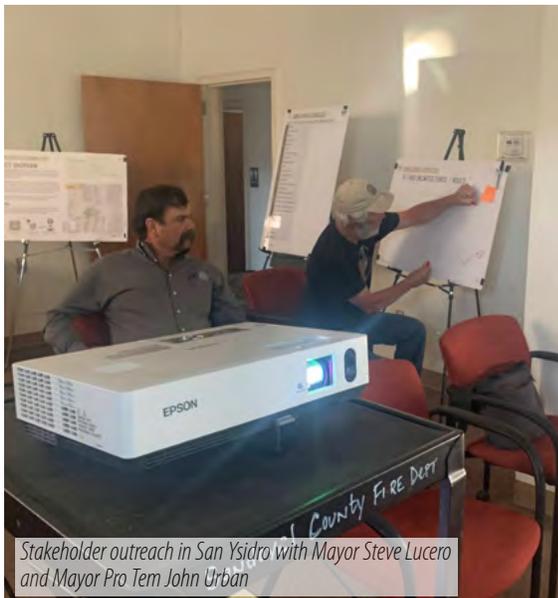
Results from Downtown Albuquerque Farmers Market



Bianca Borg (MRCOG) explaining threats and challenges to community stakeholders at the Downtown Albuquerque Farmers Market



Stakeholders outreach at the Downtown Albuquerque Farmers Market



Stakeholder outreach in San Ysidro with Mayor Steve Lucero and Mayor Pro Tem John Urban

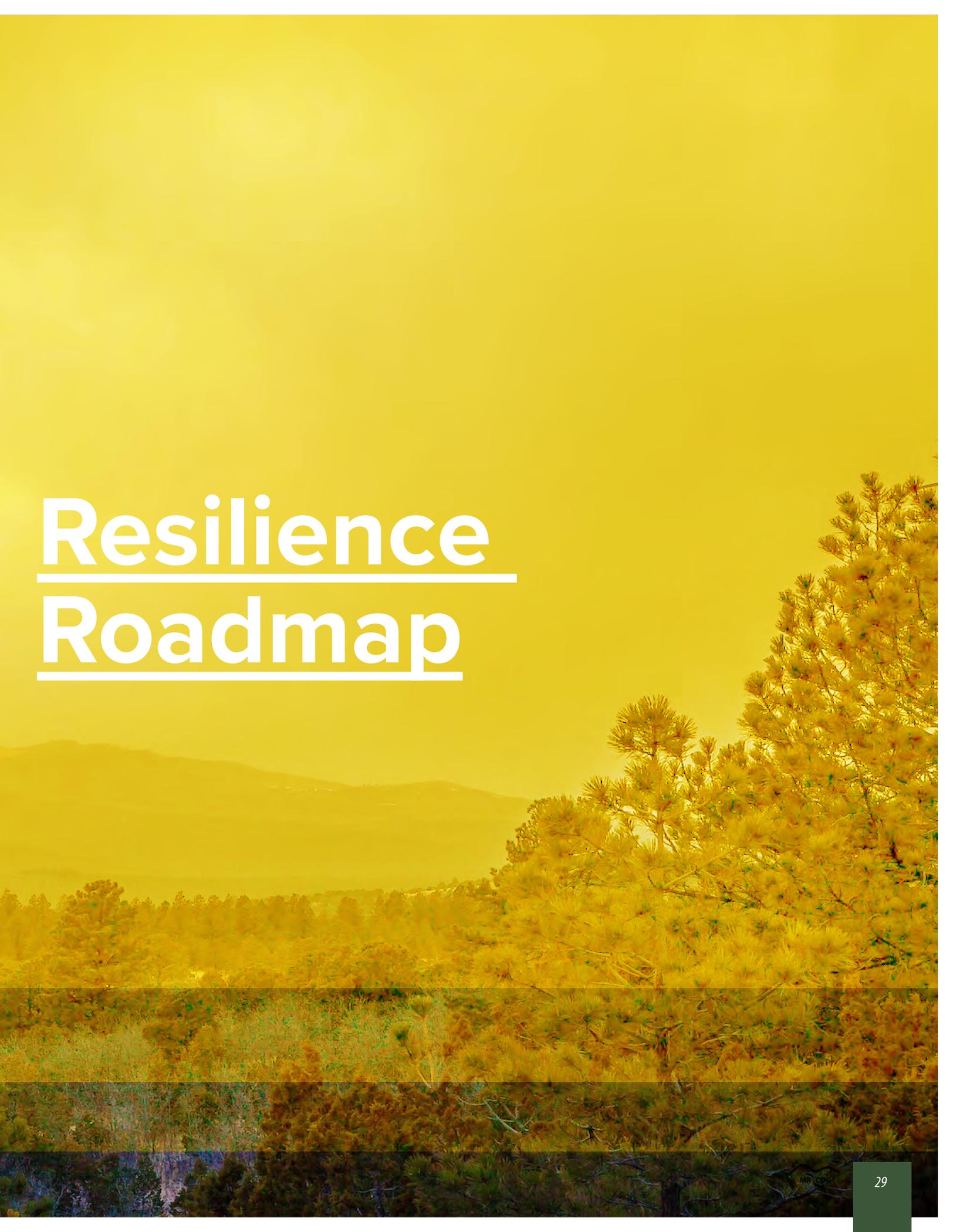


Stakeholders outreach at the Farmers market in Los Lunas

ECONOMIC RECOVERY & RESILIENCY PLAN

FOR SANDOVAL, BERNALILLO, VALENCIA, TORRANCE, & SOUTHERN SANTA FE COUNTIES





Resilience Roadmap

RESILIENCE ROADMAP

The Resilience Roadmap section identifies resilience priorities for the region and for each Community Cluster. Priorities emerged through (1) extensive stakeholder outreach, (2) an economic assessment, and (3) a natural hazard assessment.

COMMUNITY CLUSTER PRIORITIES

Each Community Cluster identified varying priorities, with some overlap between communities. All communities unanimously agreed that their most pressing challenges come from the constraints associated with the drought and limited water resources in the region. Across the board, every participating community ranked drought and limited water resources as one of their highest priorities. Several other common themes emerged based on community makeup. For example, urban communities identified crime and safety and affordable housing as main concerns. On the other hand, rural communities throughout the region identified broadband access and lack of operational capacity as main concerns.

In addition to community-identified priorities, our assessment revealed several other priorities worth noting. Energy independence and economic diversification are two important priorities applicable to the entire Mid-Region. The final priorities, compiled in [“Figure 9. Priority Areas,”](#) reflect information obtained through community feedback, the hazard assessment, and the analysis of economic conditions. These priorities inform and guide the goals, strategies, and projects listed under the regional and cluster-specific goals. They also identify areas of concern within participating communities where resilience in their local economies could be enhanced.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Over 400 government officials, industry representatives, and community stakeholders participated in the planning process. The communities recognized the potential for economic recovery as well as the threats and challenges to that recovery. Challenges are inevitable and will continue to impact communities within the region. To develop a stronger and more resilient economy, communities must address threats that currently limit their economy while looking ahead at other challenges on the horizon.

The following list identifies the overarching goals that emerged through the development of this Plan.

1. *Collaborate and coordinate with communities in the region to address common threats and challenges. Specifically, rural communities will benefit from collaborating with their neighbors to jointly achieve their goals.*
2. *Diversify the economy to reduce single industry dependence and to create economic drivers that are more resilient to downturns.*
3. *Address limitations associated with water resources and foster sustainable economic development patterns by linking resources and growth.*
4. *Address the lack of reliable broadband internet in rural communities, and identify resources to assist local businesses in creating a successful online presence.*

FIGURE 9. PRIORITY AREAS

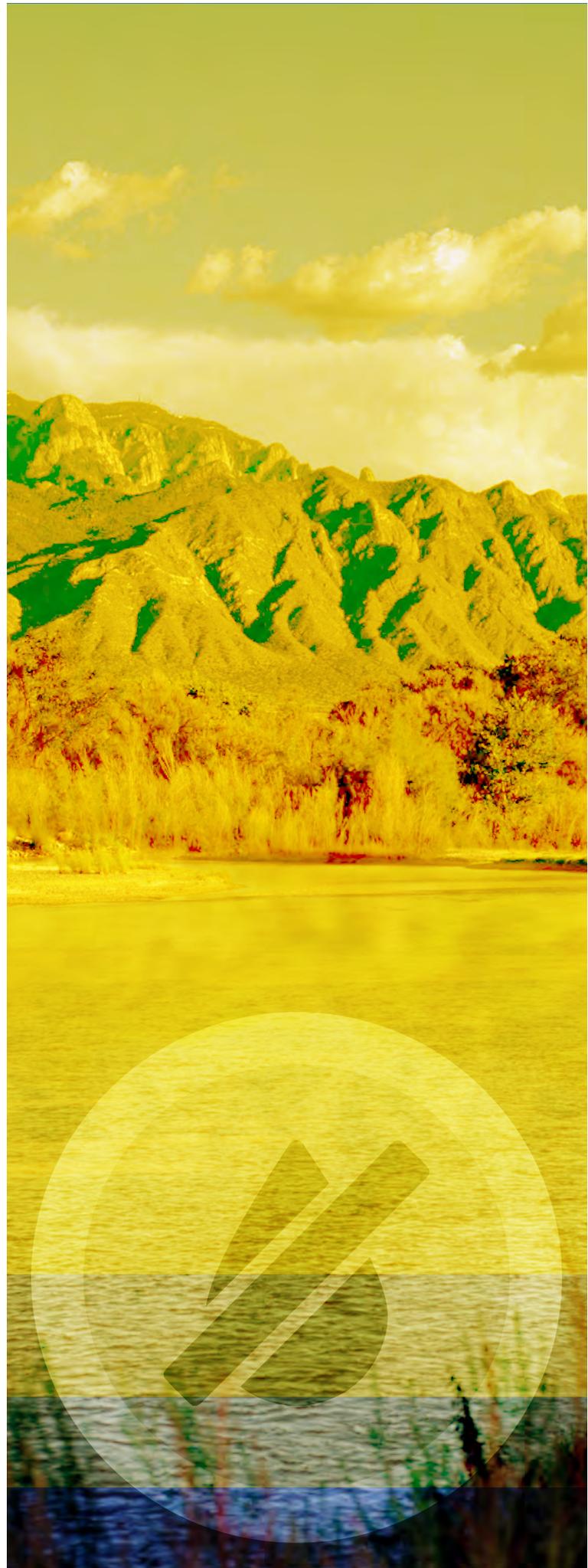
Threats & Challenges		Native American	Sandoval	East I-40	Torrance	Valencia	ABQ Metro
Economic	 Lack of Economic Diversification	X	X	X	X	X	X
	 Lack of Workforce/Unemployment	X				X	X
Social & Public Health	 Crime/Safety					X	X
	 Poverty/Access to Job Opportunities	X			X		X
Community Capacity	 Lack of Regional Coordination		X	X	X		
	 Lack of Operational Capacity	X			X	X	
	 Insufficient Community Engagement			X		X	X
Built-Environment	 Aging/Insufficient Infrastructure	X	X				
	 Affordable Housing	X	X	X	X	X	X
	 Lack of/Unreliable Broadband and Associated Infrastructure	X	X	X	X		
	 Energy Independence	X	X	X	X	X	X
Natural Systems	 Drought/Access to Water	X	X	X	X	X	X
	 Wildfire/Flooding	X	X	X	X	X	X
	 Invasive Species/Biodiversity		X	X			

 Regional Threats & Challenges  Cluster-specific Threats & Challenges

RESILIENCE ROADMAP

5. *Enable rural communities to build operational capacities to apply for more funding, and/or create external resources that support communities applying for funding.*
6. *Address aging and insufficient infrastructure, particularly in rural communities.*
7. *Address crime and safety, particularly in urban communities.*
8. *Address the affordable housing crisis in both urban and rural communities.*
9. *Prepare for future wildfires and cascading hazards, like flooding, to mitigate and prevent severe impacts.*
10. *Address invasive species and range productivity issues, and develop farming practices that can adapt to drought conditions.*

The overall recommendations cover numerous Priority Areas. Some of the recommendations are unique to specific areas within the clusters; others apply across the Mid-Region. Goals are divided accordingly.



REGIONAL GOALS

The following Priority Areas were selected based on their prevalence and importance to the entire region. Regional goals constitute goals with a regional impact that requires collaboration between communities and stakeholders. Regional goals are also goals that stakeholders from all clusters identified as a priority. The regional goals include: 1) **drought and access to water**, 2) **wildfires**, 3) **affordable housing**, 4) **economic diversification**, and 5) **energy independence**.

This portion of the Plan offers goals and strategies that apply to the entire region, while more specific strategies will be addressed for each cluster under the cluster-specific goals section. The following section offers priorities, goals, strategies, and projects for four of the five Priority Areas. Economic diversification will be discussed in the cluster-specific goals section as recommendations are tailored to each community.

PRIORITY A. DROUGHT MITIGATION AND ACCESS TO WATER



New Mexico and the southwest are experiencing the driest and most severe drought conditions in decades. A study published by the journal *Nature Climate Change* found that 2000 to 2021 was the driest period in at least 800 to 1600 years.⁴ By the first half of 2021, New Mexico had experienced the worst drought in over two decades, with more than 77% of the state exposed to severe drought. New Mexico has the worst outlook for water scarcity in the country. Many industries rely heavily on water, and new economic expansion can only be supported if water resources are secured and available. As mentioned previously, community members identified drought and access to water as one of their main concerns during the outreach portion of this project. Community leaders also tied the availability of water resources to their economic success.

4. A. Park Williams et al., "Rapid intensification of the emerging southwestern North American megadrought in 2020–2021," *Nature Climate Change*, vol. 12 (2022): 232–234.

GOAL A.1 Reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to drought.

Strategy A.1–1 Review local hazard mitigation plans and FEMA ‘Mitigation Ideas’ and implement drought mitigation actions.

Project: Coordinate with county and community planning efforts to integrate resilience by identifying new hazard mitigation/resilience actions and implementing them.

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies, New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (NM DHSEM), and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Funding: FEMA - Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Grants and Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)

GOAL A.2 Develop contingency plans for drought/water supply emergencies.

Strategy A.2–1 Develop alternative water sources that may be used during drought conditions.

Project: Establish agreements via a memorandum of understanding (MOUs), partnership agreement, or mutual aid agreement (if they don’t already exist) with local governments, water suppliers (or even other states) to provide water when water is scarce in the Mid-Region.

Project: Assess viability of brackish, treated, wastewater, and stormwater as an alternative water resource.

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies, New Mexico Drought Task Force, NM DHSEM, neighboring communities and jurisdictions, and water suppliers and utilities

Funding: FEMA - Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Grants and Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)

GOAL A.3 Investigate opportunities to increase efficiency of existing water infrastructure.

Strategy A.3–1 Implement water infrastructure improvement projects and consider innovative techniques to integrate resilience into capital improvement projects.



RESOURCES: HAZARD MITIGATION PLANS APPLICABLE TO THE REGION

- Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Hazard Mitigation Plan (March 2021);
- Sandoval County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan (September 2019);
- Torrance County Hazard Mitigation Plan (December 2017);
- Valencia County Hazard Mitigation Plan (April 2015);
- New Mexico State Hazard Mitigation Plan (September 2018).



RESOURCE: FEMA PUBLICATION ‘MITIGATION IDEAS’

The FEMA Mitigation Ideas publication provides a resource that communities can use to identify and evaluate a range of potential mitigation actions for reducing risk to natural hazards and disasters.

For more information, visit: https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/fema-mitigation-ideas_02-13-2013.pdf

Project: Hire a consultant to assess the existing water infrastructure system and identify strategies to increase efficiency and integrate resilient solutions into the regional water infrastructure.

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies, MRCOG, and water suppliers and utilities

Funding: Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Funding

GOAL A.4 Attract, grow, and launch companies that can sustain operations with limited water usage.

Strategy A.4-1 Advocate for water usage to be a driving criterion for all state level industry recruitment efforts especially as it pertains to the state's nine target sectors.

Project: Lobby the state to tie water usage to economic development incentives for existing and relocating businesses.

Partner(s): Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance (AREA), New Mexico Economic Development Department, Sustainable Economy Task Force, Sustainable Economy Advisory Committee, and NM Partnership

Funding: EPA Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) - Environmental Justice and Climate Resilience Grant Program (EJ4Climate)

Project: Work with NM Partnership to include water use estimates when sending out leads about potential businesses relocations or expansions.

Partner(s): NM Partnership and New Mexico Economic Development Department (NMEDD)

Funding: Internal and EPA Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) - Environmental Justice and Climate Resilience Grant Program (EJ4Climate)

GOAL A.5 Link business development to available water resources.

Strategy A.5-1 Work with communities to help them assess the potential impact new business or development have on water resources.

Project: Conduct an assessment of available water rights that can be used in physical development and business



RESOURCE: NINE TARGET SECTORS

The MRCOG CEDS and the New Mexico State Economic Development Strategic Plan identify nine target industries to build the State's economy and transition it away from a dependence on extractive industries like oil and gas. These include:

1. Life Sciences/Biosciences
2. Space & Aerospace
3. Film, Television, & Media
4. Cyber Security
5. Intelligent/Advanced Manufacturing
6. Clean Energy
7. Value Added Agriculture
8. Global Trade
9. Outdoor Recreation



RESOURCE: NM PARTNERSHIP

The state designates the New Mexico Partnership as the single point of contact to help businesses establish themselves in New Mexico. It offers a coordinated approach and a formal network of economic developers to simplify the site selection process. In addition, it provides expertise on talent, critical infrastructure, educational institutions, research and development institutions, real estate, facilities, incentives, and all the other factors that go into a business location decision. For more information, visit: <https://nmpartnership.com/>



RESOURCE: USGS NEW MEXICO NATIONAL WATER DASHBOARD

The USGS New Mexico National Water Dashboard is an interactive map that includes real-time water data from over 13,500 stations. For more information, visit: <https://dashboard.waterdata.usgs.gov/app/nwd/lang-en/?aoi=default>



RESILIENCE ROADMAP

operations with local departments at the county and community level.

Partner(s): New Mexico Environment Department, Native American and Community Governing Bodies, and Local Economic Development Organizations

Funding: FEMA - Direct Technical Assistance Communities, and Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) - WaterSMART grant

GOAL A.6 Implement comprehensive water demand modeling and metering to track usage and understand water needs over time.

Strategy A.6–1 Model existing water resources and the current and projected water demand by utilizing existing United States Geological Survey (USGS) data to project water demand.

Project: Create a real time water demand dashboard.

Partner(s): USGS, University of New Mexico (UNM), Central New Mexico Community College (CNM), and Office of the State Engineers

Funding: EPA - Water Research Grants, USGS, and NMEDD

Strategy A.6–2 Update water infrastructure where necessary and include meters on all residences and businesses to better control and project water demand.

Project: Install water meters on all residences.

Partner(s): Local Water Utilities, USGS, UNM, and CNM

Funding: U.S. Department Of Agriculture (USDA) – Rural Development Water and Environmental Program (WEP), (USDA) Rural Utilities Service, and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Water Infrastructure Projects

GOAL A.7 Integrate water into land use planning.

Strategy A.7–1 Integrate goals and objectives for managing water resources into community long-range planning documents and vice versa. Also, include land use data in water modeling.

Project: Update community long-range planning documents in order to tie land use to water resources and update existing water models to include land use data.

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies, Water Data Initiative, Conservation Districts, Water



RESOURCE: AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION PLANNING AND DROUGHT

The American Planning Association published a 'Planning and Drought' report to aid communities in dealing with droughts and the associated cascading effects. The guide outlines the following:

For every one acre of additional multifamily residential development built, an additional 3.9 acre-feet of water is required. On average, a one acre multifamily development will yield 50 to more than 100 units.

For every one acre of additional single-family residential development built, an additional 3.8 acre-feet of water is required. On average, a one acre single-family development will yield four to five dwelling units.

For every one acre of additional commercial-industrial development built, an additional 1.65 acre-feet of water is required.

An increase of 100 square feet of single-family residential development resulted in an increase of almost 3 acre-feet of water consumed per year.

A \$1,000 increase in median income per block group resulted in a 0.14 acre-foot increase in water consumption.

An increase of 100 college-educated residents per block group resulted in a 0.2-acre-foot reduction in water consumption.

For more information visit: <https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/publication/online/PAS-Report-574.pdf>

Authorities, MRCOG, and American Planning Association (APA) NM

Funding: HUD - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and New Mexico Finance Authority - Local Government Planning Fund

Strategy A.7–2 Link new development to water supply planning.

Project: Adopt a water adequacy policy to ensure that new development will have adequate and sustainable water supply for the build-out of the development proposal.

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies, MRCOG, APA NM, and Office of the State Engineer

Funding: USDA Rural Community Development Initiative Grants

Strategy A.7–3 Update zoning code and development standards to encourage water-smart development.

Project: Update zoning code and development standards to include smaller lot sizes; encourage compact development by removing barriers such as parking requirements and setbacks; in future growth areas allow higher density developments and encourage higher density development by using development or utility fee reductions/waivers and density bonuses.

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies, MRCOG, APA NM, Office of the State Engineer, and USDA

Funding: USDA Rural Community Development Initiative Grants

GOAL A.8 Reduce water consumption in agriculture/ranching.

Strategy A.8–1 Work with local farmers to assess irrigation techniques to improve efficiency of agricultural practices.

Project: Apply for funding and hire consultant to assess existing practices.

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies, New Mexico State University (NMSU), USDA, Farmers, MRCOG, and New Mexico Farmers Association

Funding: New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA)



RESOURCE: GROWING WATER SMART

The Growing Water Smart program introduces communities to the full range of communications, public engagement, planning, and policy implementation tools to realize their watershed health and community resiliency goals. For more information, visit:

<https://resilientwest.org/wp-content/uploads/SI-Workbook-interactive-single-1.pdf>

RESILIENCE ROADMAP

Healthy Soil Program, USDA Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities (Federal), USDA Pandemic Assistance for Producers, and United States Climate Alliance

GOAL A.9 Increase ranch/field productivity through farming/ranching sustainable practices.

Strategy A.9–1 Work with stakeholders to compare existing ranch management and farming practices with current best management practices to improve the long term resilience and sustainability of their businesses.

Project: *Assess ranch and farming management and practices.*

Partner(s): *New Mexico State University (NMSU), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Quivira Coalition*

Funding: *NMDA Assistance Programs*

RESOURCE: QUIVIRA COALITION

The Quivira Coalition builds soil, biodiversity, and resilience on western working landscapes. The coalition offers support for ranch and farming strategies through several programs (Land and Water program, New Agrarian program, Education program, and Carbon Ranch Initiative) For more information, visit:

<https://quiviracoalition.org/>

PRIORITY B. WILDFIRE



Fueled by abnormally dry, warm conditions and spread by strong winds, wildfires have burned more than 600,000 acres across New Mexico in the spring of 2022 — making it one of the worst fire years in the state’s recorded history.

The wildfires in 2022 have highlighted how real this threat is to the stability and viability of local communities and their economies. The greatest concentration of wildfire risk areas exists in the Albuquerque Metro, East I-40, and the Valencia Cluster where there is more exposure to the wildland urban interface (WUI), the transition zone between unoccupied land and developed areas. However, remote clusters are also at risk and could potentially suffer greater impacts.

Hazard maps, profiles, and more detailed discussions about vulnerability can be found in the county-specific and State of New Mexico Hazard Mitigation plans.

GOAL B.1 Reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to wildfires.

Strategy B.1–1 Review local hazard mitigation plans and seek ways to implement drought mitigations.

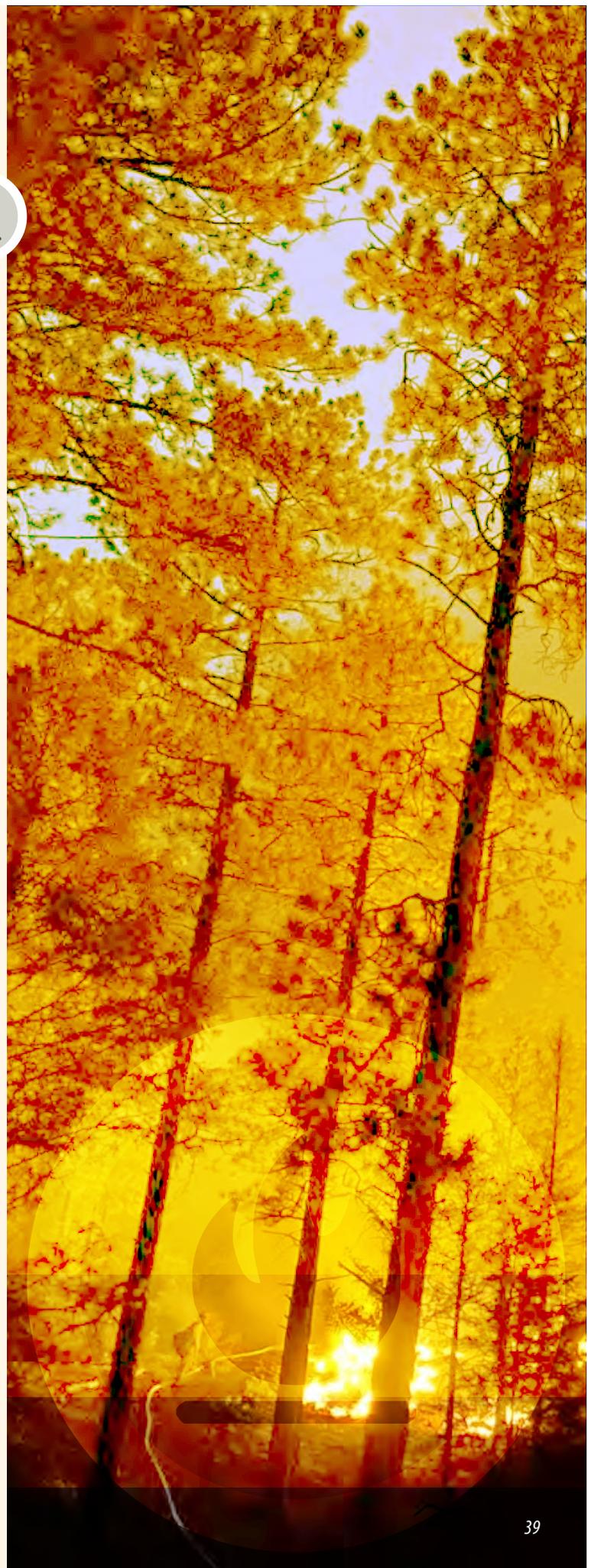
Project: Review local hazard mitigation plans and seek ways to implement drought mitigations. Consider a variety of land use planning tools to limit the environmental impacts of development and growth in the WUI.

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies, MRCOG, and Fire Adapted New Mexico Learning Network

Project: Prioritize projects from local hazard mitigation plans to implement.

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies, NM DHSEM, and FEMA

Funding: FEMA -Wildfire Mitigation Grant and New Mexico Association of Counties (NMAC) - Wildfire Risk Reduction Program for Rural Communities



RESILIENCE ROADMAP

Strategy B.1–2 Review the FEMA publication ‘*Mitigation Ideas*’ to identify potential new wildfire mitigation actions for implementation.

Project: *Coordinate with county and community planning to incorporate wildfire mitigation into comprehensive planning efforts including considerations of wildfire hazards in land use, public safety and other elements of the comprehensive plan.*

Partner(s): *County and Community Hazard Mitigation Planning Committees*

GOAL B.2 Reduce fire fuels and create defensible spaces.

Strategy B.2–1 Work with local property owners and implement larger-scale fuel removal/thinning treatments near vulnerable populations, homes, neighborhood features (parks and open space), businesses, and essential service facilities.

Project: *Map areas that need to be cleared, and host annual day of action to clear properties with the community.*

Partner(s): *Native American, County, and Community Fire Departments*

Funding: *FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants and Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)*

Strategy B.2–2 Require fire-resistant building materials and construction standards (including roofing materials, vents, siding, gutters, and windows) in wildland-urban interface areas.

Project: *Petition the state to adopt an updated building/fire code, and adopt development standards that include standards to improve fire resistance for new constructions and existing structures when appropriate.*

Partner(s): *Native American and Community Governing Bodies, National Institute of Standards and Technology Department of Commerce, and National Fire Protection Association*

GOAL B.3 Provide education on how to prepare for wildfires and raise awareness of fire danger.

Strategy B.3–1 Participate in the Fire Adapted New Mexico Learning Network (FAC NM).

Project: *Schedule a cluster wide meeting with the FAC NM.*



RESOURCE: ‘PLANNING FOR HAZARDS: LAND USE SOLUTIONS’

The State of Colorado created the ‘*Planning for Hazards: Land Use Solutions*’ guide to enable communities to prepare for and mitigate hazards, including wildfire. The guide identifies how resilience and hazard mitigation principles can be integrated into plans, codes, and standards related to land use and the built environment. For more information, visit: <https://planningforhazards.com/document/tool-profile-wildland-urban-interface-code>



RESOURCE: NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) provides information and knowledge resources on fire, amongst others. It publishes codes and standards intended to minimize the possibility and effects of fire and other risks. For more information, visit: <https://www.nfpa.org/Codes-and-Standards/List-of-Codes-and-Standards>

Partner(s): Native American, County, and Community Governing Fire Departments, National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA), NM Forestry Division, and Nature Conservancy

Strategy B.3–2 Recruit more volunteer firefighters through customized and targeted outreach.

Project: Sign-up with National Volunteer Fire Council and develop new recruitment strategies.

Partner(s): Native American, County, and Community Fire Departments, FEMA’s SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response), and National Volunteer Fire Council
Funding: USDA Forest Service (Volunteer Fire Assistance Program), FEMA’s SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response), DHSEM Management, and Fire Protection Fund (FPF)

Strategy B.3–3 Educate the public on the importance of fireproofing structures and reducing fire fuels.

Project: Create outreach materials and training on fire proofing structures.

Partner(s): Native American, County, and Community Fire Departments, FEMA’s SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response), National Volunteer Fire Council, East Mountain Interagency Fire Protection Agency (EMIFPA), and National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA)
Funding: FEMA’s SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response)

Strategy B.3–4 Educate the public on the importance of updating property records and assist the public with updating property records.

Project: Create outreach materials that inform residents about updating property records, and organize a day of action to update property records.

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies, FEMA’s SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response), and National Volunteer Fire Council
Funding: FEMA BRIC Direct Technical Assistance



RESOURCE: FIRE ADAPTED NEW MEXICO LEARNING NETWORK

The Fire Adapted New Mexico Learning Network (FAC NM) fosters fire adapted communities. It is a grassroots organization that aims to reduce wildfire risk through collective action. Members share resources, successes, failures, and lessons learned. For more information, visit: <https://facnm.org/>



RESOURCE: NATIONAL VOLUNTEER FIRE COUNCIL

For more information on the National Volunteer Fire Council visit: <https://portal.nvfc.org/>

PRIORITY C. FLOODING



Flooding is a hazard of concern across the region, however risk varies by Community Cluster. Flood hazard areas can be spatially defined, and FEMA flood maps depict many of the areas at risk, but unmapped flood risk areas also exist.

Another flood risk for the Mid-Region is the cascading impact of increased runoff caused by wildfires. Post-wildfire flooding presents a great challenge because vegetation and soil that would normally slow and absorb flood waters has been burned or destroyed by fires, thereby increasing the rate and volume of runoff.

Because of the greater concentration of assets, the ABQ Metro Cluster has the most significant risk of flooding-induced damages to private property, community assets, public facilities, commercial enterprises, and human health. However, there are also more localized areas vulnerable to flooding.

Flood hazard maps, profiles (previous occurrences, probability of futures occurrences, etc.), and more detailed discussions about vulnerability can be found in the county-specific and State of New Mexico Hazard Mitigation plans.

GOAL C.1 Reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to flooding.

Strategy C.1–1 Review existing flooding mitigation strategies found within the regional hazard mitigation plans and determine if they are completed, in development, still needed or no longer applicable based on current conditions.

Project: *Implement prioritized projects from hazard mitigation plans.*

Project: *Review FEMA publication 'Mitigation Ideas,' prioritize appropriate actions, and implement projects.*





Project: *Improve flood risk assessment by using GIS to map areas that are at-risk of flooding.*

Partner(s): *Native American and Community Governing Bodies, NM DHSEM, FEMA, and County and Community Hazard Mitigation Planning Committees*

Strategy C.1–2 Coordinate regionally to identify actions to minimize the effects of flooding on people and property through implementing flood warning, emergency response and evacuation planning.

Project: *Draft a Regional Emergency Management Plan that identifies potential flood warning, emergency response, and evacuation planning projects.*

Partner(s): *Native American and Community Governing Bodies, MRCOG, NM DHSEM, and FEMA*

Funding: *Department of the Interior (DOI) /Bureau of Land Management (BLM) - Wildfire Risk Reduction Program for Rural Communities, NM Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management - Hazard Mitigation Grant (HMGP), and FEMA - Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Post Fire*

Strategy C.1–3 Improve infrastructure to be less vulnerable to flooding.

Project: *Rehabilitate levees along the Rio Grande.*

Partner(s): *Native American and Community Governing Bodies, Army Corps of Engineers, NM DHSEM, State Land Office, Department of Homeland Security, and FEMA*

Funding: *Army Corps of Engineers - Levee Rehabilitation Program, and FEMA*

**RESOURCE: FEMA
'MITIGATION IDEAS'**

The FEMA 'Mitigation Ideas' aid communities in identifying and evaluating a range of potential mitigation actions for reducing risk to natural hazards and disasters. For more information, visit: https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/fema-mitigation-ideas_02-13-2013.pdf

PRIORITY D. AFFORDABLE HOUSING



The housing market in the Mid-Region varies widely between the larger metro cluster and rural areas. The densely populated urban cluster is growing and has a more stable economy that attracts developers who build diverse housing across a wide range of price points. In contrast, the rural clusters often experience declining populations and low economic activity. The housing stock in many rural areas consists of aging housing, with a large portion of mobile homes and little to no new development of new housing units. Mobile homes in this context include older, single-wide models, some of which are not on permanent foundations, and manufactured homes on permanent foundations. According to a 2020 New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority report, the Mid-Region is estimated to have a deficit of 49,422 affordable housing units.⁵ In addition, 4,700 existing units currently available to low-income households could lose their subsidies by 2030,⁶ further reducing the number of affordable units available to low-income households.

MFA also identified a 27% increase in the homeless population between 2018 and 2019, in part due to the lack of affordable housing. Most of the homeless population is concentrated in Albuquerque. In addition to the need for more affordable housing units, the number of homeless individuals calls for an increasing supply of permanent supportive housing in the Mid-Region.

5. New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority, '2020 New Mexico Affordable Housing Needs Assessment,' MFA. 2020, https://housingnm.org/uploads/documents/Final_Version_2020_NM_HNA.pdf
6. Josh Leopold et al., 'Albuquerque Affordable Housing and Homelessness Needs Assessment,' Urban Institute. 2020, https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/102261/albuquerque-affordable-housing-and-homelessness-needs-assessment_2.pdf



GOAL D.1 Increase supply of affordable permanent supportive housing units.

Strategy D.1–1 Develop more affordable permanent supportive housing units that combine affordable housing with healthcare and support services.

Project: Identify affordable supportive housing projects and partner with developers and non-profit organizations to build supportive housing.

Partner(s): MFA, Native American and Community Governing Bodies, Supportive Housing Coalition of New Mexico, New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness, and Department of Family and Community Services

Funding: Homewise and HUD – Supportive Housing Program

Strategy D.1–2 Make accessory dwelling units (ADUs), duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes permissive region-wide where appropriate.

Project: Amend zoning codes to permit ADUs, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in all appropriate single-family zoning districts. Add contextual design standards to require new units to fit into the existing neighborhood’s fabric and allow conversions of existing units into duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes.

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies, Homewise, APA NM, and MRCOG

Funding: Challenge Planning Grants (Housing Supply and Affordability Act – introduced to congress, not passed yet) and Housing Trust Funds (WHTF)

GOAL D.2 Increase homeownership.

Strategy D.2–1 Support households in need of down payment/homebuyer assistance.

Project: Identify homebuyers and match them with down payment assistance. Scale this project to serve more households in need.

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies, Homewise, and MFA

Funding: New Mexico Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF) and Homewise

RESOURCE: AFFORDABLE PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is permanent housing in which housing assistance (e.g., long-term leasing or rental assistance) and supportive services are provided to assist households with at least one member (adult or child) with a disability in achieving housing stability.



RESOURCE: HIGHER QUALITY DESIGN CAN HELP OVERCOME OPPOSITION TO HIGHER DENSITY HOUSING

Thoughtful housing design can help overcome the opposition to higher density housing. For more information, visit: <https://medium.com/sidewalk-talk/can-building-design-reduce-opposition-to-housing-density-bb74c2252182>



RESOURCE: HOMEOWNERSHIP AS AN OPTION FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The report 'Homeownership is Affordable Housing in New Mexico' by the New-Mexico-based non-profit Homewise, challenges the widespread belief that homeownership is more costly than renting. For more information, visit: <https://www.homewisdom.org/homeownership-is-affordable-housing-nm>



RESILIENCE ROADMAP

Strategy D.2–2 Create a housing non-profit organization that focuses on homeownership in rural areas.

Project: Work with Homewise and other regional housing stakeholders to identify funding strategies and a path forward for a rural version of Homewise.

Partner(s): County, Native American and Community Governing Bodies, MRCOG, Homewise, New Mexico Housing Trust Fund, Mortgage Finance Authority, ULI, and NAIOP
Funding: New Mexico Housing Trust Fund, Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA) Homeowner Assistance Fund Programs, and USDA - Mutual Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance Grants in New Mexico

GOAL D.3 Make training and funds available to low-income families to purchase homes.

Strategy D.3–1 Work with Homewise and identify housing need and funding/resources for low-income facilities.

Project: Create an inventory of units and unit types needed to satisfy demand.

Partner(s): County, Native American and Community Governing Bodies, MRCOG, and Homewise
Funding: Homewise, New Mexico Housing Trust Fund, Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA) Homeowner Assistance Fund Programs, and USDA - Mutual Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance Grants in New Mexico

Project: Create an online matchmaker platform to match applicants with funding and other resources.

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies and Homewise
Funding: Homewise, New Mexico Housing Trust Fund, and USDA - Mutual Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance Grants in New Mexico

Project: Work with Homewise and other non-profit developers to construct units for sale for low-income applicants.

RESOURCE: SHARE NEW MEXICO

SHARE New Mexico hosts New Mexico's largest, most up-to-date and comprehensive Resource Directory for community resources and social services. From child-care to senior services, education to housing and beyond. This platform offers quick support in finding desired resources. For more information, visit: <https://sharenm.org/nm-resources>

RESOURCE: HOUSING POLICY MATCH MAKER

Developed by non-profit public policy organizations – the Brookings Institution and the Aspen Institute, the housing policy matchmaker is intended for local leaders who know that their community faces housing problems but are not sure what is causing them or how to solve them. It is designed to help policymakers diagnose the health of their local housing market, understand key challenges, and develop a broad outline for the types of policies that address those challenges. For more information, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/ywm4nhxb>

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies, Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA), MRCOG, Homewise, Community Governing Bodies, and Private Developers

Funding: MFA - LIHTC Program Overview and New Mexico Housing Trust Fund

GOAL D.4 Support low-income homeowners to repair and weatherize existing housing units.

Strategy D.4–1 Repair/preserve existing homes to help lower-income homeowners preserve structures and family wealth.

Project: Work with MFA and identify target populations and help community members in need through the application process.

Partner(s): Native American and Community Governing Bodies, and MFA

Funding: DOE - Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funding, MFA's NM EnergySmart weatherization assistance program, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), and PNM

RESOURCE: LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) provides direct federal income tax savings to individuals or corporations that invest funds in rental housing developments with apartments set aside for low-income households. To use this tax incentive, developers typically form limited partnerships with investors who contribute equity capital in exchange for tax savings. Once an allocation is made and construction is completed, tax credits can be claimed annually for a 10-year period. For more information, visit: <https://housingnm.org/developers/lihtc>



PRIORITY E. ENERGY INDEPENDENCE



In 2019, Governor Lujan-Grisham adopted the goals set by the 2015 Paris Agreement and joined the U.S. Climate Alliance. Following the 2019 pledge, adjusted goals to reduce the world's methane emissions by 30% from 2020 levels by 2030 adopted by the Biden Administration were adopted by New Mexico. In addition, the legislature signed a clean energy bill, the Energy Transition Act (ETA), into law that requires a phased approach to reach 100% zero carbon for in-state power generations by 2045 for investor-owned utilities and by 2050 for rural electric cooperatives. These policies demand communities to take action.

The energy transition provides opportunities for employment and innovation. Distributed energy systems are smaller, more flexible systems placed near the energy consumption point. This decreases transmission and distribution power losses. This type of energy system can prioritize renewable sources, is more responsive to community needs, and can provide energy independence for rural and tribal communities.

The state and Mid-Region are prime locations for developing distributed energy resources due to the large land area, low population density, concerns about wildfires, and abundance of renewable energy resources.

Microgrids, specifically, offer potential in the transmission and storage of renewable power. In 2018, a statewide consortium received a five-year 20 million dollar grant from the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR). The NSF grant enabled the creation of the New Mexico Sustainable, Modular, Adaptive, Resilient, and Transactive (SMART) Grid Center, which supports research, test cases, and installations on microgrids for clean energy distribution. Through this work, UNM and Siemens signed an agreement in 2020 to collaborate on microgrid systems and their role in the state's green and sustainable





energy network. This work on microgrid and smart grid technologies underscores the region’s need for, and access to green and renewable energy.

Another member of the EPSCoR team, the Microgrid Systems Laboratory (MSL), partnered with the Sustainable Native Communities Collaborative to create the Energy Sovereignty Institute (ESI). ESI is a not-for-profit social initiative designed to promote the benefits of decentralized energy systems and technologies for Native American communities and to advance their availability and use.

The entirety of the Mid-Region is poised to take advantage of new and innovative energy transmission and distribution technologies that are at the forefront of the clean energy economy. The fact that smart grid and microgrid initiatives are already taking place is encouraging. The clean energy industry is also part of the core diversification strategies and should be a focus of this plan.

RESOURCE: ACCELERATING AN EQUITABLE CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION IN NEW MEXICO STUDY

This study details the states energy system today, evaluates major opportunities for the energy sector, and discusses the implications of energy transition pathways for jobs, salaries, communities, and workforce development. For more information, visit: <https://ceep.mit.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/NM-Case-Study-Draftv20211129.pdf>

GOAL E.1 Study the viability of microgrids and implement strategies for greater energy independence.

Strategy E.1–1 Work with the New Mexico Sustainable, Modular, Adaptive, Resilient, and Transactive (SMART) Grid Center and study the feasibility of a microgrid in the Mid-Region Community Clusters.

Project: *Conduct feasibility studies with interested clusters to determine the feasibility of a microgrid.*

Partner(s): *NM SMART Grid Center, UNM, and Siemens*
Funding: *NM SMART Grid Center*

Strategy E.1–2 Develop policies and regulations that facilitate the development of microgrids.

Project: *Conduct research on national best practices and draft regulations and policies for adoption.*

Partner(s): *UNM, Sandia National Laboratory (SNL), Santa Fe Community College, Native American and Community Governing Bodies, and EMNRD*
Funding: *DOE and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) - Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership Project (ETIPP)*

Strategy E.1–3 Lobby the legislature to enact microgrid-specific legislation.



RESILIENCE ROADMAP

Project: *Develop and enact microgrid-specific legislation to provide greater certainty to developers, utilities and state regulators.*

Partner(s): *Native American and Community Governing Bodies, and EMNRD*

Funding: *EMNRD -Electric Grid Modernization Grant Program*

Strategy E.1–4 Transition energy delivery towards a more localized energy delivery system.

Project: *Develop microgrids, especially in rural Cluster Communities.*

Partner(s): *UNM, SNL, Santa Fe Community College, Native American and Community Governing Bodies, and EMNRD*

Funding: *FEMA - Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)*



RESOURCE: EMNRD ELECTRIC GRID MODERNIZATION PROGRAM

The EMNRD website on Electric Grid Modernization Program includes information on the grid modernization roadmap and other tools and resources. For more information, visit: <https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/ecmd/grid-modernization/>

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CLUSTER SPECIFIC GOALS

The following section provides an economic snap shot for each cluster. This is followed by priorities, goals, strategies, and projects for five of the fourteen Priority Areas specific to each cluster.

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER SNAPSHOT

The Native American Communities Cluster includes several pueblos and other Native American communities in the Mid-Region. These include the Pueblo of Jemez, Pueblo of Zia, Santo Domingo Tribe, Pueblo of Santa Ana, Pueblo of San Felipe, Pueblo of Sandia, Pueblo of Isleta, Pueblo de Cochiti, Pueblo of Laguna, and portions of the To’Hajiilee Navajo Nation and Jicarilla Apache Nation.

Note: This cluster includes the town of Dulce in Rio Arriba County, NM. Though not part of the Mid-Region Dulce was chosen because it is the largest community and tribal headquarters for the Jicarilla Apache Reservation – a portion of which does fall within the Mid-Region.

The Native American communities are located in Sandoval County, Bernalillo County, and Valencia County. Five of the Pueblos straddle or are adjacent to the Rio Grande, while Pueblo of Zia and Pueblo of Jemez are situated along the Jemez River, along US-550 and NM-4, respectively. The cluster’s largest pueblo is the Pueblo of Laguna with 3,855 people, followed by Pueblo of Isleta, with roughly 2,800 (ACS 2020 5-year estimate).

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES ECONOMIC PROFILE

The median age in the cluster is slightly younger when compared to the country or the state, as illustrated in [“Figure 10. Native American Communities Cluster Median/Working Age Summary.”](#) This difference can be attributed to a higher-than-average percentage of persons in the under 18 age bracket. A younger population offers opportunities for developing the future workforce; however, job training and successful placement is still required in order to grow a successful future workforce.

FIGURE 10. NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER MEDIAN/WORKING AGE SUMMARY

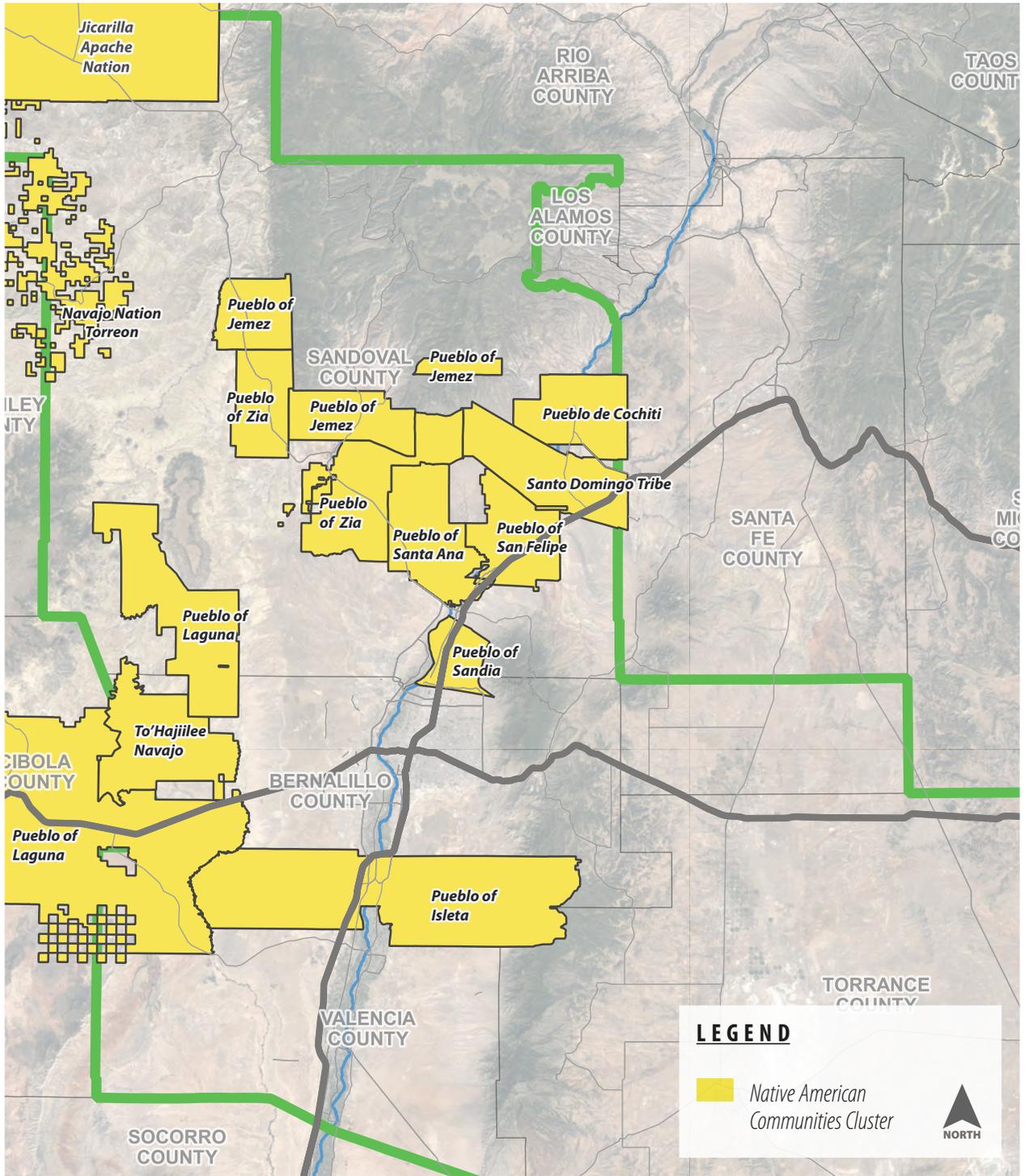
	Median Age	Under 18	18-64	Over 65
Native American	34.7	27.4%	58.8%	13.5%
New Mexico	38.1	23.1%	60.0%	17.4%
United States	38.2	22.4%	62.0%	16.0%

Source: ACS 2020 5-year estimate

The cluster has 1.5 times more people per household than the state and country. The high number of persons per household indicates that overcrowding may be an issue, which was supported during stakeholder discussions. Specifically, stakeholders noted that the overcrowded housing conditions created issues during COVID when individuals needed to isolate.

Home prices in the Native American Communities Cluster are less when compared with home values in the state or the country, as identified in [“Figure 11. Native American Communities Cluster Housing.”](#)

FIGURE 16.
MID-REGION - NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER AREAS



RESILIENCY ROADMAP

A large portion of the homes in this cluster were constructed before 1990 when compared with homes in the state and country. The older housing stock may indicate that repairs and rehabilitation are required to keep housing livable, and the average home value supports this impression. The need for housing repairs and rehabilitation was also confirmed during stakeholder discussions.

FIGURE 11. NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER HOUSING

	2021 Occupied Housing Units	2021 Median Home Value	Persons per HH (Average)	Homes built before 1990
Native American	81.4%	\$191,996	3.8	37.8%
New Mexico	84.0%	\$197,184	2.6	12.1%
United States	88.0%	\$264,021	2.6	10.0%

Source: Esri 2021, ACS 2020 5-year estimate

The per capita income is also drastically lower than the state and country. This can be attributed to high unemployment rates among all age groups of working age adults and low labor force participation rates especially outside the 25 to 54 age group. This suggests that workforce training and other mechanisms to increase workforce participation are needed to reduce the number of unemployed individuals and those not participating in the labor force.

The poverty rate in the Native American Communities Cluster is 28.3%, significantly higher than the rate for the state, and more than double the rate for the country. The creation of economic opportunities is necessary for this cluster to alleviate issues related to poverty.

FIGURE 12. NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER INCOME SUMMARY

	2021 Average Household Income	2021 Average Disposable Income	2021 Per Capita Income	Poverty Rate
Native American	\$63,846	\$51,524	\$18,474	28.3%
New Mexico	\$71,952	\$56,951	\$27,978	18.6%
United States	\$92,435	\$69,862	\$35,384	12.8%

Source: Esri 2021, ACS 2020 5-year estimate

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

The pueblos, Jicarilla Apache Reservation, and chapters of the Navajo Nation included in this cluster are independent sovereign governments, nations, or federally recognized tribes. This offers many unique challenges and opportunities for economic and community development. Some communities have strong gaming and hospitality operations, while others concentrate more on cultural and arts-based tourism.

This cluster had a 13.5% unemployment rate in 2021 with a 49.5% working-age labor force participation rate as illustrated in [“Figure 13. Native American Communities Cluster Labor Force Characteristics.”](#) The unemployment rate is significantly higher when compared with the state and over double that of the country. Labor force participation is low in all age groups.

FIGURE 13. NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

Age Group	Unemployment Rate			Labor Force Participation Rate		
	Native American	New Mexico	United States	Native American	New Mexico	United States
>16	13.5%	7.4%	6.2%	49.5%	55.4%	62.3%
16-24	19.6%	9.5%	11%	43.5%	52.1%	56.7%
25-54	14.5%	7.5%	5.7%	66.4%	73.7%	81.6%
55-64	6.5%	6.1%	5.1%	42.7%	56.3%	65.5%
65+	4.7%	5.9%	4.5%	14.1%	17.7%	20.2%

Source: Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026

The economic dependency ratio in the Native American Communities Cluster is nearly double that of the country and is significantly higher than the State of New Mexico, as illustrated in [“Figure 14. Native American Communities Cluster Economic Dependency Ratio.”](#) This means that individuals participating in the labor force are supporting a higher percentage of dependents than their counterparts in the state and the country. Because of the demographic makeup of this cluster, it may be extremely difficult to reduce the dependency ratio in the near term. Concentrating strategic efforts on diversifying and strengthening tribal enterprises so that the social support network can be maintained and expanded is important. Private business ownership and helping people enter the workforce are strategic priorities worth pursuing in light of information from the economic dependency ratio.

FIGURE 14. NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY RATIO

	Economic Dependency Ratio
Native American	211.5
New Mexico	142.1
United States	110.2

Source: Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026

[“Figure 15. Core Industries in the Native American Communities Cluster”](#) identifies the industries that represent the most sizable portion of economic activity in the cluster.

FIGURE 15. CORE INDUSTRIES IN THE NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER

Core Industry	Percentage of Employees	LQ	# of Businesses
Government/Public Administration	20.10%	4.19	28
Healthcare Social Assistance	17.90%	1.19	25
Retail Trade	11.20%	1.15	10
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation	5.30%	3.31	4
Construction	8.40%	1.14	2
Mining/Quarrying/Oil & Gas	0.70%	1.4	0
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing	1.90%	1.46	0

Source: Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026

Economic diversification is an essential priority in resilience planning. By decreasing dependencies on a few industries that are economic drivers, the region becomes more resilient to downturns or other shocks to the system. The diversification opportunities for this cluster include:

- Tourism – non-gaming (eco, agro, cultural)
- Outdoor recreation
- Sovereignty initiatives (healthcare/dental clinics, etc.)
- Film & Media

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES GAP ANALYSIS

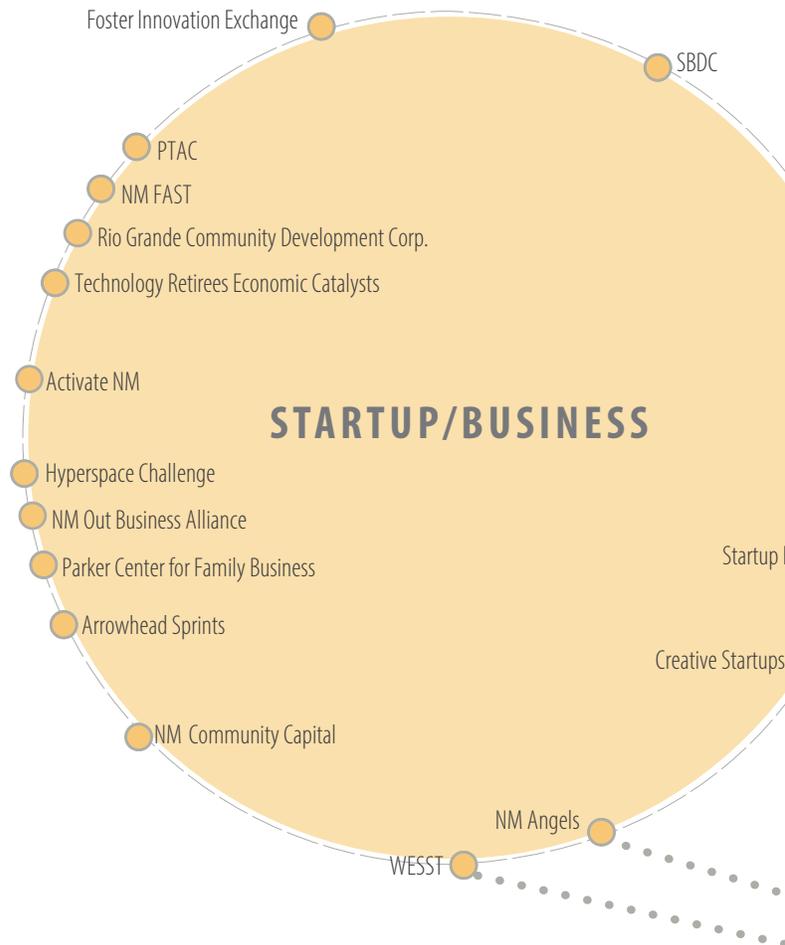
The general lack of access to capital for new and expanding businesses paired with sparse resources to assist aspiring business owners is exacerbated by historical trauma, patterns of underfunded infrastructure and other resources, and disenfranchisement. Recent legislation passed by the New Mexico Legislature created a Sustainable Economy Advisory Committee (SEAC) tasked with outreach to historically underrepresented groups like Native American tribes to gain input and insight into implementing the state’s economic development strategic plan. The state has created resources like the SEAC and the New Mexico Economic Development Department tribal liaisons to gain more traction for economic development on Native American reservations and pueblos in the state. How those programs will help increase economic development efforts and overall economic activity in this cluster remains to be seen.

The cluster’s proximity to Albuquerque is beneficial because resources and assistance can move more easily between the two clusters.

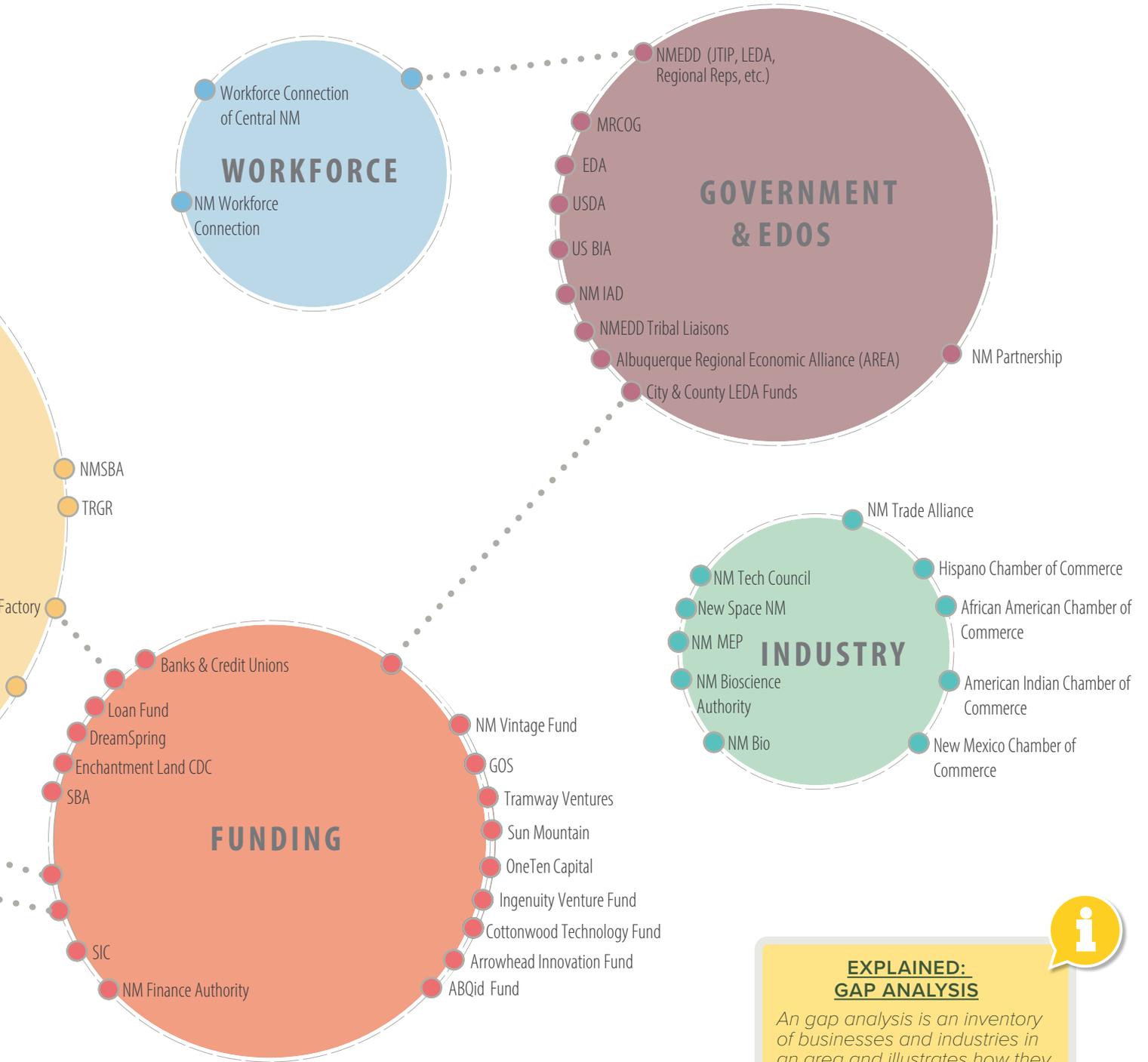
Very little capital is available from within the cluster, and most funding opportunities for aspiring business owners come from outside the cluster – banks, risk capital, grants, etc. Developing internal funding sources for startup costs or expansion will help fill this gap and provide more opportunities for the cluster as a whole. There is a delicate balance between developing and supporting tribal enterprises and supporting the launch and expansion of private businesses owned by tribal members. There is also an opportunity to expand economic opportunities through capitalizing on tribal sovereignty. The recently opened Tesla repair and sales center at Nambé Pueblo is an example of such an approach.

The Tesla sales, service, and delivery center was the first agreement between the company and a

FIGURE 17. NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER GAP ANALYSIS



sovereign Native entity. The agreement bypassed the state law that prohibits auto manufacturers from selling directly to customers, benefiting from Nambé Pueblo’s status as a sovereign nation. This is an example of how communities in this cluster can utilize their sovereignty to create economic employment and business opportunities.



**EXPLAINED:
GAP ANALYSIS**

An gap analysis is an inventory of businesses and industries in an area and illustrates how they are interconnected and rely on each other.

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES SWOT ANALYSIS

It is important to understand the unique strengths, opportunities, and weaknesses for each cluster to identify suitable strategies for greater resilience.

The Native American Communities Cluster is rich in outdoor recreation and cultural tourism opportunities. These opportunities can work hand in hand with the gaming industry, by providing outdoor or cultural tourism for visitors to the casino to extend or enrich their stay. Renewable and clean energy manufacturing is another opportunity to generate revenue, and potentially, energy independence.

FIGURE 18. **NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER SWOT**

STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
<p><i>Cultural diversity and rich history.</i></p> <p><i>Younger overall population - 31% of the cluster population are under the age of 18 (NM is 23%).</i></p> <p><i>Access to the outdoors.</i></p> <p><i>Natural beauty/scenery.</i></p> <p><i>Rich in art and cultural heritage.</i></p> <p><i>Diversity of local businesses.</i></p> <p><i>Rich heritage of traditional dryland agriculture.</i></p> <p><i>Sovereignty.</i></p>	<p><i>Economic diversification, industries reliance on tourism related businesses and jobs.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of operational capacity.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of regional coordination.</i></p> <p><i>High unemployment and lack of access to job opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>High rates of mental health illness and poor access to healthcare.</i></p> <p><i>Aging infrastructure.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of mobility and lack of connectivity to job opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of (reliable) broadband.</i></p> <p><i>Change in work dynamic through shift from in-person to remote work.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of internet literacy.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of affordable, or adequate housing units.</i></p> <p><i>Reliance on gaming.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of private member owned businesses.</i></p>
OPPORTUNITY	THREAT
<p><i>Capabilities to create online retail and host online events to increase the reach of local businesses and access to new markets.</i></p> <p><i>Potential for renewable energy related businesses and job opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Energy independence through energy coops.</i></p> <p><i>Eco, agro, and cultural tourism related businesses and job opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Benefiting from sovereignty initiatives in healthcare/dental clinics, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Potential for film & media related job opportunities.</i></p>	<p><i>Drought/access to water.</i></p> <p><i>Loss of cultural knowledge due to high mortality rates from COVID.</i></p> <p><i>Loss of biodiversity through invasive species.</i></p> <p><i>Increasing extreme heat events.</i></p> <p><i>Wildfires and associated flooding.</i></p> <p><i>Poverty/low incomes partially related to access to job centers and remoteness of communities.</i></p>

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES KEY FINDINGS:

- 1. The population in this cluster is, on average, younger, providing opportunities to grow a skilled workforce in the future.*
- 2. The housing stock is, on average, older and requires repair and rehabilitation. Additional affordable housing units were identified as a need.*
- 3. The high unemployment rates and low rates of labor force participation, especially outside the 25 to 54 age group, create the need for workforce training and other mechanisms to increase workforce participation.*
- 4. The high poverty rates create the need for employment and business opportunities and workforce training.*
- 5. The status of the Native Communities Cluster as sovereign governments, nations, or federally recognized tribes offer unique challenges and opportunities for economic and community development.*
- 6. The high economic dependency ratio suggests the need to diversify, grow, and strengthen tribal enterprises.*
- 7. Eco, agro, and cultural tourism, outdoor recreation, renewable and clean energy manufacturing, energy independence, sovereignty initiatives, and film and media are key industries to diversify the cluster's economy.*
- 8. The lack of access to capital for new business formation and expansion create the need for the development of internal funding sources.*

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER PRIORITY AREAS

The following Priority Areas for the Native American Communities Cluster were selected based on the analysis of existing economic conditions, the hazards assessment, and extensive stakeholder engagement. Region-wide Priority Areas are identified in the [“Regional Goals” on page 33.](#)

For the Native American Communities Cluster, the list below details the top five cluster-specific Priority Areas. The following section identifies goals, strategies, and projects to guide the cluster to address each Priority Area. The Priority Areas are based on [“Figure 9. Priority Areas” on page 31.](#)

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER PRIORITY AREAS

-  *Economic Diversification*
-  *Lack of Workforce/Unemployment*
-  *Poverty/Access to Job Opportunities*
-  *Lack of Operational Capacity*
-  *Lack of/or Unreliable Broadband*
-  *Affordable/Appropriate Housing (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*
-  *Drought/Access to Water (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*
-  *Wildfires/Flooding (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*
-  *Energy Independence (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES CLUSTER

GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND PROJECTS

The following goals, strategies, and associated projects will support the cluster in achieving greater resilience. While many threats and challenges can disrupt and weaken the economy, the cluster specific Priority Areas are identified as the most impactful in meeting some of the community's most pressing needs.

PRIORITY A. ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION



SOURCE:

- *Industry Outlook: high reliance on government/public administration for economic activity*
- *SWOT:*
 - > *Strength – sovereignty; cultural diversity & rich history; access to outdoors*
 - > *Weakness – lack of economic diversification; reliance on gaming and tourism; lack of private member-owned businesses*
 - > *Opportunity – tourism and film/media opportunities; online business; sovereignty initiatives like healthcare, dental clinics, etc.*
- *Ecosystem/Gap Analysis: low availability of cluster specific programming, funding, and technical assistance for businesses and entrepreneurs*
- *COVID Impact: broadband expansion to increase online literacy, economic diversification, and job creation.*

GOAL A.1 Enhance economic activity and opportunity by capitalizing on sovereign advantages.

Strategy A.1–1 Identify possible sovereign advantages and business cases.

Project: *Create a Sovereignty Institute and work with Native American governments and enterprises on new business opportunities related to their sovereign advantages and assist in building business cases & feasibility studies.*

Partner(s): *Native American Community Governing Bodies, NMEDD, Sustainable Economy Task Force, and NM Indian Affairs Department*

Project: *Assist in designing a recruitment initiative aimed specifically at businesses/firms that align with the identified sovereign advantages.*

EXPLAINED: **BUSINESS CASE**

Building a business case translates a broad opportunity into a more concrete 'business case' like a casino, a retail store, a health clinic, or the Tesla sales outlet, as in the recent example of the new Tesla sales outlet on Nambé Pueblo land.



RESILIENCE ROADMAP

Partner(s): *New Mexico Partnership, Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance (AREA), and Sandoval Economic Alliance (SEA)*

Strategy A.1–2 Develop a standard process for each community to vet business opportunities for Native American enterprises.

Project: *Establish a committee utilizing the standard process to vet business opportunities.*

Partner(s): *AREA, New Mexico Indian Affairs Department (IAD), NMEDD, and NM IDEA*

Funding: *Native American Business Development Institute (NABDI) Grant*

PRIORITY B. LACK OF WORKFORCE/ UNEMPLOYMENT



SOURCE:

- *Industry Outlook: 13.5% unemployment rate in 2021 with a 49.5% working-age labor force participation rate.*
- *Industry Outlook: EDR is nearly double that of the country as whole and is significantly higher than the State of New Mexico.*
- *SWOT:*
 - > *Strength – younger population*
 - > *Weakness – high unemployment and lack of access to job opportunities.*

GOAL B.1 *Help job seekers and workers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market.*

Strategy B.1–1 Create workforce development programs for job seekers, and teach skills required to be successful in the labor market.

Project: *Work with New Mexico Community Capital (NMCC), to develop targeted workforce development training programs and offer classes to Native American communities.*

Partner(s): *New Mexico Community Capital (NMCC), Indian Pueblo Cultural Center (IPCC), American Indian Chamber of Commerce, and Workforce Connections*

Funding: *NMCC, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education - Division of Workforce Development.*

RESOURCE: TRIBAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The 'Tribal Workforce Development: A Decision-Framing Toolkit' was created by the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) for tribal governments, organizations, and higher education institutions to strengthen their workforce development efforts. For more information, visit: https://www.ncai.org/resources/ncai_publications

Strategy B.1–2 Enable more people to enter the workforce by creating more childcare, eldercare, and other specialty care services and programs.

Project: Create an accelerator program aimed at helping child and eldercare businesses launch in the cluster.

Partner(s): NMEDD, NM MainStreet, Los Lunas Economic Development, and Belen Chamber of Commerce

Funding: LEADS, and NM MainStreet rural and frontier communities program

PRIORITY C. POVERTY/ACCESS TO JOB OPPORTUNITIES



SOURCE:

- Economic Profile: high poverty rate; low per capita income
- Industry Outlook: EDR is nearly double that of the country and is significantly higher than the State of New Mexico; high reliance on government/public administration for economic activity
- Ecosystem/Gap Analysis: no cluster specific funding opportunities outside of government grants
- SWOT:
 - > Weakness – lack of economic diversification; reliance on gaming; lack of private member-owned businesses; high unemployment and lack of access to job opportunities; lack of affordable housing
 - > Threat – poverty partially related to access to job centers and remoteness.

GOAL C.1 Increase the number of privately owned Native American businesses.

Strategy C.1–1 Provide skills-building and technical assistance to aspiring business owners and current small business owners.

Project: Create a Business Adviser Network with regional Small Business Development Center (SBDC) offices and with the Albuquerque and Santa Fe SCORE chapters to provide mentoring and business assistance to Native American businesses.

Partner(s): Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) Santa Fe, and SCORE Albuquerque

Funding: SCORE Santa Fe, SCORE Albuquerque, State Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and ABQ SBDC

RESOURCE: THE COUNSELORS TO AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS

The SCORE Association “Counselors to America’s Small Business” is a nonprofit association comprised of 13,000+ volunteer business counselors throughout the U.S. and its territories. SCORE members are trained to serve as counselors, advisors, and mentors to aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners. These services are offered at no fee, as a community service. SCORE offers several resources and services to small businesses. For more information, visit: <https://www.score.org/>



Strategy C.1–2 Launch accelerator programs in the Native American Communities Cluster targeting specific industries (outdoor recreation, arts, etc.).

Project: *Work with Arrowhead Center, NM MainStreet Frontier & Native American Communities Initiative, Creative Startups to design and launch a boot-camp program.*

Partner(s): *Arrowhead Center, NM MainStreet Frontier & Native American Communities Initiative, and Creative Startups*

Funding: *NM MainStreet application for technical assistance, Indian Business Incubators Program (IBIP), NM LEADS Grant, PNM, NM Gas, and DOI Indian Affairs - Native American Business Development Institute (NABDI) Grant*

PRIORITY D. LACK OF OPERATIONAL CAPACITY



SOURCE:

- SWOT:
 - > Weakness – lack of operational capacity; lack of regional coordination
- Ecosystem/Gap Analysis: *Lack of capacity of community/tribal specific economic development and planning organizations/departments and lack of resources for business.*

GOAL D.1 Increase Native American communities' operational capacities.

Strategy D.1–1 Apply for funding to draft a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

Project: *Draft a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.*

Partner(s): *Native American Community Governing Bodies and Economic Development Administration (EDA)*

Funding: *EDA*

PRIORITY E. LACK OF/ UNRELIABLE BROADBAND



SOURCE:

- SWOT:
 - > Weakness – lack of mobility and connectivity to job opportunities; lack of reliable broadband; shift to remote work; lack of internet literacy.

GOAL E.1 Provide reliable broadband to the Native American Communities Cluster.

Strategy E.1–1 Commission a high-level design and cost estimate for broadband deployment, evaluate funding options, and develop strategic approaches to obtain needed funding.

Project: Apply for New Mexico Broadband Technical Assistance Program (NM TAP) funding.

Partner(s): Native American Community Governing Bodies
Funding: New Mexico Broadband Technical Assistance Program (NM TAP), Connect NM has \$100 million to expand broadband access, and Groundworks Technical Assistance & Grant Writing Fund

Strategy E.1–2 Design and install broadband in the Native American Communities Cluster.

Project: Apply for State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program through the Department of Commerce.

Partner(s): Native American Community Governing Bodies
Funding: State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program

GOAL E.2 Link local businesses with training resources and financial support to develop internet literacy and an online presence.

Strategy E.2–1 Support businesses with developing an online presence and train local businesses to market their services and maintain their online platform.

Project: Connect local businesses with the New Mexico Community Capital to develop skills for developing an online platform and marketing.

Partner(s): Native American Community Governing Bodies and Local Businesses
Funding: New Mexico Community Capital

RESOURCE: DIGITAL EQUITY ACT

In 2022, as part of the Digital Equity Programs, \$2.75 billion was dedicated to establish three grants that promote digital inclusion and equity to ensure that all individuals and communities have the skills, technology, and capacity needed to reap the full benefits of our digital economy. The goal of these programs is to promote the meaningful adoption and use of broadband services across populations targeted in the act, including low-income households, aging populations, incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with disabilities, individuals with a language barrier, racial and ethnic minorities, and rural inhabitants. To learn more, visit: <https://www.digitalequityact.org/>

RESOURCE: NEW MEXICO COMMUNITY CAPITAL

New Mexico Community Capital (NMCC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Albuquerque, with a mission to change the status quo in Native-owned businesses through tailored mentorship, financial literacy, digital skills programs, and specialized technical assistance and services for tribes and tribal enterprises. To learn more, visit: <https://nmccap.org/>



SANDOVAL CLUSTER

SANDOVAL CLUSTER SNAPSHOT

The Sandoval Cluster includes fourteen communities in Sandoval County. These include San Ysidro, Jemez Springs, Cuba, Algodones, Cochiti, La Jara, Peña Blanca, Ponderosa, Regina, Torreon, Cañon, Cochiti Lake, San Luis, and Bernalillo. Rio Rancho, Corrales, and Placitas are included in the ABQ Metro Cluster to group communities with similar characteristics and resiliency challenges.

The overall population for the Sandoval Cluster is 15,106 (ACS 2020 5-year estimate). Between 2010 and 2019, the population for the cluster decreased by 6.13%, while the County itself increased by 8.47%.

Most of the communities in this cluster are located along US-550 or NM-4, in the valleys created by mountains in the Cibola National Forest in the southwest of the County and the Santa Fe National Forest in the northeast. Of the communities in the cluster, the Town of Bernalillo is the largest, with roughly 10,077 people (ACS 2020 5-year estimate).

SANDOVAL COMMUNITIES ECONOMIC PROFILE

The Sandoval Cluster skews slightly older relative to the state and the country, as identified in [“Figure 19. Sandoval Cluster Age Distribution.”](#) The cluster has more individuals in the over 65 age bracket and fewer in the under 18 age brackets. During the stakeholder engagement, this demographic shift was highlighted as a concern. Communities are challenged by the migration of young people out of the rural communities into areas that offer more opportunities, leaving older generations behind. This suggests the need to create opportunities to encourage young adults to remain in their rural communities.

FIGURE 19. SANDOVAL CLUSTER AGE DISTRIBUTION

	Median Age	Under 18	18-64	over 65
Sandoval Cluster	43.1	18.9%	60.2%	20.8%
New Mexico	38.1	23.1%	59.5%	17.4%
United States	38.2	22.4%	62.0%	16.0%

Source: ACS 2020 5-year estimate

Home prices in the Sandoval Cluster are higher than those in the state but lower when compared with the country, as identified in [“Figure 20. Sandoval Cluster Housing.”](#) The number of persons per household is similar to the state and the nation. The number of homes built before 1990 is much higher than in the state or country. This suggests a need for home repairs and rehabilitation. During the stakeholder engagement, the need for more housing and in particular affordable housing options was mentioned as a concern.

FIGURE 20. SANDOVAL CLUSTER HOUSING

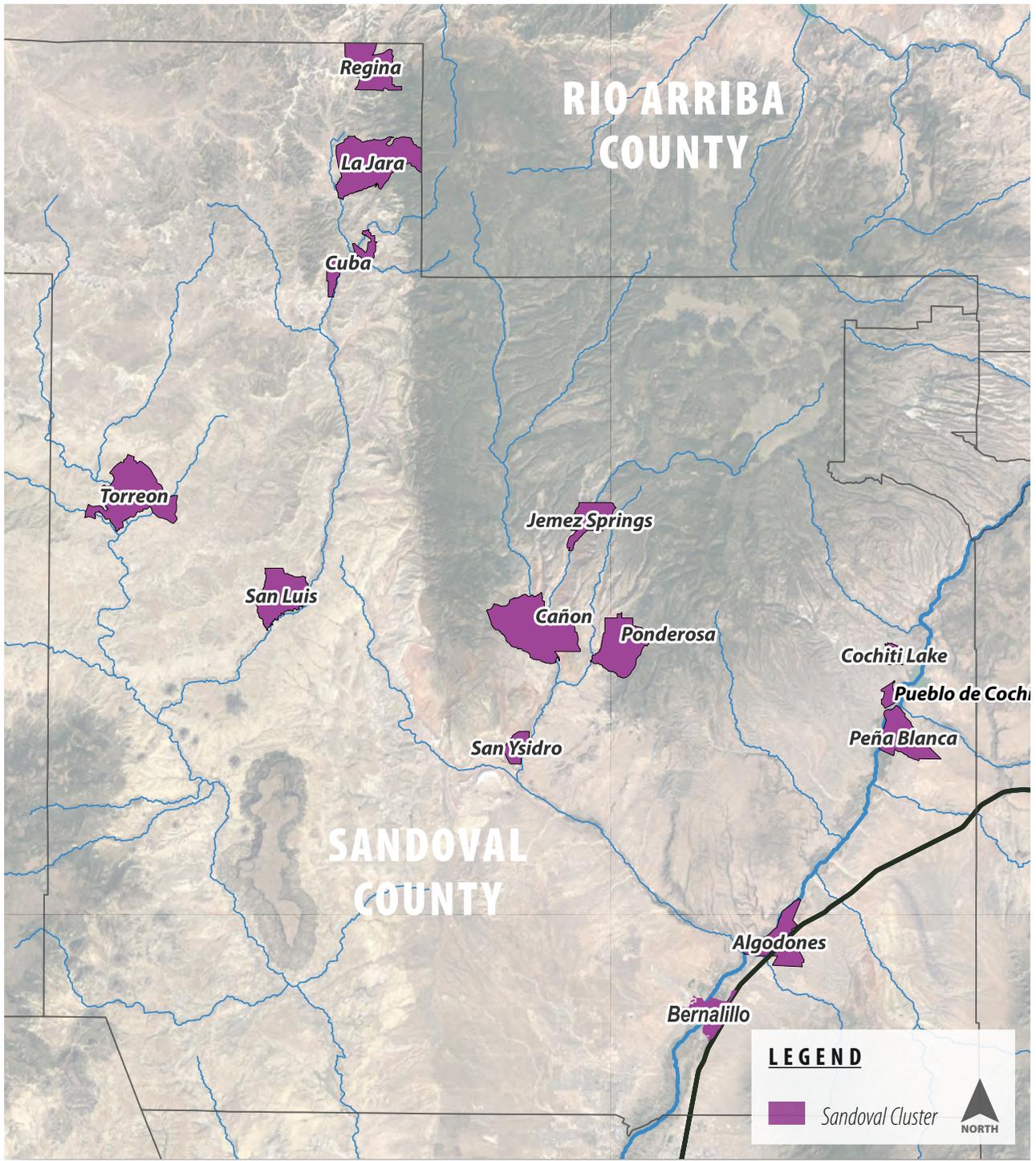
	Occupied Housing Units	2021 Median Home Value	Persons per HH Average	Homes built before 1990
Sandoval Cluster	76.9%	\$231,590	2.7	32.2%
New Mexico	84.0%	\$197,184	2.6	12.1%
United States	88.0%	\$264,021	2.6	10.0%

Source: Esri 2021, ACS 2020 5-year estimate

Average household income, average disposable income, and per capita income are slightly higher than incomes in the state but lower than those in the country.

The poverty rate is almost double that in the state and almost triple the poverty rate in the nation. This is in part due to extreme poverty rates in selected communities, including San Ysidro (39.3%), Cuba (48.4%), and Regina (76.8%). This data suggests a dire need for economic opportunities in these communities to help lift them out of poverty.

FIGURE 25.
MID-REGION - SANDOVAL CLUSTER AREAS



RESILIENCY ROADMAP

FIGURE 21. SANDOVAL CLUSTER INCOME SUMMARY

	Average Household Income	2021 Average Disposable Income	2021 Per Capita Income	Poverty Rate
Sandoval Cluster	\$74,253	\$58,317	\$28,132	32.7%
New Mexico	\$71,952	\$56,951	\$27,978	18.6%
United States	\$92,435	\$69,862	\$35,384	12.8%

Source: Esri 2021, ACS 2020 5-year estimate

SANDOVAL CLUSTER INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

This cluster includes some of the most remarkable areas of natural beauty, culture, history, and outdoor recreation opportunities in the state. Bandelier National Monument, the Jemez National Recreation Area, and the Valles Caldera National Preserve are some of the areas that attract visitors and tourists from near and far.

This cluster had an 8.8% unemployment rate in 2021 with a 45.4% working-age labor force participation rate, as identified in [“Figure 22. Sandoval Labor Force Characteristics.”](#)

FIGURE 22. SANDOVAL LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

Age Group	Unemployment Rate			Labor Force Participation Rate		
	Sandoval Cluster	New Mexico	United States	Sandoval Cluster	New Mexico	United States
>16	8.8%	7.4%	6.2%	45.4%	55.4%	62.3%
16-24	32.1%	9.5%	11%	52.8%	52.1%	56.7%
25-54	6.1%	7.5%	5.7%	64.8%	73.7%	81.6%
55-64	4.0%	6.1%	5.1%	46.6%	56.3%	65.5%
65+	2.4%	5.9%	4.5%	10.7%	17.7%	20.2%

Source: Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.

The cluster’s economic dependency ratio (EDR) is 193.2, which is higher than the state’s EDR and higher than the nation’s average, as illustrated in [“Figure 23. Sandoval Cluster Economic Dependency Ratio.”](#)

This EDR coupled with the relatively low labor force participation rate indicates that the working population of the cluster may be burdened by those not in the labor force or other dependents. It also suggests that the economy cannot provide opportunities to all residents. Therefore, encouraging more individuals to join or reenter the workforce is a priority for economic growth. This is especially important for the younger individuals, where current numbers show an unemployment rate of 32.1% for the 16 to 24 age group. The creation, expansion, and attraction of companies to locate in the cluster should also be prioritized. This would create local employment opportunities for community members who currently commute to jobs outside the cluster.

Workers in this cluster are primarily employed in white-collar occupations, with 60.1% of residents holding those jobs. Within the white-collar occupations, Office/Administrative Support, Management, and Sales have the highest percentage of workers.

FIGURE 23. SANDOVAL CLUSTER ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY RATIO

	Economic Dependency Ratio
Sandoval Cluster	190.5
New Mexico	142.1
United States	110.2

Source: Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.

The core industries for this cluster are identified in [“Figure 24. Core Industries in the Sandoval Cluster.”](#) These are the industries with the highest percentage of employees, number of businesses, and the most specialized according to the location quotient. They represent the most sizable portion of economic activity in the cluster. Looking at location quotients for this area, Community/Social Services, Construction/Extraction, and Business/Financial are the most specialized industries in the cluster.

FIGURE 24. CORE INDUSTRIES IN THE SANDOVAL CLUSTER

Core Industry	Percentage of Employees	LQ	# of Businesses
Government/Public Administration	11.2%	2.33	54
Construction	14.2%	1.92	38
Healthcare/Social Assistance	14.9%	0.99	38
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation	2.2%	1.38	6
Utilities	1.2%	1.33	4

Source: Esri Business Analyst 2022.

When we look at the Sandoval County-level data for core industries, the number of Arts/Entertainment/Recreation businesses jumps to 90. Much of this increase can be attributed to the Rio Rancho area, but it highlights this industry’s importance to the county and the cluster.

The New Mexico State Economic Development Strategic Plan identifies ten target industries for the state. Of those ten industries, the Sandoval Cluster is well positioned to grow and sustain four. These include:

- *Outdoor Recreation*
- *Film, Television, & Media*
- *Renewable Energy*
- *Sustainable & Value-Added Agriculture*

In addition to the target industries identified by the state, the Sandoval Cluster is also well positioned to take advantage of opportunities in the following industries:

- *Technology*
- *Natural Resource Management Technology*
- *Data Centers*

These target industries were identified by the Sandoval County Economic Development Action Strategy (2019) produced by Sandoval County and the Sandoval Economic Alliance.

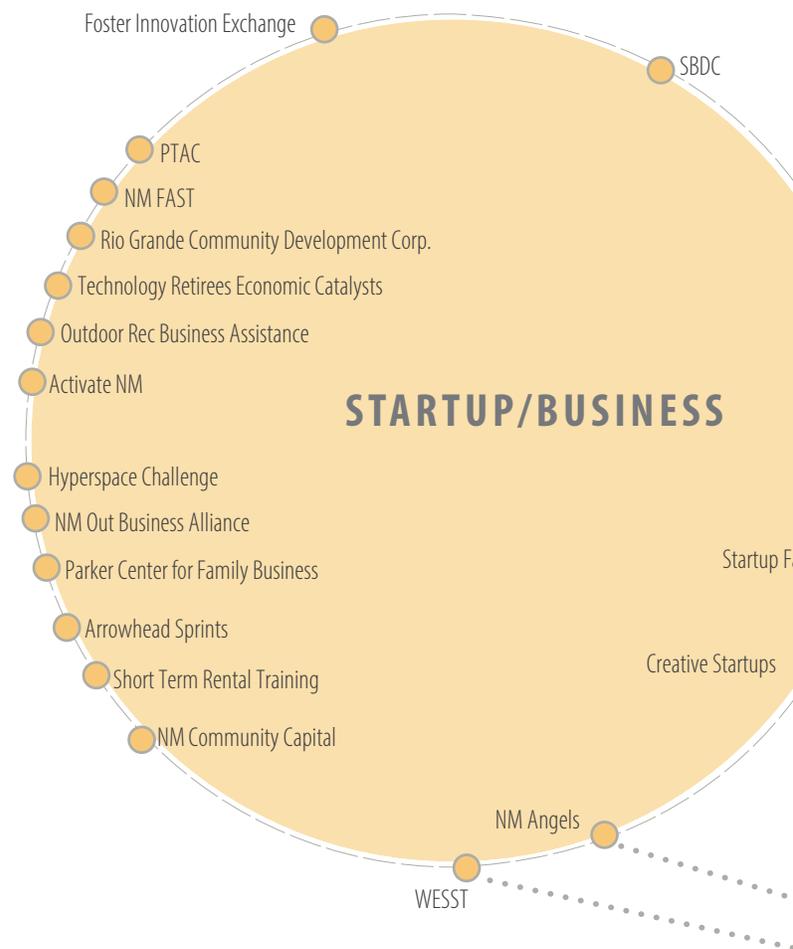
SANDOVAL CLUSTER GAP ANALYSIS

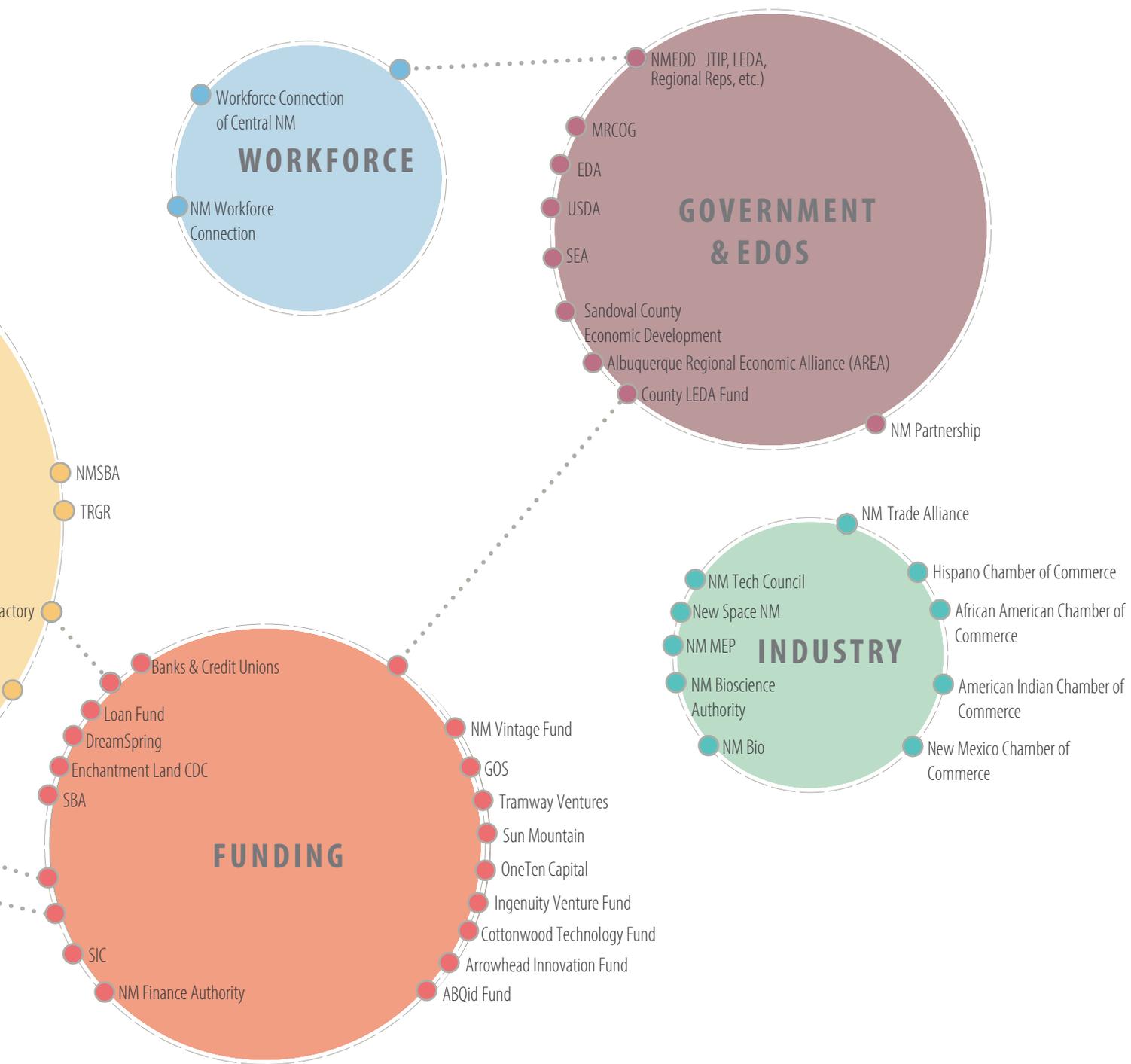
Businesses in this cluster are eligible to receive technical and funding assistance from the Regional Development Corporation (RDC), and communities and nonprofits can benefit from technical assistance from Los Alamos National Lab through the Community Technical Assistance (CTA) program. This cluster is also served by the Sandoval County Economic Development Department and the Sandoval Economic Alliance (SEA). SEA has a business retention and expansion program for the county and runs the county’s business recruitment efforts. While most of these efforts, especially business recruitment, are focused on the southern portion of the county around Rio Rancho, there are opportunities for the communities outside of this area to utilize their services. This cluster is also served by “Creative Startups,” a non-profit organization working to grow the outdoor recreation industry by offering pre-accelerator programs, workshops, training, and seminars to start ups as well as cataloging existing outdoor recreation businesses.

RESOURCE: REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The Regional Development Corporation (RDC) is a private non-profit 501(c) 3 organization dedicated to improving economic development in Northern New Mexico. The RDC provides private investment opportunities and technical assistance to facilitate job growth and diversify the economies of communities in the following seven counties: Los Alamos, Mora, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, San Miguel, Santa Fe, Taos, and the municipalities and Native American Pueblos therein. For more information, visit: <https://www.rdcnm.org/about>

FIGURE 26. SANDOVAL CLUSTER GAP ANALYSIS





SANDOVAL CLUSTER SWOT

SUMMARY

Each cluster has its unique strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Some of these are unique to each cluster; others are shared. Therefore, it is essential to understand the unique strengths, opportunities, and weaknesses to identify suitable strategies for greater resilience.

The Sandoval Cluster SWOT analysis was informed by input received through stakeholder engagement, the economic analysis of the cluster, and a natural and man-made hazard assessment for the region.

FIGURE 27. **SANDOVAL CLUSTER SWOT**

STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
<p><i>Diversity of cultures, historic sites and buildings.</i></p> <p><i>Access to the outdoors.</i></p> <p><i>Natural beauty and stunning scenery at the foot of the Jemez Mountains.</i></p> <p><i>Diversity and richness of local businesses.</i></p> <p><i>Traditional agriculture practices.</i></p> <p><i>Gateway to the Jemez (Highway 4).</i></p> <p><i>Ranching and farming.</i></p> <p><i>Outdoor recreation.</i></p>	<p><i>Lack of operational capacity.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of cluster-wide and regional coordination and collaboration.</i></p> <p><i>Unemployment/access to opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Limited access to healthcare.</i></p> <p><i>Aging/inadequate infrastructure, lack of community service facilities.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of mobility and access to transit, specifically to connect to jobs.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of reliable broadband.</i></p> <p><i>Poor access to resources/funding due in part to operational capacities.</i></p> <p><i>Aging population due in part to young community members moving away from rural areas.</i></p> <p><i>Insufficient community engagement.</i></p> <p><i>Local businesses have suffered during COVID because they did not have an online presence.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of affordable, or adequate housing units.</i></p>
OPPORTUNITY	THREAT
<p><i>New business opportunities and employment in film & media.</i></p> <p><i>Potential for renewable energy and related revenue, business, and job opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Growing and selling of cannabis.</i></p> <p><i>Potential for locating a regional/national distribution center.</i></p> <p><i>Job and revenue opportunities through sustainable & value-added agriculture.</i></p> <p><i>Potential for locating a data center.</i></p> <p><i>New business and employment opportunities' related to tourism.</i></p> <p><i>Opportunities through collaboration with neighboring communities to obtain funding for infrastructure projects.</i></p>	<p><i>Drought/access to water.</i></p> <p><i>Erosion associated with overgrazing and range management practices.</i></p> <p><i>Invasive species threatening range health and biodiversity.</i></p> <p><i>Water quality issues.</i></p> <p><i>Wildfires/flooding and the associated threats, damage and loss of property, loss of habitat, and loss of revenue for related industries including outdoor recreation.</i></p> <p><i>Poverty and poor access to job and business opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Rising transportation costs limiting travel and visitors to the area.</i></p>

SANDOVAL CLUSTER KEY FINDINGS:

- 1. The cluster is experiencing outmigration of younger individuals. This suggests the need to focus on the creation of opportunities targeting younger individuals including, economic, housing, schools, entertainment, and increased access to goods and services.*
- 2. The housing stock is, on average, older and requires repair and rehabilitation. Stakeholders also identified the need for an increase in affordable housing units.*
- 3. The extreme rate of poverty suggests that the creation of economic opportunities is necessary for this cluster to be lifted out of poverty.*
- 4. The high economic dependency ratio and low labor force participation rate suggest that there are not enough economic opportunities.*
- 5. The cluster includes some of the most remarkable areas of natural beauty, culture, history, and outdoor recreation opportunities in the region.*
- 6. The core industries for this cluster are Construction, Utilities, Arts/Entertainment/Recreation, Healthcare/Social Assistance, and Government/Public Administration.*
- 7. Target industries include Outdoor Recreation, Film & Media, Renewable Energy, Sustainable & Value-Added Agriculture, Technology, Natural Resource Management Technology, and Data Centers.*
- 8. Owing to its location close to Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Los Alamos, this cluster has access to many resources that are not available in other clusters.*
- 9. Businesses in this cluster are eligible to receive technical and funding assistance from the Regional Development Corporation (RDC), and communities and nonprofits can benefit from technical assistance from Los Alamos National Lab through the Community Technical Assistance (CTA) program.*

SANDOVAL CLUSTER PRIORITY AREAS

The following Priority Areas for the Sandoval Cluster were developed based on the analysis of existing economic conditions, the hazards assessment, and extensive stakeholder engagement. Region-wide Priority Areas are identified in the [“Regional Goals” on page 33](#).

For the Sandoval Cluster, the list below details the top five cluster specific Priority Areas. The following section identifies goals, strategies, and projects to guide the Sandoval Cluster in addressing each Priority Area. The Priority Areas are based on [“Figure 9. Priority Areas” on page 31](#).

SANDOVAL CLUSTER PRIORITY AREAS

-  *Lack of Economic Diversification*
-  *Lack of Regional Coordination*
-  *Lack of/Unreliable Broadband and associated Infrastructure*
-  *Aging/Insufficient Infrastructure*
-  *Invasive Species/Biodiversity*
-  *Lack of Affordable Housing (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*
-  *Drought/Access to Water (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*
-  *Wildfire/Flooding (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*
-  *Energy Independence (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*

SANDOVAL CLUSTER GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND PROJECTS

The following goals, strategies, and associated projects will support the cluster in achieving greater resilience. While many threats and challenges can disrupt and weaken the economy, the cluster specific Priority Areas are identified as the most impactful in meeting some of the community's most pressing needs.

PRIORITY A. ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION



SOURCE:

- *Economic Profile: high unemployment among young workers 16 to 24*
- *Gap Analysis: resources like SEA, RDC, and LANL community partnerships available in the cluster region to assist with industry and cluster development*
- *SWOT:*
 - > *Strength – natural beauty and stunning scenery; outdoor recreation; gateway to the Jemez*
 - > *Opportunity – film and media; potential for renewable energy; growing and selling cannabis; potential for a national or regional distribution center; potential for locating a data center; tourism*
 - > *Weakness – unemployment/access to opportunities; poor access to resources/funding; aging population/outmigration of young workers; local businesses suffered during pandemic because of no online presence*
 - > *Threat – Poverty and poor access to jobs and business opportunities; rising costs may limit visitors to the area.*

GOAL A.1 Businesses have the support and resources necessary to weather disasters (internal and external).

Strategy A.1-1 Create a micro-grant program for businesses who experience a sudden need for capital (equipment breakdown, façade improvement, technology upgrade, etc.).

Project: *Explore options for a small Gross Receipt Tax (GRT) increase, lodgers' tax increase, or other tax funding options to fund the grant programs.*

Partner(s): *Community Governing Bodies*

RESILIENCE ROADMAP

Project: Determine the legal framework for a grant program and consider the anti-donation clause and other county rules and regulations to create a grant program.

Partner(s): County Legal Team, Sandoval Economic Alliance (SEA), and RDC

Funding: Sandoval Economic Alliance (SEA) and Regional Development Corporation (RDC)

Project: Use existing CARES Act infrastructure to administer micro-grants (\$2,500 to \$5,000). CARES Act grants are directly available to small-businesses, administered by the counties, and provided through funding from the federal government.

Partner(s): Sandoval County Economic Development and SEA

Project: Develop process/criteria to administer grants and track economic impact of the grants.

Partner(s): Sandoval County Economic Development and SEA

Strategy A.1–2 Work with SEA and the RDC to develop a cluster specific succession planning program for businesses. Succession planning is an important step for business owners when planning to sell or leave their business in order to best position their business to be successful after they leave or sell.

Partner(s): SEA and RDC

Project: Identify resources around business valuation and planning for when a business owner plans to leave or sell their business.

Partner(s): SEA and RDC

Project: Expand capacity and capabilities of partner programs to deliver more targeted services around succession planning.

Partner(s): SEA and RDC

Funding: USDA Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG)



RESOURCE: SANDOVAL ECONOMIC ALLIANCE

Sandoval Economic Alliance (SEA) is a private, not-for-profit economic development corporation established to strengthen and diversify the economic base of Rio Rancho and Sandoval County, New Mexico. For more information, visit: <https://edd.newmexico.gov/business-directory/sandoval-economic-alliance/>



GOAL A.1 Capitalize on the outdoor recreation drivers of the Sandoval Cluster.

Strategy A.1-1 Develop an experiential accelerator program for outdoor recreation using the Valles Caldera as the focal point and offer select cohort members the opportunity to test their business concept in the real world at the park.

Project: Begin talks with the National Park Service about available locations for cohort members to work in as they are launching their business and testing the model.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, National Park Service, Sandoval County, and SEA

Project: Design curriculum for the accelerator program based on similar experiential accelerator models.

Partner(s): New Mexico MainStreet, Creative Startups, Sandoval Economic Alliance, and Sandoval County

Funding: NM MainStreet Frontier & Native American Communities Initiative and LEADS

Strategy A.1-2 Attract outdoor recreation businesses to expand or relocate to the cluster.

Project: Catalog available locations near outdoor recreation destinations in the cluster for small businesses and startups who want to open and operate a business.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Sandoval County, Sandoval Economic Alliance, National Park Service, and U.S. Forest Service

Project: Develop a marketing campaign that is aimed at outdoor recreation businesses in surrounding states: Texas, Utah, Arizona, Colorado and highlight existing business opportunities, available infrastructure and business spaces, and available business resources.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, NM Partnership, Sandoval Economic Alliance, and NM Outdoor Recreation Division

Funding: NM Outdoor Equity Fund, EDA - Planning and Local Technical Assistance Program, EDA - State Tourism Grants, and New Mexico Tourism Department - Cooperative Marketing Grant

EXAMPLE: LOS ALAMOS RETAIL ACCELERATOR

The Los Alamos Retail Accelerator is an example of an accelerator program. The Los Alamos Retail Accelerator was launched in 2021 with financial support from the New Mexico Economic Development Department LEADS Grant, LANL Community Partnerships Office, New Mexico MainStreet, and Los Alamos Commerce & Development Corporation. It resulted in four new retail storefronts in Los Alamos County: Little Studio on the Mesa, Samizdat Bookstore & Teahouse, Inspired Jewelers, and Weed. The Lovington Downtown Bites/Local Innovators Institute is another example for such a program.

PRIORITY B. LACK OF REGIONAL COORDINATION



SOURCE:

- SWOT:
 - > Weakness: lack of operational capacity; lack of cluster-wide and regional coordination and collaboration; insufficient community engagement.

GOAL B.1 Increase collaboration amongst Sandoval Cluster Communities and across cluster boundaries.

Strategy B.1–1 Organize a monthly virtual lunch or happy hour of administrators, mayors, planners and other appropriate stakeholders.

Project: Organize monthly virtual lunch. Utilize stakeholder list of this project as a starting point.

Partner(s): Communities Governing Bodies, APA NM, Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance (AREA), New Mexico Municipal League, and MRCOG

PRIORITY C. LACK OF/OR UNRELIABLE BROADBAND



SOURCE:

- SWOT:
 - > Weakness: aging/inadequate infrastructure; lack of reliable broadband.

GOAL C.1 Provide reliable broadband to all Cluster Communities.

Strategy C.1–1 Assess feasibility of installing improved broadband infrastructure.

Project: Apply for New Mexico Broadband Technical Assistance Program (NM TAP) funding through the New Mexico Department of Informational Technology (NM DoIT) for technical Assistance to prepare needs assessment, a high-level design and cost estimate for broadband deployment, evaluate funding options, and develop strategic

approaches to obtain needed funding. Grant writing support can be accessed through Groundworks New Mexico.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Adjacent Communities, and Groundworks New Mexico

Funding: New Mexico Broadband Technical Assistance Program (NM TAP), Connect NM, and Groundworks Technical Assistance & Grant Writing Fund

Strategy C.1–2 Apply for State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program through the Department of Commerce.

Project: Design and install broadband.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies and Adjacent Communities

Funding: Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAAE) and Department of Information Technology (DoIT)

GOAL C.1 Link local businesses with training resources and financial support to develop internet literacy and an online presence.

Strategy C.1–1 Train local businesses how to develop and maintain an online presence to market their goods and services.

Project: Create a survey to identify small businesses that need support with creating an online presence and marketing their services and connect them with the Small Business Development Center to Connect (NM SBDC).

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies and New Mexico SBDC

Funding: New Mexico SBDC



RESOURCE: DIGITAL EQUITY ACT

In 2022, as part of the Digital Equity Act programs, \$2.75 billion was dedicated to establish three grant programs that promote digital inclusion and equity to ensure that all individuals and communities have the skills, technology, and capacity needed to reap the full benefits of our digital economy. The goal of these programs is to promote the meaningful adoption and use of broadband services across the targeted populations in the Act, including low-income households, aging populations, incarcerated individuals, veterans, individuals with disabilities, individuals with a language barrier, racial and ethnic minorities, and rural inhabitants. To learn more, visit: <https://www.digitalequityact.org/>



RESOURCE: NEW MEXICO SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The New Mexico Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provide small business assistance with planning, marketing, financing, small business start-up, entrepreneur training, and other specialized areas to help grow and strengthen businesses in New Mexico. For more information, visit: www.nmsbdc.org

PRIORITY D. AGING INFRASTRUCTURE/ LACK OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES



SOURCE:

- SWOT:

- > Weakness – aging/inadequate infrastructure; lack of affordable or adequate housing units
- > Threat – drought/access to water; water quality issues

GOAL D.1 Secure drinking water resources and improve water quality.

Strategy D.1–1 Collaborate with neighboring communities (e.g., San Ysidro and Jemez Springs) to obtain funding, secure drinking water and improve water quality.

Project: Schedule a monthly meeting of adjacent communities (e.g. San Ysidro and Jemez Springs) to start the conversation on infrastructure projects collaboration.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies

Project: Build improved drinking water infrastructure and desalination plant.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Office of the Engineer, and Sandoval County Public Works Department

Funding: USDA - Rural Development Program, NMED - State Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund, NMFA - Public Project Revolving Loan Fund, and National Rural Water Association (NRWA) - Revolving Loan Fund

Strategy D.1–2 Support legislation to create a template that allows small scale water systems to join together and share staff and other resources.

Project: Work with Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) to develop water and wastewater policies.

Project: Regionalize small water systems.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC), and RCAP

GOAL D.2 Add missing community service facilities.

Strategy D.2–1 Rehab or develop missing community service facilities.

RESOURCE: RURAL COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PARTNERSHIP

RCAP is a national network of non-profit partners working to provide technical assistance, training, resources, and support to rural communities across every state, the U.S. territories, and tribal lands. For more information, visit: <https://www.rcap.org/community-resources/>

Project: Identify need for specific facilities and include priority projects in the community Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP).

Project: Collaborate with neighboring communities to identify community service facilities (e.g. San Ysidro Community/Senior Center) that could be shared and jointly apply for funding.

Partner(s): USDA, MRCOG, and Community Governing Bodies

Funding: USDA Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program in New Mexico, Rural Community Assistance Corporation - Community Facility Loans, HUD - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and Rural Housing Service and USDA - Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Grant

PRIORITY E. INVASIVE SPECIES/ BIODIVERSITY



SOURCE:

- SWOT:
 - > Threat – invasive species threatening range health and biodiversity.

RESOURCE: RIVER SOURCES NEW MEXICO

River Source is a New Mexico-based organization that supports watershed restoration projects and offers various services and resources. For more information, visit: <https://riversource.net/>

GOAL E.1 Reduce the threat of invasive species to the Sandoval Cluster.

Strategy E.1-1 Apply for funding to treat areas along arroyos and washes to slow the spread of invasive species and minimize the impact on range and farmland.

Project: Employ appropriate treatments along arroyos and washes and remove invasive species and replant with desired species.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Forest Service, Rio Puerco Alliance, River Sources New Mexico, and Private Landowners

Funding: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in collaboration with other U.S. Department of the Interior bureaus - Preventing the Introduction and Spread of Invasive Species through Strategic Landscape-Level Approaches and USDA - Invasive Species Program's National Invasive Species Management Plan funding

EAST I-40 CLUSTER

EAST I-40 CLUSTER SNAPSHOT

The East I-40 Cluster encompasses 17 communities along Interstate-40 (I-40), east of the Albuquerque Metro area. These include Moriarty, Estancia, Edgewood, Indian Hills, Manzano Springs, McIntosh, Carnuel, Chilili, Cedro, Ponderosa Pine, Tijeras, Cedar Crest, San Antonito, Sandia Knolls, Sandia Park, Sedillo, and Golden. The Cluster Communities are located in Bernalillo, Tarrant County, and Southern Santa Fe County. In addition, the cluster encompasses parts of the Sandia and Manzano mountains and areas north and south of I-40. Of the communities in the cluster, the Town of Edgewood is the largest, with roughly 6,000 people (ACS 2020 5-year estimate), followed by Moriarty, with 1,600 and 1,800 people, respectively.

EAST I-40 CLUSTER COMMUNITIES ECONOMIC PROFILE

The overall population for the East I-40 Cluster is 20,165 (ACS 2020 5-year estimate). Between 2010 and 2019, the population for the cluster increased by roughly 2.6%, similar to the growth in Bernalillo County (2.3%) and the City of Albuquerque (3%). Over the same period, the population of the State of New Mexico increased by 1.6%.

The median age in the cluster is significantly older when compared with the state and the country, as illustrated in [“Figure 28. East I-40 Cluster Age distribution” on page 82.](#) This difference can be attributed to fewer people under the age of 18. This is especially apparent in the following communities that have a much lower percentage of individuals in this age group: McIntosh 12.9%, Carnuel 14.3%, Chilili 0.0%, Ponderosa Pine 5.9%, Cedar Crest 4.5%, and Sandia Park 15.4%. It is also due to more individuals in the 65 and over age brackets. Therefore, the age composition should

be considered when applying resiliency strategies. The older demographics of this cluster may require specialized services and training that takes into consideration the various levels of physical abilities and proficiencies.

FIGURE 28. EAST I-40 CLUSTER AGE DISTRIBUTION

	Median Age	Under 18	18-64	Over 65
East I-40 Cluster	46.0	19.1%	56.4%	24.6%
New Mexico	38.1	23.1%	60.0%	17.4%
United States	38.2	22.4%	62.0%	16.0%

Source: ACS 2020 5-year estimate

Home prices in the cluster are valued close to home prices in the country. Compared with prices in the state, houses are valued higher, as identified in [“Figure 29. East I-40 Cluster Housing” on page 82.](#) The number of persons per household is almost identical to the state and the country. The housing inventory is older, with more homes built before 1990. The older housing stock may indicate that repairs and rehabilitation are required to keep housing livable. The number of occupied units is higher when compared to both the state and the country. The data supports what stakeholders mentioned during the engagement effort of this project. Stakeholders indicated a need for more housing, particularly affordable housing options.

FIGURE 29. EAST I-40 CLUSTER HOUSING

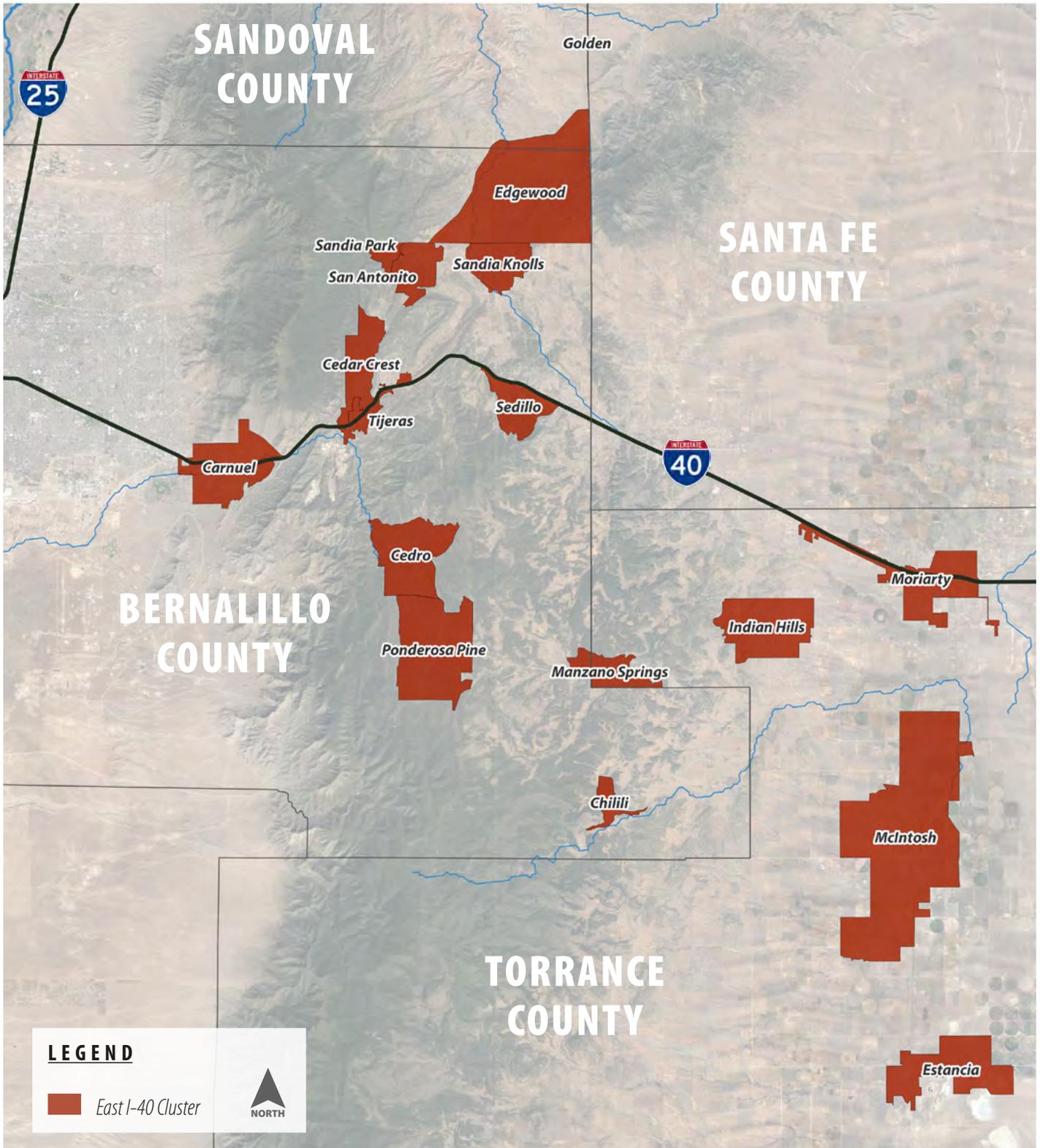
	Occupied Housing Units	2021 Median Home Value	Persons per HH Average	Homes built before 1990
East I-40	87.5%	\$247,185	2.5	16.5%
New Mexico	68.0%	\$197,184	2.6	12.1%
United States	64.0%	\$264,021	2.6	10.0%

Source: Esri 2021, ACS 2020 5-year estimate

The average household income for the cluster is higher than the state, but about 12% lower than the United States average and the cluster’s average disposable and per capita incomes tell a similar story, as identified in [“Figure 30. East I-40 Cluster Income Summary” on page 84.](#)

The poverty rate in the East I-40 Cluster is 17.3%, slightly lower than the state’s poverty rate and higher than the poverty rate in the country.

FIGURE 33.
MID-REGION - EAST INTERSTATE 40 CLUSTER AREAS



RESILIENCY ROADMAP

However, income and poverty rates are nuanced within the cluster. For example, Moriarty has a much higher poverty rate (39.1%) and much lower incomes than the state and country, while areas like Sedillo and Cedar Crest have higher incomes and lower poverty rates than the state and country.

FIGURE 30. [EAST I-40 CLUSTER INCOME SUMMARY](#)

	2021 Average Household Income	2021 Average Disposable Income	2021 Per Capita Income	Poverty Rate
East I-40	\$81,858	\$64,155	\$32,701	17.3%
New Mexico	\$71,952	\$56,951	\$27,978	18.6%
United States	\$92,435	\$69,862	\$35,384	12.8%

Source: Esri 2021, ACS 2020 5-year estimate

EAST I-40 CLUSTER INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

In 2021, this cluster had a working age (16+) unemployment rate of 5.3% with a 51% working-age labor force participation rate, as illustrated in [“Figure 31. East I-40 Cluster Labor Force Characteristics.”](#)

FIGURE 31. [EAST I-40 CLUSTER LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS](#)

Age Group	Unemployment Rate			Labor Force Participation Rate		
	East I-40	New Mexico	United States	East I-40	New Mexico	United States
>16	5.3%	7.4%	6.2%	51.0%	55.4%	62.3%
16-24	8.0%	9.5%	11%	51.4%	52.1%	56.7%
25-54	5.1%	7.5%	5.7%	64.8%	73.7%	81.6%
55-64	3.9%	6.1%	5.1%	55.9%	56.3%	65.5%
65+	7.2%	5.9%	4.5%	17.5%	17.7%	20.2%

Source: Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.

The cluster’s economic dependency ratio (EDR) is 136.2, which is lower than the state’s EDR of 142.1, but higher than the country average of 110.2, as illustrated in [“Figure 32. East I-40 Cluster Economic Dependency Ratio.”](#) This indicates that the cluster’s employed population supports a higher number of people. It also indicates that there is room for more residents to enter the workforce and contribute to the overall economy.

Nearly half of the population in the 55 to 64 age group are not participating in the workforce. For the nation as a whole, that age group has a 65.5% labor force participation rate, and prime working-aged adults between the ages of 25 and 54 in the nation have a labor force participation rate of 81.6%, compared to a rate of 68.7% for the cluster.

Improving the low workforce participation by creating economic opportunities will help to increase resilience for this cluster.

FIGURE 32. [EAST I-40 CLUSTER ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY RATIO](#)

	Economic Dependency Ratio
East I-40	136.1
New Mexico	142.1
United States	110.2

Source: Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.

Core industries in the cluster are identified in [“Core Industries in the East I-40 Cluster.”](#) These are the industries with the highest percentage of employees, number of businesses, and the most specialized according to location quotients. The Utility sector, while not among the highest employers, is a vital industry because of its regional specialization. This sector includes power generation operations like solar and wind farms.

[CORE INDUSTRIES IN THE EAST I-40 CLUSTER](#)

Core Industry	Percentage of Employees	LQ	# of Businesses
Healthcare/Social Assistance	18.70%	1.24	50
Professional/Scientific/Tech	11.30%	1.38	44
Government/Public Administration	7.10%	1.48	34
Utilities	1.60%	1.78	6
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing	1.90%	1.46	4

Source: Esri Business Analyst 2022.

The New Mexico State Economic Development Strategic Plan identifies ten target industries for

statewide economic diversification and growth. Of those ten industries, the East I-40 Cluster is well positioned to capitalize on three. These are:

- *Tech*
- *Outdoor Recreation*
- *Film & Media*

Community members in the East I-40 Cluster expressed that they value their town's and village's unique character and culture. Therefore, preserving and building on this unique character and culture is important in bringing new business opportunities and attracting new residents to the area.

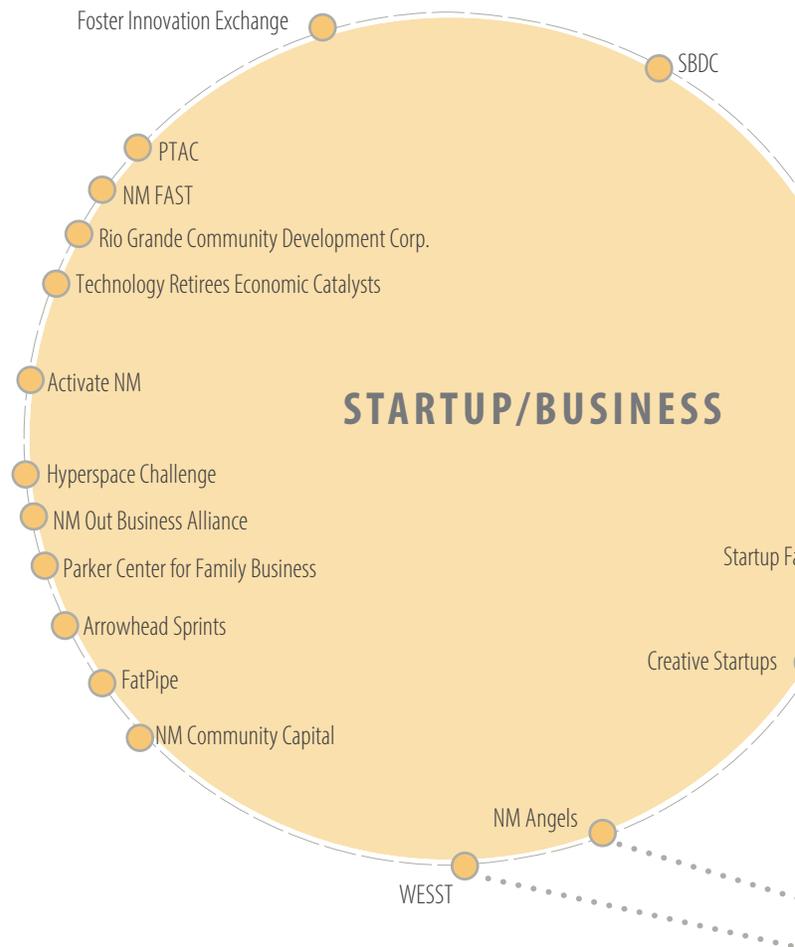
EAST I-40 CLUSTER GAP ANALYSIS

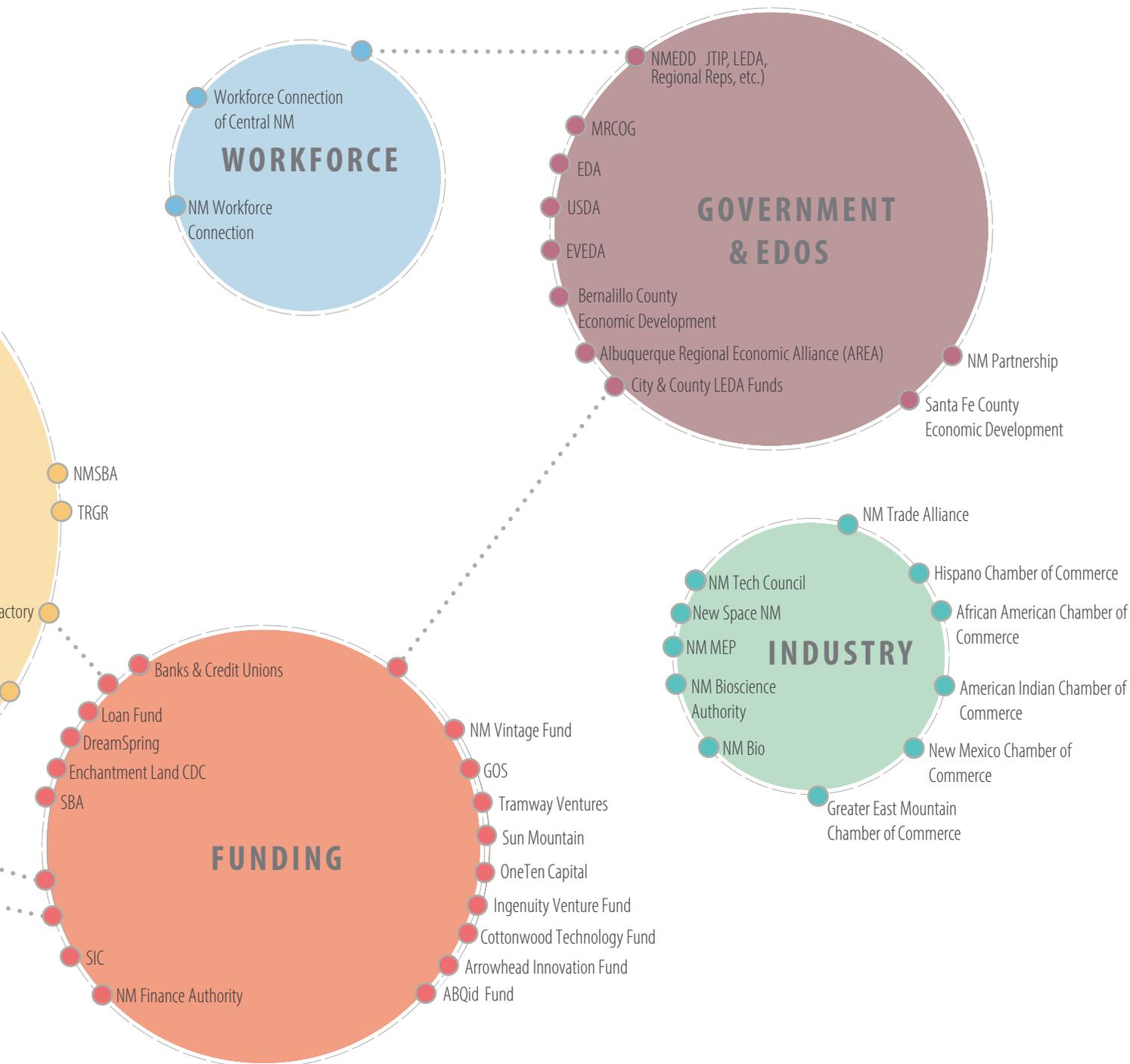
This cluster primarily includes communities along I-40 on the eastern side of the Sandia Mountains, many considered bedroom communities for Albuquerque. As a result, many resources available to businesses in this cluster are statewide and available to businesses across New Mexico. Except for the FatPipe coworking space in Edgewood, there are no cluster-specific entrepreneur or small business support programs or facilities locally available.

Two cluster specific resources that do exist in the cluster are the Estancia Valley Economic Development Association (EVEDA) and the Greater East Mountain Chamber of Commerce. EVEDA runs a regional business recruitment program and works with key industries like greenhouses, brewing/manufacturing, renewable energy, and retail. The Greater East Mountain Chamber of Commerce is a business advocacy group providing information and resources to its members and advocating on behalf of the business community to local, state, and federal elected officials and departments. The cluster also includes small sections of Bernalillo and Santa Fe counties, so it is served by the Santa Fe County Economic Development Department and the Bernalillo County Economic Development Department. Other industry, trade groups, and economic development organizations listed in the gap analysis have a statewide presence and, while able to assist in the cluster, may not do so regularly. The cluster's proximity to Albuquerque is beneficial because resources and assistance can move more easily between the two clusters.

The cluster lacks asset and community-based economic development organizations that could assist in the stability and growth of the businesses present in the cluster. State programs like MainStreet can be developed to fill those gaps. Cluster-specific entrepreneur and small business assistance programs can also be created to assist aspiring business owners as they work to launch their products and services.

FIGURE 34. EAST I-40 CLUSTER GAP ANALYSIS





EAST I-40 CLUSTER SWOT

Each cluster has its unique strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Some of these are unique to each cluster; others are shared. It is important to understand the unique strengths, opportunities, and weaknesses to identify suitable strategies for greater resilience.

The East I-40 Cluster SWOT analysis was informed by input received through stakeholder engagement, the economic analysis of the cluster, and a natural and man-made hazard assessment for the region.

FIGURE 35. **EAST I-40 CLUSTER SWOT**

STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Historic Route 66 corridor.</i> <i>Location (proximity to Albuquerque).</i> <i>Remote living.</i> <i>Access to the outdoors.</i> <i>Existing concrete plant.</i> <i>Diversity of annual events that draw in visitors.</i> <i>Ranching and farming.</i> <i>Pride in place through uniqueness of communities and history.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Aging infrastructure.</i> <i>Increase of crime.</i> <i>Lack of regional coordination, and lack of coordination between neighboring communities.</i> <i>Insufficient community engagement caused in part by lack of reliable internet and skills to use online resources.</i> <i>Lack of /access to reliable broadband.</i> <i>Lack of job opportunities.</i> <i>Lack of affordable, or adequate housing units.</i>
OPPORTUNITY	THREAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>New business opportunities and employment in tech.</i> <i>New business opportunities and employment in the outdoor recreation industry.</i> <i>New business opportunities and employment in film & media.</i> <i>Potential for renewable energy and related revenue, business, and job opportunities.</i> <i>Business and employment opportunities related to the revitalization of the Mainstreet district in Tijeras.</i> <i>Attraction of remote workers and associated businesses and employment opportunities.</i> <i>Attraction of retirees and associated business and employment opportunities.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Drought/access to water.</i> <i>Invasive species threatening range health and biodiversity.</i> <i>Wildfires and associated flooding.</i> <i>Lack of workforce.</i> <i>Increasing extreme heat events.</i>

EAST I-40 CLUSTER KEY FINDINGS:

- 1. The cluster has an older population, requiring specialized services and training that considers the various levels of physical abilities and proficiencies.*
- 2. Homes are more expensive, the housing inventory is older, and there is a higher number of occupied units. This suggests the need for more housing units to satisfy growing demand.*
- 3. Household incomes are higher than incomes in the remainder of the state, creating buying power to support local businesses. Some communities experience higher rates of poverty creating the need for employment and business opportunities.*
- 4. Lower rates of labor force participation indicate the need for workforce development to increase the number of individuals participating in the labor market.*
- 5. Core industries include Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing, Utilities, Professional/Scientific/Tech, Healthcare/Social Assistance, Government/Public Administration.*
- 6. Target diversification industries include Tech, Outdoor Recreation, Film & Media.*
- 7. The cluster's proximity to Albuquerque is beneficial because resources and assistance can move more easily between the two clusters.*
- 8. The cluster lacks asset and community-based economic development organizations that could assist in the stability and growth of businesses present in the cluster.*
- 9. It was critical to stakeholders that the unique character of towns and communities is preserved in any effort to increase community investment by attracting digital nomads and remote workers.*

RESILIENCE ROADMAP

EAST I-40 CLUSTER PRIORITY AREAS

The following Priority Areas for the East I-40 Cluster were developed based on the analysis of existing economic conditions, the hazards assessment, and extensive stakeholder engagement. Region-wide Priority Areas are identified in the [“Regional Goals” on page 33](#).

For the East I-40 Cluster, the list below details the top five cluster-specific Priority Areas. The following section identifies goals, strategies, and projects to guide the East I-40 Cluster in addressing each Priority Area. The Priority Areas are based on [“Figure 9. Priority Areas” on page 31](#).

EAST I-40 CLUSTER PRIORITY AREAS

-  *Economic Diversification*
-  *Lack of Regional Coordination*
-  *Lack of/Unreliable Broadband and associated Infrastructure*
-  *Lack of Community Engagement*
-  *Invasive Species/Biodiversity*
-  *Affordable Housing (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*
-  *Drought/Access to Water (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*
-  *Wildfire (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*
-  *Energy Independence (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*

EAST I-40 CLUSTER GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND PROJECTS

The following goals, strategies, and associated projects will support the cluster in achieving greater resilience. While many threats and challenges can disrupt and weaken the economy, the cluster specific Priority Areas are identified as the most impactful in meeting some of the community’s most pressing needs.

PRIORITY A. ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

SOURCE:

- SWOT:
 - > Opportunity – new business and employment in tech., film & media and outdoor recreation; renewable energy; Tijeras MainStreet district; attraction of remote workers and retirees
 - > Strength – access to the outdoors
 - > Weakness – lack of job opportunities
 - > Threat – lack of workforce
- Industry Outlook: low labor force participation rates; target Industries of technology, film & media and outdoor recreation
- Economic/Gap Analysis: startup services like FatPipe and economic development resources.

GOAL A.1 Increase new business starts and entrepreneurship in the outdoor recreation industry.

Strategy A.1–1 Offer tax exemptions on equipment and property purchased for outdoor recreation businesses.

Project: Work with local and county governments to devise tax exemptions for property and equipment.

Partner(s): State of New Mexico, County and Community Governing Bodies, Legal Teams, and Assessors

Project: Promote the tax exemptions to existing outdoor recreation businesses looking to expand or to aspiring outdoor recreation business owners.

Partner(s): NM Outdoor Recreation Division, NM Tourism Department , and County/Communities Marketing Department

RESOURCE: OUTDOOR RECREATION TRAILS+ GRANT (EDD) 

The ‘Outdoor Recreation Trails + Grant Program’ supports projects that enhance communities’ outdoor recreation opportunities and offers funding for trails, river parks, wildlife viewing areas amongst others. For more information, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/rfebe4da>

RESOURCE: FACILITY, EQUIPMENT & EXPENSE INCENTIVES 

The State of New Mexico offers similar tax credits for manufacturers. Qualifying businesses may take a credit against gross receipts, compensating or withholding taxes equal to 5.125% of the value of qualified equipment if specific conditions apply. For more information, visit: <https://santafenm.gov/economic-development/business-specialists/incentives>

Another example is the County of El Paso that offers business partners business personal property tax credits. For more information, visit: <https://admin.elpasoco.com/economic-development/business-personal-property-tax-credit/>

GOAL A.1 Create marketing campaigns promoting outdoor recreation opportunities and businesses.

Strategy A.1–1 Establish a region-wide branding team charged with developing the area’s brand as an outdoor recreation destination.

Project: *Work with Estancia Valley Economic Development Association (EVEDA) and local chambers of commerce to establish a working group with representatives from across the cluster.*

Partner(s): *County and Community Governing Bodies, EVEDA, and Greater East Mountain Chamber of Commerce*

Project: *Develop a cluster/region brand and marketing campaign.*

Partner(s): *County and Community Governing Bodies*

Funding: *NM Outdoor Equity Fund*

GOAL A.2 Increase investment in the East I-40 Cluster.

Strategy A.2–1 Attract remote workers to the cluster.

Project: *Research community incentives that exist and develop list of possible additional incentives for newcomers to the area.*

Project: *Develop an incentive package to attract workers.*

Partner(s): *Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance (AREA), Community and County Governing Bodies, and Greater East Mountain Chamber of Commerce*

Strategy A.2–2 Develop an ecosystem ambassador initiative to connect remote workers considering a move, or who just moved, to the area with a community member who can introduce them to resources and social networks.

Project: *Create an ecosystem ambassador program.*

Partner(s): *Greater East Mountain Chamber of Commerce, Edgewood Chamber of Commerce, FatPipe, and Local Businesses*

GOAL A.3 Promote East I-40 Cluster as a great place to film.

Strategy A.3–1 Increase awareness of film locations in the cluster.

Project: Consult with FilmBernCo, the Albuquerque and New Mexico Film Office to determine the best spots in the cluster and the most valuable information to present.

Project: Add cluster filming locations and other valuable information about the cluster to the New Mexico Film Office website: <https://nmfilm.com/>.

Partner(s): New Mexico Film Office and ABQ Film Office

Partner(s): EDD - Local Economic Assistance and Development Support Program (LEADS)

Strategy A.3–2 Locate and vet businesses in the cluster that can provide services to film productions.

Project: Determine needs of film production.

Partner(s): NM Film Office and ABQ Film Office

Project: Match production needs with businesses in the cluster and promote their services on the website and to productions in the area.

Partner(s): NM Film Office, ABQ Film Office, AREA, FilmBernCo in Bernalillo County, and Greater East Mountain Chamber of Commerce

PRIORITY B. LACK OF REGIONAL COORDINATION



SOURCE:

- Ecosystem/Gap Analysis: lack of coordinating body for the cluster; organizations like EVEDA and the Chamber that can contribute to coordination efforts
- SWOT:
 - > Weakness: lack of regional coordination; lack of coordination between neighboring communities.

RESILIENCE ROADMAP

GOAL B.1 Increase East I-40 Cluster Communities' operational capacities.

Strategy B.1-1 Apply for funding to employ additional staff members.

Project: Assess operational capacities and identify what type of hire should be made.

Project: Utilize the New Mexico Capacity Building Grant.

Project: Write a grant for funding for additional staff.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Groundworks, and USDA

Funding: HUD - Section 4 Capacity Building for Communities Development and Affordable Housing, DOT and HUD - Thriving Communities Program, Groundworks New Mexico, Federal Grant Writing Fund, and McCune Foundation

RECOURSE: NM CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT

The New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration Local Government Division (LGD) offers the Capacity Building Grant to provide resources to local and tribal governments to secure grant professionals. For more information, visit: <https://www.doit.nm.gov/programs/broadband/>



PRIORITY C. LACK OF/UNRELIABLE BROADBAND



SOURCE:

- SWOT:
 - > Weakness: lack of access to reliable broadband; aging infrastructure.

GOAL C.1 Provide reliable broadband to all East I-40 Cluster Communities.

Strategy C.1-1 Assess the feasibility of installing improved broadband infrastructure.

Project: Prepare a needs assessment, a high-level design, and a cost estimate for broadband deployment.

Project: Identify and evaluate funding options, and develop a strategic approach to obtain needed funding.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Adjacent Communities, and Groundworks New Mexico

Funding: New Mexico Broadband Technical Assistance Program (NM TAP) and Groundworks Technical Assistance & Grant Writing Fund

RECOURSE: NEW MEXICO BROADBAND PROGRAM

The NM Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAAE) wants to facilitate the deployment of a "Statewide Open Access Middle Mile Network." The OBAAE is issuing a Request for Information (RFI) to obtain information from broadband providers, local governments, tribal communities and state agencies to assist in developing a comprehensive strategy for network funding, design, and administration. This will facilitate future plans and allow last mile providers to convey their middle mile needs. For more information, visit: <https://www.doit.nm.gov/programs/broadband/>



Strategy C.1–2 Design and install broadband in East I-40 Cluster Communities.

Project: Apply for State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program through the Department of Commerce.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies and Adjacent Communities, and Office of Broadband Access and Expansion

Funding: NM DoIT - Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE)

GOAL C.2 Link local businesses with training resources and financial support to develop internet literacy and an online presence.

Strategy C.2–1 Support local businesses in developing an online presence and marketing.

Project: Identify small businesses that need support with creating an online presence and marketing their services, and connect them with the Small Business Development Center (NM SBDC).

Partner(s): Community and Adjacent Community Governing Bodies and the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion

Funding: New Mexico SBDC and USDA- Rural Business Development Grants

PRIORITY D. LACK OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



SOURCE:

- SWOT:
 - > Strength: pride in place
 - > Weakness: insufficient community engagement
- Ecosystem/Gap Analysis: lack of coordinating body for the cluster; organizations like EVEDA and the Chamber that can contribute to coordination efforts.

GOAL D.1 Increase community engagement.

Strategy D.1–1 Create a public outreach plan to identify strategies to better engage the community. Meet with various

RESOURCE: PUBLIC OUTREACH GUIDE

The City of Ft. Collins created a Public Outreach guide to create and maintain a community that is educated, aware, motivated, engaged, and fulfilled. The guide aims to create "opportunities for citizens to take part in the conversation, to learn, and to work with others, not just provide input." This guide is a great resource and could serve as a starting point to re-imagine the public outreach/input/engagement. For more information, visit: <https://www.fcgov.com/excellence/files/publicengagementguide.pdf>



RESILIENCE ROADMAP

stakeholder groups to better understand how they would prefer to be engaged.

Project: Create a public outreach plan and implement the plan.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Neighborhood Organizations, and Community Advocacy Groups

Funding: EDA - Economic Recovery Corps and Equity Impact Investments Programs

Strategy D.1–2 Evaluate various engagement strategies.

Project: Create a platform for Mobile Participation (MParticipation).

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Neighborhood Organizations, and Community Advocacy Groups

Funding: McCune Foundation (Foundation Priorities, Influencing Planning of Built Environments)

Strategy D.1–3 Develop an outreach plan/how-to guide to introduce mobile participation to the community and train community members on this new tool.

Project: Employ mobile participation and develop how-to guide and training.

Partner(s): Communities, Neighborhood Organizations, and Community Advocacy Groups

Funding: EDA - Economic Recovery Corps and Equity Impact Investments Programs and AmeriCorps State Formula Grants

RESOURCE: MOBILE PARTICIPATION

Smartphones open channels of communication between citizens, institutions and administrations, and offer greater access to public information, and facilitate increased participation. The paper 'Mobile Participation: Citizen Engagement in Urban Planning via Smartphones' outlines several mobile engagement tools for stakeholder engagement. For more information, visit: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/291749584_Mobile_Participation_Citizen_Engagement_in_Urban_Planning_via_Smartphones



RESOURCE: MCCUNE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

The McCune Charitable Foundation supports community-based work in the State of New Mexico that aligns with the nine Foundation Priorities and corresponding Leverage Points. For more information, visit: <https://nmmccune.org/grant-eligibility/#eligibility-guide>



PRIORITY E. INVASIVE SPECIES/ BIODIVERSITY



SOURCE:

- SWOT:
- > Threat: invasive species threatening range health and biodiversity.

GOAL E.1 Reduce the threat of invasive species to the East I-40 Cluster.

Strategy E.1–1 Apply for funding to treat areas along arroyos and washes to slow the spread of invasive species and minimize the impact on range and farmland.

Project: *Employ appropriate treatments along arroyos and washes and remove invasive species and replant with desired species.*

Partner(s): *Community Governing Bodies, Forest Service, Rio Puerco Alliance, River Sources New Mexico, and Private Landowners*

Funding: *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in collaboration with other U.S. Department of the Interior bureaus - Preventing the Introduction and Spread of Invasive Species through Strategic Landscape-Level Approaches and USDA - Invasive Species Program's National Invasive Species Management Plan funding*



**RESOURCE: RIVER SOURCES
NEW MEXICO**

River Source is a New Mexico-based organization that supports watershed restoration projects and offers various services and resources. For more information, visit: <https://riversource.net/>

TORRANCE CLUSTER

TORRANCE CLUSTER SNAPSHOT

The Torrance Cluster encompasses eight communities, including Willard, Mountainair, Encino, Corona, Manzano, Tajique, Torreon, and Duran – all located in Torrance County. McIntosh, Estancia, Moriarty, and Indian Hills are part of the East I-40 Cluster.

Most of the communities in the Torrance Cluster are spread out around the central part of the county, ranging from Torreon and Manzano at the foothills of the Manzano mountains to the small communities of Encino and Duran, in the eastern plains part of the county. Of the communities in the cluster, the Town of Mountainair is the most populated, with roughly 900 people (ACS 2020 5-year estimate).

TORRANCE CLUSTER COMMUNITIES ECONOMIC PROFILE

The overall population for the Torrance Cluster is 1,775 people (ACS 2020 5-year estimate). Between 2010 and 2020, the population for the cluster decreased by 4.8%, similar to Torrance County overall, which shrank by 5.3%. By contrast, Bernalillo County grew by 2.3%, and the State of New Mexico increased by 1.6%.

The median age in the cluster is significantly older when compared with the state and the country, as illustrated in [“Figure 42. Mid-Region - Torrance Cluster.”](#) This cluster has fewer people under 18 years old and almost double the number of people over 65 years old compared to the state and country. The age distribution of this cluster suggests that strategies need to be developed to create economic employment opportunities and offer appropriate services and recreation opportunities to stop the outmigration of younger residents. The focus should be on younger individuals moving to the

cluster, but also aging individuals that already live in the cluster.

FIGURE 36. TORRANCE CLUSTER AGE DISTRIBUTION

	Median Age	Under 18	18-64	Over 65
Torrance Cluster	43.2	13.5%	58.3%	28.2%
New Mexico	38.1	23.1%	60.0%	17.4%
United States	38.2	22.4%	62.0%	16.0%

Source: ACS 2020 5-year estimate

The number of occupied units is slightly lower than those in the state and the nation. Home prices in the cluster are valued lower than home prices in the state and the country, as identified in [“Figure 37. Torrance Cluster Housing.”](#) the percentage of homes built before 1990 is higher compared to the state and the nation. The older housing stock and low occupancy rates suggest that there are homes needing repair and rehabilitation. During stakeholder engagement, the need for more housing, particularly affordable housing options, was mentioned. This feedback, combined with the data, suggests that strategies should focus on housing rehabilitation or removal.

FIGURE 37. TORRANCE CLUSTER HOUSING

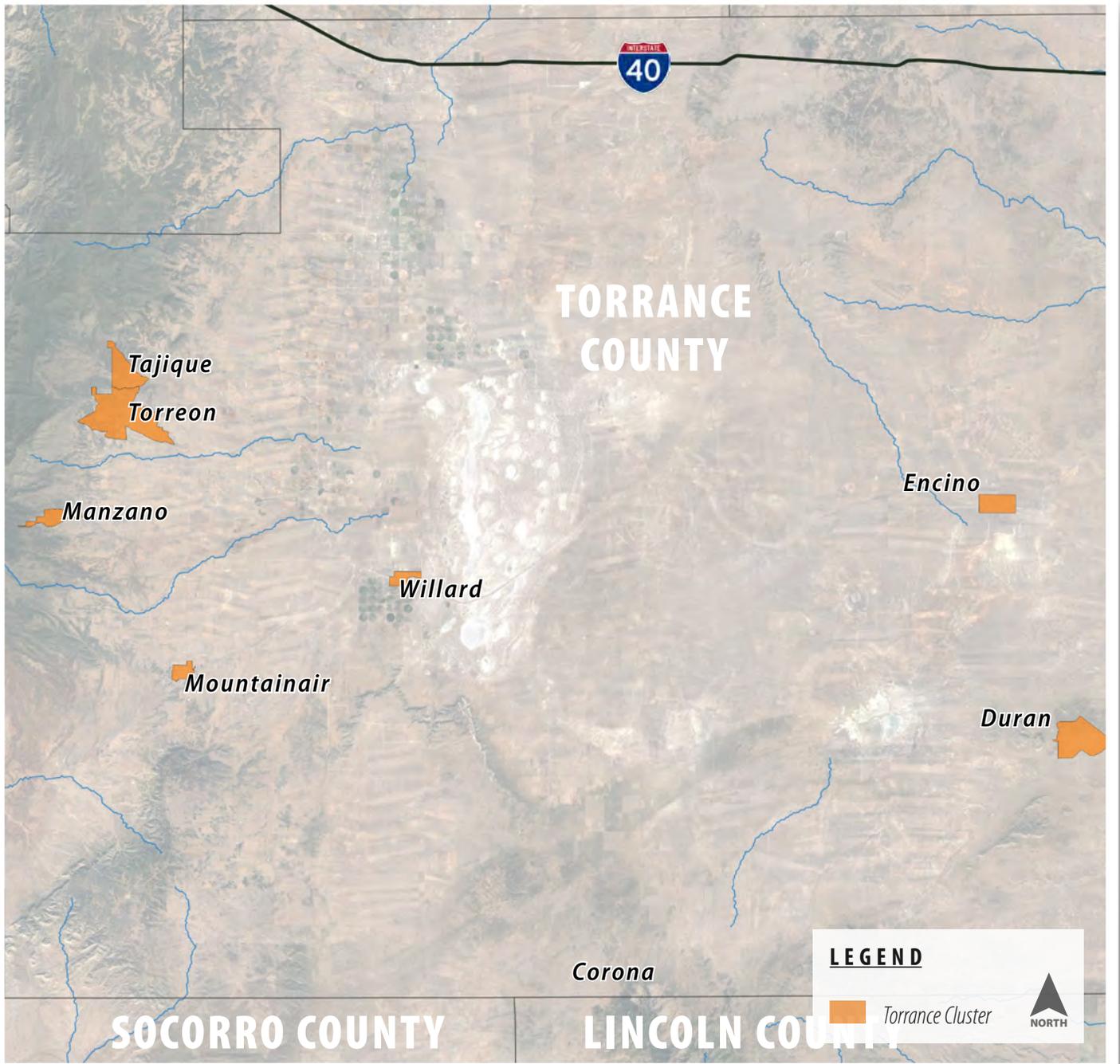
	Occupied Housing Units	2021 Median Home Value	Persons per HH Average	Homes built before 1990
Torrance	63.0%	\$153,736	2.6	23.3%
New Mexico	68.0%	\$197,184	2.6	12.1%
United States	64.0%	\$264,021	2.6	10.0%

Source: Esri 2021, ACS 2020 5-year estimate

As illustrated in [“Figure 37. Torrance Cluster Housing.”](#) annual household and per capita incomes are notably lower than the state and the country.

The poverty rate in the Torrance Cluster is 18.0%, identical to the state’s poverty rate but higher than the rate in the country. Incomes are lower compared to incomes in the state and country. However, income and poverty rates are nuanced within the cluster. For example, Willard (38.2%), Tajique (27.4%), and Mountainair (28.6%) have high rates of poverty, while Encino (1.2%), Corona (4.4%),

FIGURE 42.
MID-REGION - TORRANCE CLUSTER



RESILIENCY ROADMAP

and Estancia (11.0%) have low rates of poverty. It should be noted that for small communities the margin of error of the reported poverty rate is extremely high and the numbers mentioned above may not reflect the true state of the community. Poverty, therefore, is experienced differently in communities across the cluster. Strategies should work to begin to address poverty by creating economic opportunities and workforce training.

FIGURE 38. **TORRANCE CLUSTER INCOME SUMMARY**

	2021 Average Household Income	2021 Average Disposable Income	2021 Per Capita Income	Poverty Rate
Torrance	\$51,309	\$43,255	\$22,796	18.5%
New Mexico	\$71,952	\$56,951	\$27,978	18.6%
United States	\$92,435	\$69,862	\$35,384	12.8%

Source: Esri 2021, ACS 2020 5-year estimate

TORRANCE CLUSTER INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

Communities in this cluster have strong agricultural roots and represent some of the most rural parts of the Mid-Region. This cluster is also home to immense renewable energy resources, most notable of which is wind energy production from large wind farms throughout the cluster.

In 2021, this cluster had a 1.9% unemployment rate with a 34.1% working-age labor force participation rate.

FIGURE 39. **TORRANCE CLUSTER LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS**

Age Group	Unemployment Rate			Labor Force Participation Rate		
	Torrance	New Mexico	United States	Torrance	New Mexico	United States
>16	1.9%	7.4%	6.2%	34.1%	55.4%	62.3%
16-24	0%	9.5%	11%	15.9%	52.1%	56.7%
25-54	2.2%	7.5%	5.7%	52.5%	73.7%	81.6%
55-64	0%	6.1%	5.1%	48.4%	56.3%	65.5%
65+	8.2%	5.9%	4.5%	9.9%	17.7%	20.2%

Source: Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.

The cluster's economic dependency ratio (EDR) is 255, which is higher than the state's EDR of 142 and higher than the countries average of 110.2, as illustrated in "Figure 40. Torrance Cluster Economic Dependency Ratio." This EDR, coupled with the relatively low labor force participation rate, indicates that the working population of the cluster is burdened by those not in the labor force or other dependents. It also suggests that the economy is not robust enough to provide opportunities to all the residents of the cluster. Targeted workforce development, training, and upskilling efforts are needed to bring residents back into the workforce and help create more opportunities.

FIGURE 40. **TORRANCE CLUSTER ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY RATIO**

	Economic Dependency Ratio
Torrance	255
New Mexico	142.1
United States	110.2

Source: Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.

Workers in this cluster are primarily employed in white-collar occupations, with 61.8% holding those jobs. The white-collar occupations such as Management, Education/Training/Library, and Sales have the highest percentage of workers. When looking at the location quotients (LQ) for this area, Farming/Fishing/Forestry, Life/Physical/Social Sciences, and Protective Services are the most specialized in the cluster. These numbers most likely reflect the cluster's agricultural traditions, businesses, and prison.

The core industries for this cluster are identified in "Figure 41. Core Industries in the Torrance Cluster." These are the industries with the highest percentage of employees, number of businesses, the most specialized according to the location quotient, and they represent the most significant portion of economic activity in the cluster.

FIGURE 41. CORE INDUSTRIES IN THE TORRANCE CLUSTER

Core Industry	Percentage of Employees	LQ	# of Businesses
Government/Public Administration	11.90%	2.48	14
Retail Trade	11.10%	1.14	10
Educational Services	15.10%	1.56	6
Construction	9.70%	1.31	2
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing	12.70%	9.77	1

Source: Esri Business Analyst 2022.

It should be noted that the cluster-level data only identifies one business classified as an Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing and two businesses classified as Construction. Yet, at the same time, they employ a significant percentage of the cluster workforce. County-level data, on the other hand, identifies 15 businesses classified as Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing and 24 businesses classified as Construction. This likely means that businesses in those industries are located outside the cluster boundaries while people employed there might reside in the cluster.

The New Mexico State Economic Development Strategic Plan identifies ten target industries for the state. Of those ten industries, the Torrance Cluster is well positioned to grow and sustain three. These include:

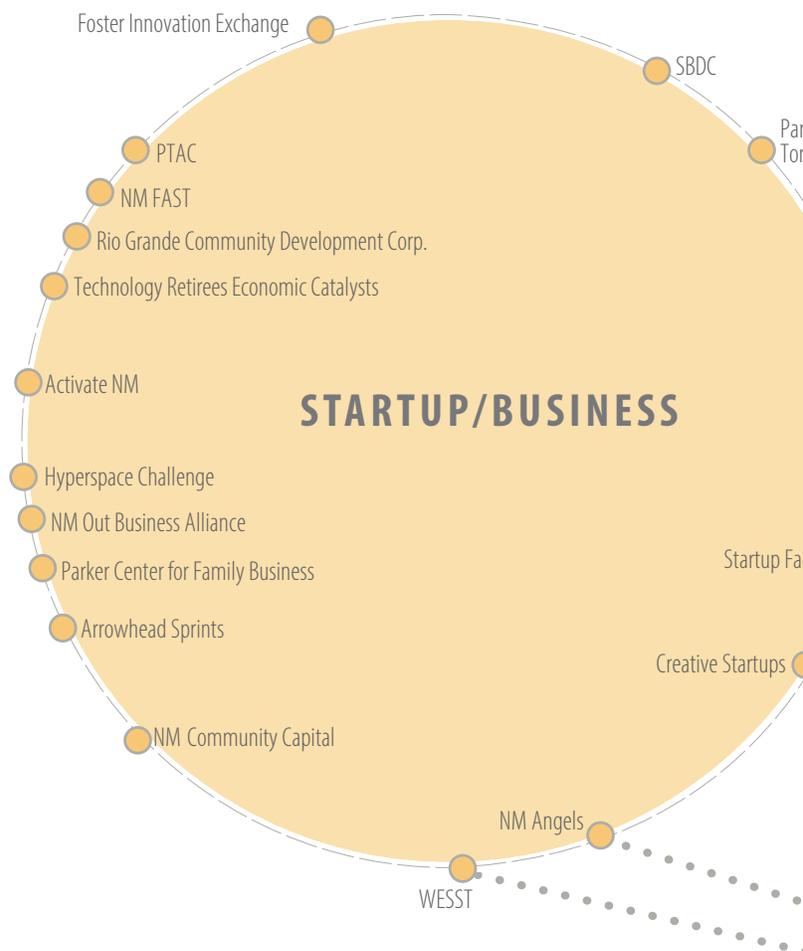
- *Film & Media*
- *Sustainable & Green Energy*
- *Sustainable & Value-Added Agriculture*

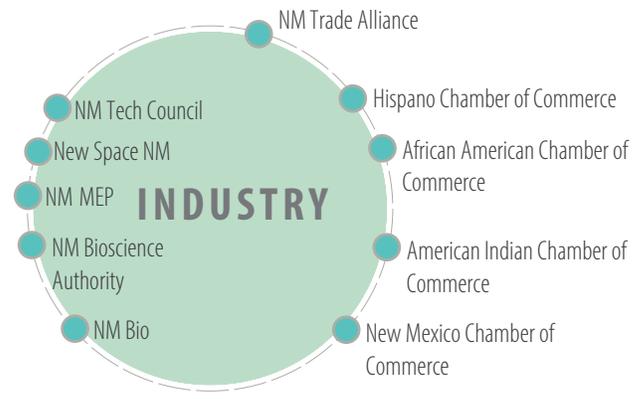
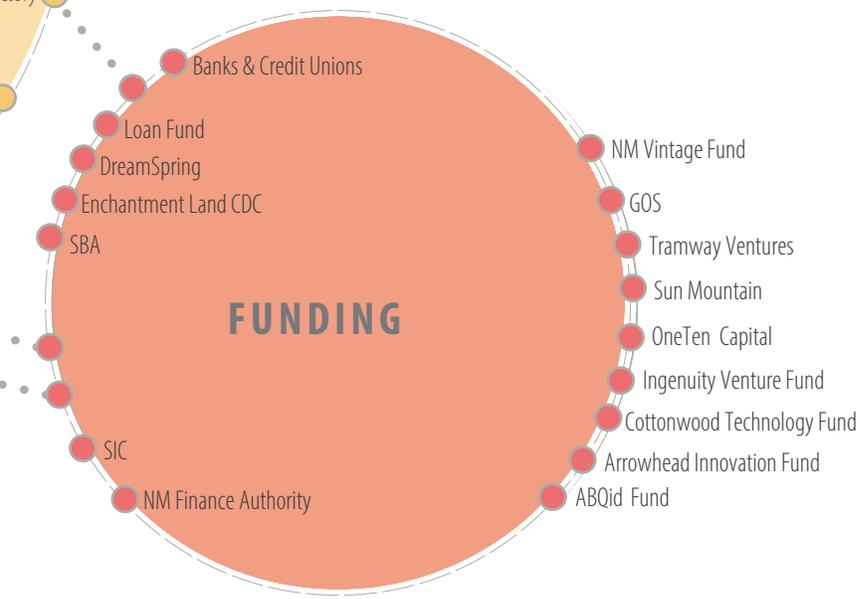
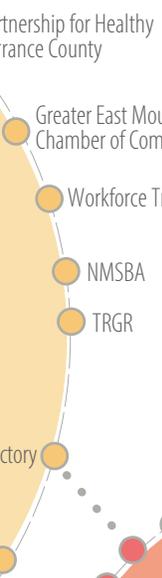
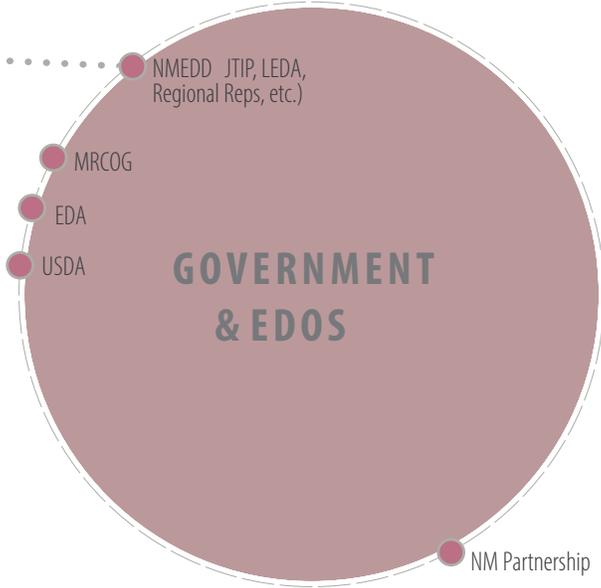
The cluster’s agricultural traditions, existing operations, and significant private investments in wind energy and transmission make it an ideal location to grow those industries. In addition, Film & Media could find a welcoming home in the cluster, especially location shooting where scenic and wide-open vistas are needed.

TORRANCE CLUSTER GAP ANALYSIS

This cluster is rural and has few internal business or startup resources. Entrepreneurs and small businesses looking for funding or other assistance have to look outside the cluster, and while technically available, applicable resources may be hard to identify. Being a rural cluster has some advantages when accessing state-wide resource programs. For example, the New Mexico Small Business Assistance (NMSBA) program by Sandia and Los Alamos National Labs provides twice as much money for technical assistance to companies located in rural areas of the state. Often, these assistance programs need access or introductions to businesses to start providing assistance. These connectors are mostly absent in this cluster.

FIGURE 43. TORRANCE CLUSTER GAP ANALYSIS





TORRANCE CLUSTER SWOT

Each cluster has its unique strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Some of these are unique to each cluster; others are shared. It is important to understand the unique strengths, opportunities, and weaknesses to identify suitable strategies for greater resilience.

The Torrance Cluster SWOT analysis was informed by input received through stakeholder engagement, the economic analysis of the cluster, and a natural and man-made hazard assessment for the region.

FIGURE 44. **TORRANCE CLUSTER SWOT**

STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
<p><i>Existing renewable energy, specifically wind power/wind turbines.</i></p> <p><i>Access to the outdoors.</i></p> <p><i>Salt Mission Trail corridor and associated assets.</i></p> <p><i>Farming, ranching, and associated industries.</i></p> <p><i>CoreCivic - Torrance County Detention Facility and associated employment.</i></p> <p><i>Diversity of annual events.</i></p>	<p><i>Lack of trained workforce.</i></p> <p><i>Limited access to funding because of limited operational capacities and trained employees.</i></p> <p><i>Insufficient community engagement and consensus within the community.</i></p> <p><i>Opposition to growth.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of fresh foods/food desert.</i></p> <p><i>Mental health issues.</i></p> <p><i>Political polarization/division.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of reliable broadband.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of affordable, or adequate housing units.</i></p>
OPPORTUNITY	THREAT
<p><i>New business opportunities and employment in film & media.</i></p> <p><i>Potential for renewable energy and related revenue, business, and employment opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Sustainable and value-added agriculture and associated businesses and job opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Ranching and associated industries including processing facilities.</i></p> <p><i>EMWT water line to support future development.</i></p> <p><i>Cannabis growing and selling.</i></p> <p><i>US-60 (as a tourist alternative to Route 66).</i></p> <p><i>New business opportunities and employment in the outdoor recreation industry.</i></p>	<p><i>Drought/access to water.</i></p> <p><i>Invasive species threatening range health and biodiversity.</i></p> <p><i>Loss of range productivity through overgrazing and other range management practices.</i></p> <p><i>Wildfires/flooding and the associated danger of damage and loss of property, loss of habitat, and loss of revenue for related industries including outdoor recreation.</i></p> <p><i>Poverty/lack of opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>High winds and associated erosion.</i></p> <p><i>Population loss through outmigration.</i></p> <p><i>Limited energy transmission capacity.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of economic diversification.</i></p>

TORRANCE CLUSTER KEY FINDINGS:

- 1.** *The median age is significantly older compared to the state and country, and the cluster is experiencing population decline due to the outmigration of young individuals and families. The creation of economic employment opportunities and additional services focused on families and young adults is needed to help reverse this trend.*
- 2.** *The cluster has an older housing stock, and stakeholders identified the need for more affordable housing options. This suggests that strategies should focus on housing rehabilitation and removal as well as the construction of new affordable housing units.*
- 3.** *Some communities in the cluster experience high poverty rates, and strategies should be developed that create economic employment opportunities and offer workforce training.*
- 4.** *The cluster has strong agricultural roots and immense renewable energy resources.*
- 5.** *Core industries include Construction, Transportation/Warehousing, Retail Trade, Healthcare/Social Assistance, and Government/Public Administration.*
- 6.** *Target industries include Film & Media, Sustainable & Green Energy, and Sustainable & Value-Added Agriculture.*
- 7.** *There are few internal business or startup resources and entrepreneurs and small businesses must look for funding or other assistance outside the cluster.*

TORRANCE CLUSTER PRIORITY AREAS

The following Priority Areas for the Torrance Cluster were developed based on the analysis of existing economic conditions, the hazards assessment, and extensive stakeholder engagement. Region-wide Priority Areas are identified in the [“Regional Goals” on page 33](#).

For the Torrance Cluster, the list below details the top five cluster-specific Priority Areas. The following section identifies goals, strategies, and projects to guide the Torrance Cluster in addressing each Priority Area. The Priority Areas are based on [“Figure 9. Priority Areas” on page 31](#).

TORRANCE CLUSTER PRIORITY AREAS

-  *Lack of Economic Diversification*
-  *Poverty/Lack of Opportunities*
-  *Lack of Regional Coordination*
-  *Lack of Operational Capacity*
-  *Lack of/Unreliable Broadband and associated Infrastructure*
-  *Lack of Affordable Housing (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*
-  *Drought/Access to Water (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*
-  *Wildfire/Flooding (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*
-  *Energy Independence (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)*

TORRANCE CLUSTER GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND PROJECTS

The following goals, strategies, and associated projects will support the cluster in achieving greater resilience. While many threats and challenges can disrupt and weaken the economy, the cluster specific Priority Areas are identified as the most impactful in meeting some of the community's most pressing needs.

PRIORITY A. ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION



SOURCE:

- *Ecosystem/Gap Analysis: no cluster specific entrepreneur or business support programming or access to funding especially risk capital*
- *Industry Outlook: extremely high LQ in agriculture employment*
- *SWOT:*
 - > *Strength: existing renewable energy especially wind; salt mission trail corridor; access to the outdoors*
 - > *Opportunity: film and media; renewable energy; value added agriculture; ranching and associated industries; outdoor recreation; US 60*
 - > *Weakness: limited access to funding*
 - > *Threat: lack of opportunity; lack of economic diversification; limited energy transmission capacity.*

GOAL A.1 Advocate at the state legislature for a consistent business environment for clean energy.

Strategy A.1-1 Coordinate with clean energy producers on legislative priorities.

Project: Convene working groups of clean energy producers to discuss legislative priorities.

Partner(s): Torrance County, Clean Energy Businesses, and State Representatives

Project: Incorporate priorities from working group into county legislative priorities.

Partner(s): Torrance County, Clean Energy Businesses, and State Representatives

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK



Speaking with industry leaders in the renewable energy space, especially wind energy producers, it became clear that the state must maintain a consistent policy towards regulation and taxation for the energy produced by renewable and clean energy providers. Any increase in the costs of doing business in New Mexico, the MRCOG region, or the cluster areas may lead to a decrease in investment by renewable energy companies.

RESILIENCE ROADMAP

GOAL A.2 Increase clean energy production and the transmission of energy to customers.

Strategy A.2–1 Engage in planning activities to determine key issues around the capacity for clean energy production in the Torrance Cluster and the transmission of energy to customers.

Project: Create a plan that outlines the transmission needs and how to best achieve them.

Project: Establish relationship with Los Alamos National Lab (LANL) and Sandia National Laboratory (SNL) and request technical assistance in the planning process.

Partner(s): Torrance County, LANL, and SNL

Funding: Department of Energy Transmission Facilitation Program

Strategy A.2–2 Engage with state planning activities to advocate for greater clean energy transmission capacity

Project: Work with partners to advocate for expanded clean energy transmission capacity in the cluster.

Partner(s): Torrance County, NMEDD, SET Force, and SEAC

PRIORITY B. POVERTY/LACK OF OPPORTUNITIES



SOURCE:

- Ecosystem/Gap Analysis: lack of business technical assistance resources located in the cluster
- Economic Profile: lower than average household income, average disposable income, and per capita income than New Mexico and the country; higher poverty rate than the country; low overall workforce participation rate (34%)
- SWOT:
 - > Threat: poverty/lack of opportunity
 - > Weakness: lack of trained workforce.

GOAL B.1 Increase new business starts in the Torrance Cluster in value-added agriculture.

Strategy B.1–1 Develop an innovation navigator program to help connect value-added businesses (for example, manufacturing facilities, fulfillment centers, e-commerce options, sourcing, supply chain management, etc.) with resources to start and grow their businesses.

EXPLAINED: ENERGY GRID



There is currently limited capacity for wind and solar energy producers to get the energy they produce into the grid. In order for this industry to grow these capacity issues must be addressed.

RESOURCE: SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY TASK FORCE



The New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD), as part of Senate Bill 112 (SB112) was tasked with oversight in the development of the Sustainable Economy Task Force (SET Force) and the Sustainable Economy Advisory Council (SEAC).

For more information, visit: <https://edd.newmexico.gov/about-us/setf/>

For more information about the The Statewide Strategic Plan, visit: <http://eddstateplan.com/>

EXAMPLE: INNOVATION NAVIGATOR PROGRAM



A innovation navigator program assists individuals who want to start businesses by connecting them with the correct information and key support. An example of such a program is the University of Florida Innovation NaviGator program. For more information, visit: <https://innovate.research.ufl.edu/about/innovation-navigator/>



Project: Map the ecosystem for value-added manufacturers and become familiar with the various support programs and organizations.

Partner(s): Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance (AREA), NMEDD, MEP, CNM, UNM, NMSU, and New Mexico Department of Agriculture

Funding: U.S. Small Business Administration

**RESOURCE:
NM FUNIT**

New Mexico FUNDIT connects projects to funding opportunities from over 20 different state and federal entities – all at one meeting. For more information, visit: <https://nmfundit.org/>

Project: Launch innovation navigator program within county administration.

Partner(s): Torrance County and NMEDD

Funding: AmeriCorps VISTA

Strategy B.1–2 Arrange a small-scale mobile meat processing facility for community/ranching meat processing.

Project: Work with the ranching and agricultural community in the cluster to hold a series of public meetings and informational sessions on developing a small-scale mobile meat processing facility – its uses, care, maintenance, and operations/ownership structure.

Partner(s): NMSU Extension Service, USDA, County, Community Governing Bodies, and Community Organizations

Funding: USDA Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program

PRIORITY C. LACK OF REGIONAL COORDINATION



SOURCE:

- SWOT:
 - > Weakness: insufficient community engagement and consensus; political polarization
 - > Threat: population loss through outmigration
- Ecosystem/Gap Analysis: no cluster specific or subregional organizations available to coordinate efforts.

GOAL C.1 Increase collaboration amongst Torrance Cluster Communities and across cluster boundaries.

Strategy C.1–1 Organize a monthly virtual lunch of administrators, mayors, and planners.



RESILIENCE ROADMAP

Project: Host monthly virtual lunch and utilize stakeholder list of this project as a starting point.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, APA NM, New Mexico Municipal League, and MRCOG

PRIORITY D. LACK OF OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

SOURCE:

- SWOT:
 - > Weakness: limited access to funding because of limited operational capacities and trained employees; lack of trained workforce
 - > Threat: population loss due to out migration.

GOAL D.1 Increase operational capacities.

Strategy D.1–1 Connect with Rural Partners Network (RPN) and receive technical assistance on accessing alternative funding sources to increase staffing for rural communities' governing bodies.

Project: Apply for alternative funding for additional staffing

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies and MRCOG
Funding: USDA Rural Partners Network, EDA - Economic Recovery Corps and Equity Impact Investments Programs and AmeriCorps State Formula Grants

RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE GRANTS

This grant is intended to help non-profit housing and community development organizations, low-income rural communities and federally recognized tribes support housing, community facilities and community and economic development projects in rural areas.

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities/rural-community-development-initiative-grants>

PRIORITY E. LACK OF/OR UNRELIABLE BROADBAND

SOURCE:

- SWOT
 - > Weakness: lack of reliable broadband; opposition to growth.

GOAL E.1 Provide reliable broadband to all Torrance Cluster Communities.

Strategy E.1–1 Assess feasibility of installing improved broadband infrastructure.

Project: Apply for New Mexico Technical Assistance Program (NMTAP) funding through the New Mexico Department of Informational Technology (NM DoIT) for technical Assistance to prepare needs assessment, a high-level design and cost estimate for broadband deployment, evaluate funding options, and develop strategic approaches to obtain needed funding. Grant writing support can be accessed through Groundworks New Mexico.

Partner(s): Communities' and Adjacent Communities' Governing Bodies and Groundworks New Mexico

Funding: New Mexico Broadband Technical Assistance Program (NM TAP) and Groundworks Technical Assistance & Grant Writing Fund

Strategy E.1–2 Design and install broadband.

Project: Apply for State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program through the Department of Commerce

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies and Adjacent Communities

Funding: Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) and Department of Information Technology (DoIT)

GOAL E.1 Link local businesses with training resources and financial support to develop internet literacy and an online presence.

Strategy E.1–1 Identify small businesses that need support with creating an online presence and marketing their services, and connect them with the Small Business Development Center (NM SBDC).

Project: Develop an online presence and marketing training for small businesses.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies and New Mexico SBDC

Funding: New Mexico SBDC and USDA- Rural Business Development Grant

VALENCIA CLUSTER

VALENCIA CLUSTER SNAPSHOT

The Valencia Cluster encompasses all of Valencia County and includes the communities of Meadow Lake, Bosque Farms, Pajarito Mesa, Highland Meadows, Chical, Peralta, Los Lunas, Belen, Casa Colorada, El Cerro Mission, Jarales, Los Chaves, Rio Communities, Tome, Valencia, Adelino, Madrone, El Cerro, Pueblitos, Las Maravillas, Sausa, and Monterey Park. Most of the communities in the Valencia Cluster are located adjacent to Interstate-25. Los Lunas (roughly 16,000 residents) and Belen (approximately 7,500 residents) are the two largest communities and serve as the primary hubs for commerce and services.

VALENCIA CLUSTER COMMUNITIES ECONOMIC PROFILE

The overall population for the Valencia Cluster is 66,019 (ACS 2020 5-year estimate). Between 2010 and 2020, the population for the cluster decreased by 1.2%. By contrast, Bernalillo County, just north of Valencia, increased by 2.3%, and the population of the State of New Mexico increased by 1.6% over the same period.

The cluster’s median age is significantly older than the state and the country, as illustrated in [“Figure 45. Valencia Cluster Age distribution.”](#) This cluster has fewer people under 18 years old and more people in the 65 years age bracket than the state and country. The higher median age can be attributed to the communities that skew older and have more persons in the over 65 and over age range, including Bosque Farms (26.0%), Pajarito Mesa (24.0%), Peralta (19.0%), Los Chaves (18.0%), Rio Communities (24.0%), Adelino (36.0%), El Cerro (30.0%), Pueblitos (36.0%). This age composition should be considered when applying resiliency strategies. The older population may

require specialized services and training that considers the various levels of physical abilities and proficiencies.

FIGURE 45. VALENCIA CLUSTER AGE DISTRIBUTION

	Median Age	Under 18	18-64	Over 65
Valencia	47.2	21.7%	57.6%	20.9%
New Mexico	38.1	23.1%	60.0%	17.4%
United States	38.2	22.4%	62.0%	16.0%

Source: ACS 2020 5-year estimate

As identified in [“Figure 46. Valencia Cluster Housing,”](#) median home prices in the Valencia Cluster are slightly lower compared to the state and significantly lower compared to the country. The number of persons per household is somewhat higher than those in the state and the country. The number of homes built before 1990 is similar to the state and the country. During the stakeholder engagement, stakeholders mentioned the need for more housing, particularly affordable housing options. However, stakeholders also noted that many new homes were currently being built.

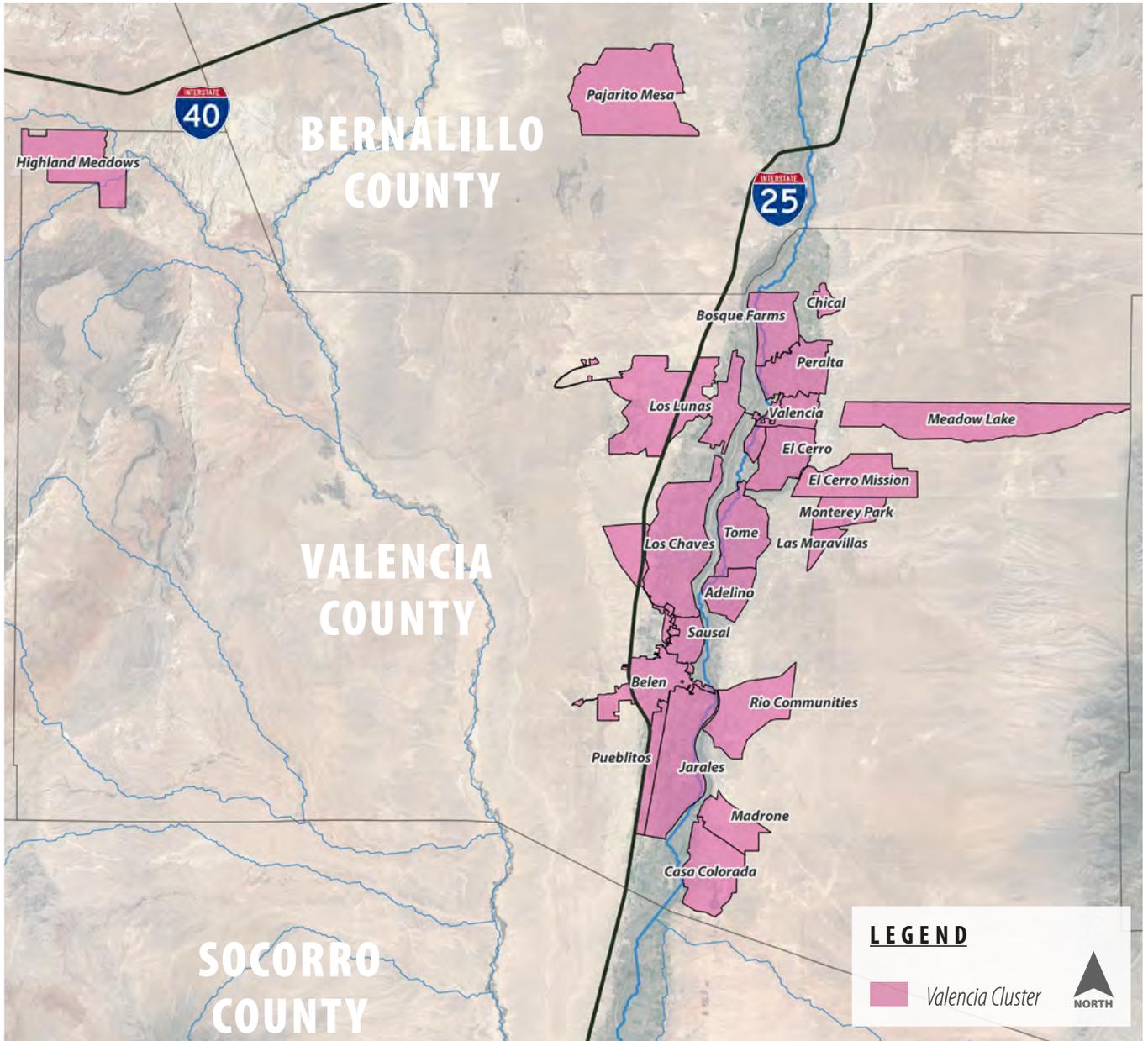
FIGURE 46. VALENCIA CLUSTER HOUSING

	Occupied Housing Units	2021 Median Home Value	Persons per HH Average	Homes built before 1990
Valencia	81.0%	\$171,101	2.8	14.7%
New Mexico	68.0%	\$197,184	2.6	12.1%
United States	64.0%	\$264,021	2.6	10.0%

Source: Esri 2021, ACS 2020 5-year estimate

Average household incomes, disposable incomes, and per capita incomes are lower than those in the state and country, as illustrated in [“Figure 47. Valencia Cluster Income Summary.”](#) This is partially reflected in the relatively low labor force participation rates across age groups compared to the state and nation. The economic dependency ratio is also higher than that of the state and country. During community meetings and interviews with individuals, County representatives, organizations, and stakeholders voiced concerns on behalf of industries and economic development professionals. Stakeholders saw the need to upskill or retrain the workforce to match

FIGURE 51.
MID-REGION - VALENCIA CLUSTER AREAS



RESILIENCY ROADMAP

employment opportunities in the County. The disconnect between the needs of employers and the training currently provided by higher education institutions are also documented in the State Economic Development Strategic Plan. Without targeted workforce training programs, this cluster will likely experience economic stratification where existing economic employment opportunities lift up some community members while others cannot realize gains because they lack the required job skills. This can be seen in the county's efforts to attract manufacturing and bioscience businesses. The companies that will move into the cluster require skilled labor to be successful. If those skills are locally unavailable, the labor force will come in from Albuquerque or other areas, and the local community will not benefit from jobs and wages. Targeted workforce development, training, and upskilling efforts are needed to match employment opportunities with the skills required.

FIGURE 47. VALENCIA CLUSTER INCOME SUMMARY

	2021 Average Household Income	2021 Average Disposable Income	2021 Per Capita Income	Poverty Rate
Valencia	\$69,165	\$55,364	\$25,433	23.4%
New Mexico	\$71,952	\$56,951	\$27,978	18.6%
United States	\$92,435	\$69,862	\$35,384	12.8%

Source: Esri 2021, ACS 2020 5-year estimate

VALENCIA CLUSTER INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

This cluster has numerous industrial parks and commercial/industrial building opportunities. It is well served by rail, roads (I-25 and I-40), and the Sunport. In Los Lunas, Meta (Facebook) recently opened a major data center, and Amazon has a large distribution center. A recently announced partnership between Manna Capital and Ball Corporation will invest \$2 billion to bring an

aluminum can sheet rolling mill and a recycling center to the Rail Park also in Los Lunas.

This cluster had a 7.6% unemployment rate with a 48.6% working-age labor force participation rate, as illustrated in [“Figure 48. Valencia Cluster Labor Force Characteristics.”](#)

FIGURE 48. VALENCIA CLUSTER LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

Age Group	Unemployment Rate			Labor Force Participation Rate		
	Valencia	New Mexico	United States	Valencia	New Mexico	United States
>16	7.6%	7.4%	6.2%	48.6%	55.4%	62.3%
16-24	11.9%	9.5%	11%	50.5%	52.1%	56.7%
25-54	7.2%	7.5%	5.7%	66.1%	73.7%	81.6%
55-64	3.7%	6.1%	5.1%	45.9%	56.3%	65.5%
65+	11.6%	5.9%	4.5%	13.0%	17.7%	20.2%

Source: Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.

The cluster's economic dependency ratio (EDR) is 179.2, which is higher than the state's EDR of 142 and higher than the country's average of 110.2, as illustrated in [“Figure 49. Valencia Cluster Economic Dependency Ratio.”](#) This EDR, coupled with the relatively low labor force participation rate, indicates that the working population of the cluster may be burdened by those not in the labor force or other dependents. It also suggests that the economy is slow to provide opportunities to all of its residents despite high-profile companies opening in the area. As new companies, like the recently announced aluminum mill, begin operation in the cluster, these workforce participation numbers and the EDR can be expected to improve.

FIGURE 49. VALENCIA CLUSTER ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY RATIO

	Economic Dependency Ratio
Valencia	179.2
New Mexico	142.1
United States	110.2

Source: Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.

This cluster primarily employs white-collar workers (53.2%) occupying jobs in Office/Administrative Support, Management, and Sales. When looking at location quotients for this area, Healthcare Support, Construction/Extraction, and Installation/Maintenance/Repair are the most specialized in the cluster.

A fourth target industry for the cluster is Transportation/Logistics. Because of its strategic position in the state (close to rail, air, and the intersection of I-25 and I-40), and its increasing manufacturing base, the cluster has an opportunity to grow this industry through coordinated strategic investments.

Core industries for this cluster are identified in “[Figure 50. Core Industries in the Valencia Cluster.](#)” These are the industries with the highest percentage of employees, number of businesses, and the most specialized according to the location quotient (LQ). These industries represent the most significant portion of economic activity in the cluster. Resilience strategies aimed at economic diversification seek to capitalize on growing industries like transportation and warehousing, where the cluster is well positioned to become a regional and national leader.

FIGURE 50. CORE INDUSTRIES IN THE VALENCIA CLUSTER

Core Industry	Percentage of Employees	LQ	# of Businesses
Construction	12.9%	1.74	96
Transportation/Warehousing	6.7%	1.43	29
Retail Trade	11.6%	1.2	234
Healthcare Social Assistance	16.2%	1.07	137
Government/Public Administration	8.8%	1.83	75

Source: Esri Business Analyst 2022.

The New Mexico State Economic Development Strategic Plan identifies ten target industries for statewide economic diversification and growth. Of those ten industries, the Valencia Cluster is well positioned to capitalize on three. These include:

- Manufacturing (Intelligent Manufacturing)
- Life Sciences/Bioscience
- Outdoor Recreation

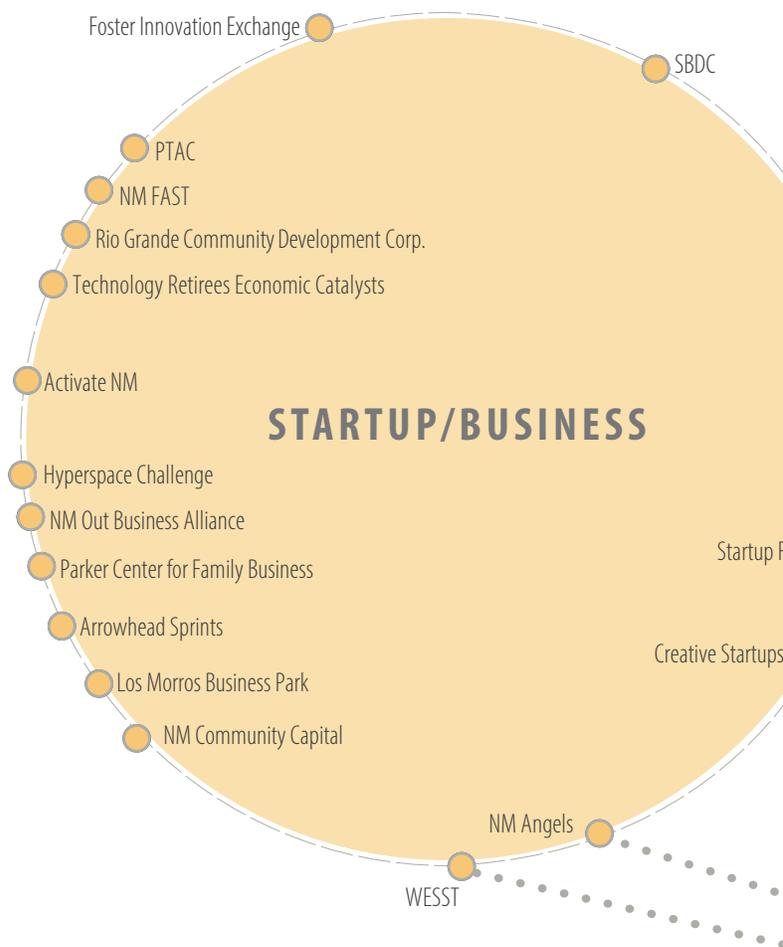
VALENCIA CLUSTER GAP ANALYSIS

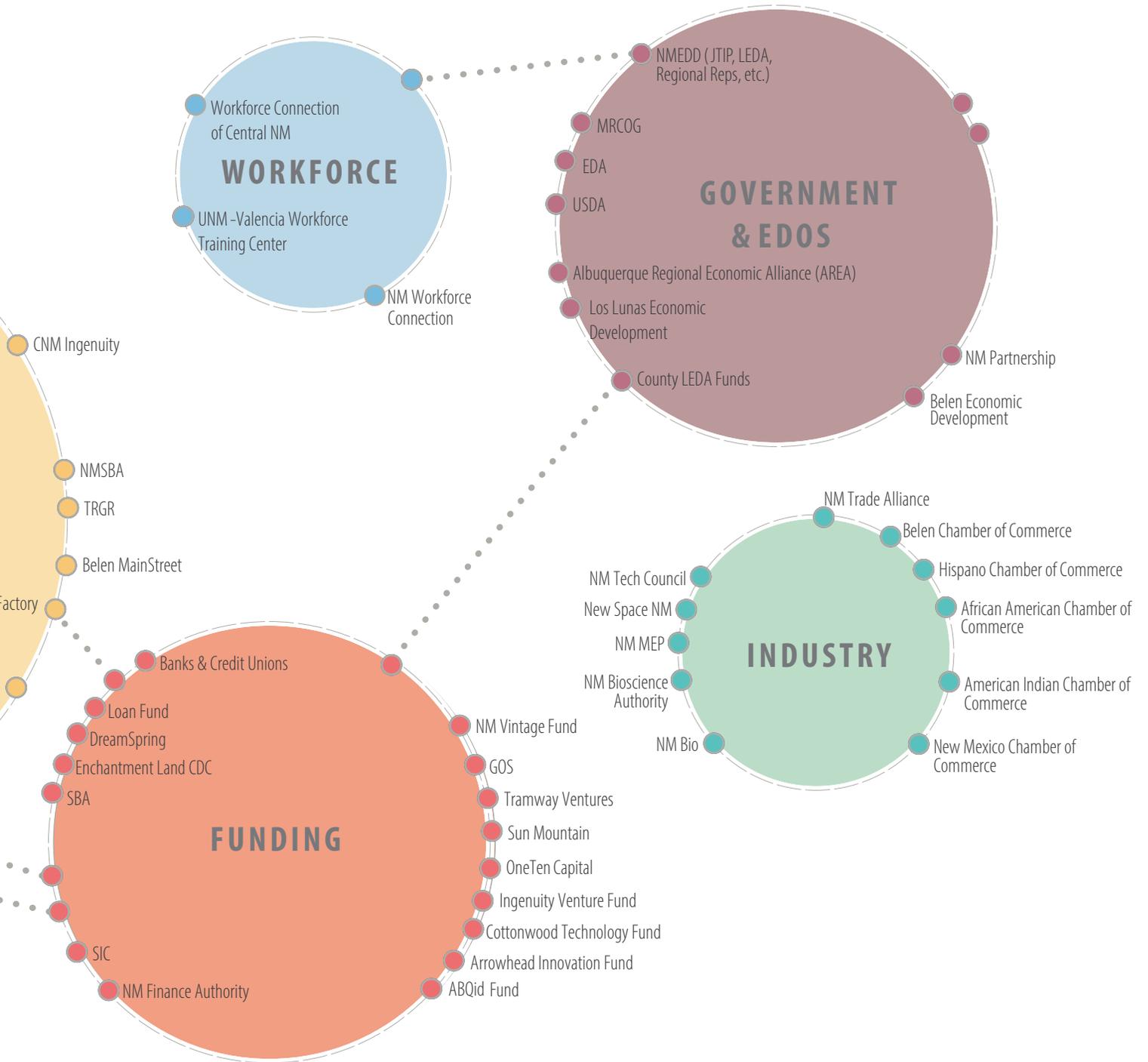
Resources in this cluster are dedicated to recruiting and establishing transportation and logistics, manufacturing companies, and the stability and growth of existing businesses. The Los Lunas Economic Development Division has succeeded in recruiting companies like Amazon, Meta, and Manna Capital Partners to the cluster over the last few years. The Belen Chamber of Commerce and the Belen MainStreet organization have also been instrumental in retaining businesses in the cluster by providing networking opportunities, technical and property redevelopment assistance, and small grants. Higher education and workforce training are also present in this cluster through the UNM Valencia workforce training center and Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico. However, a disconnect between the needs of employers and the training currently provided by higher education institutions exists, which is documented in the State Economic Development Strategic Plan.

Workforce training initiatives in this cluster can be further developed to better align skills and education with the needs of the companies moving into the area.

Capital accessibility, especially from within the cluster, is also lacking. The same is true for entrepreneur and small business support programs. This cluster is well positioned to launch programs like accelerators, especially in industry clusters like transportation, logistics, and manufacturing. These programs can help the cluster build a local base of companies and local suppliers for the larger companies relocating or expanding into the area.

FIGURE 52. VALENCIA CLUSTER GAP ANALYSIS





VALENCIA CLUSTER SWOT

Each cluster has its unique strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Some of these are unique to each cluster; others are shared. Understanding the unique strengths, opportunities, and weaknesses is essential to identifying suitable strategies for greater resilience.

The Valencia Cluster has established itself as an area of economic opportunities. Meta’s most recent data center in Valencia County is

the highest-profile data center in the region. Transportation/Logistics is another area in which the cluster can grow. This industry is experiencing rapid technological changes as the need to transition to cleaner fuel types and different modes of transportation becomes imperative. This offers an opportunity for spin-off businesses and tech transfers from the ABQ Metro Cluster to the south. Clean Energy Manufacturing and manufacturing are potential areas of growth as well.

FIGURE 53. **VALENCIA CLUSTER SWOT**

STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Location (Proximity to I-25 and Albuquerque).</i> <i>Diversity of local businesses.</i> <i>BNSF (Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad).</i> <i>City of Belen Visitor Center.</i> <i>Meta and associated jobs.</i> <i>Regional airport and associated business and jobs.</i> <i>Historic Mainstreet/art district.</i> <i>Existing long-range planning activities and collaboration with neighboring communities.</i> <i>Access to the Rio Grande open space areas.</i> <i>Farming and ranching.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Perception of crime.</i> <i>Lack of operational capacity.</i> <i>Poor access to healthcare.</i> <i>Insufficient community engagement.</i> <i>Lack of transit to access other parts of the cluster and jobs/services in Albuquerque.</i> <i>Aging/insufficient infrastructure.</i> <i>Lack of workforce with appropriate skills.</i> <i>Lack of affordable, or adequate housing units.</i>
OPPORTUNITY	THREAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>New businesses and associated job opportunities (Economic Base Jobs).</i> <i>UNM Workforce Training Center and associated training and job opportunities.</i> <i>Housing growth in Los Lunas through people moving into the cluster and associated construction jobs and business opportunities created through added rooftops.</i> <i>Defense-related industries, businesses, and job opportunities.</i> <i>Clean energy manufacturing businesses and job opportunities.</i> <i>Transportation/logistics businesses and job opportunities.</i> <i>Manufacturing (intelligent manufacturing) and related businesses and job opportunities.</i> <i>Life Sciences/Bioscience and related businesses and job opportunities.</i> <i>Outdoor recreation businesses and job opportunities.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Drought/access to water.</i> <i>Increase in days with extreme heat.</i> <i>Wildfires and associated flooding.</i> <i>Ranch/farmland and site management issues and associated increase of erosion.</i> <i>Extreme weather events.</i> <i>Continued supply chain disruptions and inflation.</i>

VALENCIA CLUSTER KEY FINDINGS:

- 1.** *The cluster is aging, requiring specialized services and training that considers the various levels of physical abilities and proficiencies.*
- 2.** *Stakeholders see the need for more housing, particularly affordable housing options.*
- 3.** *The cluster has a low labor force participation rate, and targeted workforce development, training, and upskilling efforts are needed to match employment opportunities with skills required.*
- 4.** *The cluster has economic assets such as an industrial park and commercial/industrial building opportunities.*
- 5.** *The high economic dependency ratio country and low labor force participation rate suggest that there are not enough economic employment opportunities.*
- 6.** *Healthcare Support, Construction/Extraction, and Installation/Maintenance/Repair are the most specialized industries in the cluster.*
- 7.** *Core industries include Construction, Transportation/Warehousing, Retail Trade, Healthcare/Social Assistance, and Government/Public Administration.*
- 8.** *Target diversification industries include Manufacturing (Intelligent Manufacturing), Life Sciences/Bioscience, Outdoor Recreation, and Transportation/Logistics.*
- 9.** *Resources in this cluster are dedicated to the recruitment and establishment of transportation and logistics, manufacturing companies, and the stability and growth of existing businesses.*
- 10.** *Capital accessibility, especially from within the cluster, is lacking.*
- 11.** *The cluster is well positioned to launch programs like accelerators, especially in industry clusters like transportation, logistics, and manufacturing.*

VALENCIA CLUSTER PRIORITY AREAS

The following Priority Areas for the Valencia Cluster were developed based on the analysis of existing economic conditions, the hazards assessment, and extensive stakeholder engagement. Region-wide Priority Areas are identified in the [“Regional Goals” on page 33](#).

For the Valencia Cluster, the list below details the top five cluster specific Priority Areas. The following section identifies goals, strategies, and projects to guide the Valencia Cluster in addressing each Priority Area. The Priority Areas are based on [“Figure 9. Priority Areas” on page 31](#).

VALENCIA CLUSTER PRIORITY AREAS

-  **Lack of Economic Diversification**
-  **Lack of Workforce/Unemployment**
-  **Crime and Safety**
-  **Lack of Operational Capacity**
-  **Insufficient Public Engagement**
-  **Lack of Affordable Housing** (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)
-  **Drought/Access to Water** (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)
-  **Wildfire/Flooding** (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)
-  **Energy Independence** (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)

VALENCIA CLUSTER GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND PROJECTS

The following goals, strategies, and associated projects will support the cluster in achieving greater resilience. While many threats and challenges can disrupt and weaken the economy, the cluster specific Priority Areas are identified as the most impactful in meeting some of the community's most pressing needs.

PRIORITY A. ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION



SOURCE:

- *Ecosystem/Gap Analysis: cluster-specific workforce, business, and entrepreneur technical assistance and resources available; gap in cluster-specific funding availability*
- *SWOT*
 - > *Strengths: location (proximity to I-25 and ABQ); BNSF; Meta; regional airport; existing long-range planning and collaboration with neighboring communities; farming and ranching*
 - > *Opportunity: new economic base jobs; UNM workforce training center; defense-related industries and job growth; clean energy manufacturing; transportation & logistics; manufacturing (intelligent/advanced); life sciences & biotech; outdoor recreation*
 - > *Weakness: lack of appropriate commercial/industrial space; lack of workforce with relevant skills*
 - > *Threat: supply chain disruptions and sustained inflation.*

GOAL A.1 Provide resources like business incubators, second stage business incubators, business parks, technology parks, or specialized equipment for companies that have graduated from state business incubator programs.

Strategy A.1-1 Conduct feasibility planning as a first step in the development of business incubators to find the most advantageous location, size, and amenities in line with market needs and model for the second-stage business incubation.

Project: Work with partners in the industry (e.g. Colliers, NM Bioscience Authority, etc.) to create an exploratory group aimed at guiding the feasibility study and planning process.

Project: Conduct a feasibility study.

EXPLAINED: NEW MEXICO ANTI-DONATION CLAUSE

The anti-donation clause does not apply when supporting the building of facilities that can be accessed by companies. These facilities/programs are often called business incubators, second stage business incubators, business parks, or technology parks.

EXPLAINED: SECOND STAGE BUSINESS INCUBATION

Business incubation provides support and resources to young promising startup companies so that they can survive the tumultuous and risky initial stages of business growth and expansion. When businesses in an incubator reach a certain stage of growth they graduate out of the program and the facility. Second stage business incubation supports later stage startup companies as they begin to scale their operations. These programs are typically aimed at industries like bioscience and intelligent manufacturing where a company's runway to product development is much longer and they need specialized facilities and labs to maintain momentum.

RESILIENCE ROADMAP

Partner(s): Colliers, NM Bioscience Authority, NM Bio, MEP, State Chamber of Commerce, and NMEDD

Funding: EDA and USDA RBDG

Strategy A.1–2 Work with state-certified business incubators, venture capital firms/angel investors, and other support and funding programs in bioscience and/or intelligent manufacturing industries to align resources, strategies, and projects.

Project: Schedule a monthly meeting with support and funding organizations that are working in the bioscience and/or intelligent manufacturing industries and invite startups in these industries to participate.

Partner(s): WESST, Santa Fe Business Incubator, San Juan Enterprise Center, Bioscience Center, New Mexico Consortium, Sandia Science and Tech Park, NM Angels, UNM STC, and UNM Rain Forest Innovations

Funding: NA (Internal)

GOAL A.2 Promote cluster as prime location for transportation and logistics companies to expand into, relocate to, or launch within.

Strategy A.2–1 Develop a logistics and transportation innovation hub that will help launch new businesses, create a soft landing for relocating or expanding businesses, and connect transportation and logistics companies with innovation resources in the state like the national labs, research universities, and military installations.

Project: Conduct feasibility planning for location, development, and construction of the innovation hub.

Partner(s): Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance (AREA), MRCOG, Los Lunas Economic Development, Belen Economic Development, and New Mexico Economic Development Department

Funding: EDA planning grants

Strategy A.2–2 Introduce legislation to designate the innovation hub as a State Transportation & Logistics Center of Excellence.

Project: Expand the legislation that created four New Mexico Centers of Excellence in 2019 (Bioscience at UNM, Cybersecurity at NM Tech, Sustainable and Renewable Energy at San Juan College, and Sustainable Agriculture at

RESOURCE: WESST

WESST provides training, one-on-one consulting and loans to help entrepreneurs start and grow sustainable small businesses. For more information, visit: <https://www.wesst.org/>



EXAMPLE: NM BIOSCIENCE AUTHORITY

This strategy is modeled on the creation of the NM Bioscience Authority that was created and eventually funded by the NM Legislature to be the cluster development body for the biosciences in the state.



NMSU) to require the creation of the State Transportation and Logistics Center of Excellence. Affiliate the center with a university (e.g. UNM Valencia).

Partner(s): State Legislators from Districts within the cluster, UNM Valencia, AREA, MRCOG, Los Lunas Economic Development, Belen Economic Development, and New Mexico Economic Development Department

Funding: NA (Internal)

Strategy A. 2–3 With the Center of Excellence designation create the Transportation & Logistics Cluster Authority.

Project: Request that a Transportation & Logistics Authority be created from the NM State Legislature. This could be done in tandem with requests for a Center of Excellence or after the Center of Excellence is created.

Partner(s): NM Bioscience Authority, Cluster State Legislators, UNM Valencia, MRCOG, Los Lunas Economic Development, Belen Economic Development, and New Mexico Economic Development Department

Funding: Likely lobbying expense that could be wrapped into an existing contract with communities or counties

PRIORITY B. LACK OF WORKFORCE/ UNEMPLOYMENT



SOURCE:

- *Economic Profile: higher overall unemployment and lower workforce participation rates than the state and country*
- *Ecosystem/Gap Analysis: available workforce training programs and facilities; need to better coordinate training with needs of industries*
- *SWOT:*
 - > *Weakness: lack of workforce with appropriate skills.*

GOAL B.1 Increase workforce participation rates.

Strategy B.1–1 Enable more people to enter the workforce by creating childcare, eldercare, and other specialty care services and programs.

Project: Create a program aimed at helping child and eldercare businesses launch in the cluster.

Partner(s): NMEDD, NM MainStreet, Los Lunas Economic Development, and Belen Chamber of Commerce

Funding: LEADS and NM MainStreet Rural and Frontier Communities Program

Strategy B.1–2 Educate employers about the potential benefits, such as tax credits, from hiring individuals who have been historically marginalized and left out of the hiring process: ex prisoners, disabled, veterans, etc.

Project: Develop a campaign to educate employers about the tax benefits of hiring certain marginalized populations.

Partner(s): Los Lunas Economic Development, Belen Chamber of Commerce, NMEDD, and New Mexico Tax and Revenue

Funding: U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Pathway Home Grant Program

RESOURCE: WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a federal tax credit that encourages employers to hire workers from nine target groups. The tax credit is designed to help job seekers gain on-the-job experience, move towards economic self-sufficiency, and help reduce employers federal tax liability. For more information visit: <https://www.dws.state.nm.us/en-us/WOTC>



PRIORITY C. CRIME AND PUBLIC SAFETY



SOURCE:

- SWOT:
 - > Weakness: perception of crime
 - > Strength: historic MainStreet district.

GOAL C.1 Create attractions that increase activity on MainStreet with placemaking strategies.

Strategy C.1–1 Work with MainStreet organizations to identify spaces for attractions and programming, and develop attractions and regular programming for the MainStreet area to increase numbers of visitors.

Project: Install a visually appealing, photogenic attraction, or a series of attractions for social media.

Project: Program main public spaces to attract visitors throughout the week.

Partner(s): MainStreet, UNM, CNM, and Community Governing Bodies

Funding: New Mexico Arts, New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, and National Endowment for the Arts

DEFINITION: PLACEMAKING AND PROGRAMMING

Placemaking is creating quality places where people want to live, work, play, and learn. One strategy is to program spaces by organizing events and activities, which in turn attract people and helps activates an area. For more information visit: <https://www.pps.org/article/ten-strategies-for-transforming-cities-through-placemaking-public-spaces>

EXAMPLE: LAWN ON D, BOSTON

The Lawn on D is an outdoor event space adjacent to the Boston Convention Center Authority. The space is used to test strategies and interventions to facilitate community engagement and nurture local arts. It has attracted a lot of activity and attention nationwide. For more information visit: <https://www.pps.org/places/the-lawn-on-d>

PRIORITY D. LACK OF OPERATIONAL CAPACITY



SOURCE:

- SWOT:
 - > Weakness: lack of operational capacity.

GOAL D.1 Increase Valencia Cluster Communities' operational capacities.

Strategy D.1–1 Apply for funding to employ additional staff members.

Project: Assess operational capacities and identify what type of hire should be made.

EXAMPLE: MICE ON MAINSTREET

In Greenville, South Carolina, nine bronze mice were placed along the Main Street as part of a high school senior project in 2000. As a result, the "Mice on Main Street." have become a visitor attraction and encourage visitors to stroll down Main Street. For more information visit: <https://www.visitgreenvillesc.com/things-to-do/signature-experiences/mice-on-main/>

Project: Write a grant for funding for additional staff.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Groundworks, USDA, MRCOG, and New Mexico Municipal League

Funding: USDA - Rural Community Development Initiative Grants, Groundworks New Mexico, Federal Grant Writing Fund, and McCune Foundation

PRIORITY E. INSUFFICIENT PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



SOURCE:

- Ecosystem/Gap Analysis: lack of coordinating body for the cluster; organizations like EVEDA and the Chamber that can contribute to coordination efforts
- SWOT:
 - > Weakness: insufficient community engagement.

GOAL E.1 Increase community engagement.

Strategy E.1–1 Create a public outreach plan to identify strategies to engage the community. Meet with various stakeholder groups to better understand how they would prefer to be engaged.

Project: Engage the public through strategies identified in the public outreach plan.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Neighborhood Organizations, and Community Advocacy Groups

Funding: EDA - Economic Recovery Corps and Equity Impact Investments Programs

Strategy E.1–2 Identify virtual engagement tools to increase participation.

Project: Create a platform for mobile participation (MParticipation).

Project: Develop an outreach plan/how-to guide to introduce the mobile participation to the community and train community members on this new tool.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Neighborhood Organizations, Community Advocacy Groups, EDA - Economic Recovery Corps and Equity Impact Investments Programs and AmeriCorps State Formula Grants

Funding: McCune Foundation (Foundation Priorities, Influencing Planning of Built Environments)

RESOURCE: MOBILE PARTICIPATION



Smartphones open channels of communication between citizens, institutions and administrations, and offer greater access to public information, and facilitate increased participation. The paper 'Mobile Participation: Citizen Engagement in Urban Planning via Smartphones' outlines several mobile engagement tools for stakeholder engagement. For more information, visit: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/291749584_Mobile_Participation_Citizen_Engagement_in_Urban_Planning_via_Smartphones

RESOURCE: PUBLIC OUTREACH GUIDE



The City of Ft. Collins created a Public Outreach guide to create and maintain a community that is educated, aware, motivated, engaged, and fulfilled. The guide aims to create "opportunities for citizens to take part in the conversation, to learn, and to work with others, not just provide input." This guide is a great resource and could serve as a starting point to re-imagine the public process. For more information visit: <https://www.fcgov.com/excellence/files/publicengagementguide.pdf>

RESOURCE: MCCUNE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION



The McCune Charitable Foundation supports community-based work in the State of New Mexico that aligns with the nine Foundation Priorities and corresponding Leverage Points. For more information, visit: <https://nmmccune.org/grant-eligibility/#eligibility-guide>

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ABQ METRO CLUSTER

ABQ METRO CLUSTER SNAPSHOT

The ABQ Metro Cluster includes 11 communities in the Albuquerque Metro area, located in Bernalillo and Sandoval County. Rio Rancho, Los Ranchos de Albuquerque, Albuquerque, Corrales, Paradise Hills, North Valley, South Valley, Sandia Heights, Edith Ave, and Placitas are part of this cluster.

The ABQ Metro Cluster is the most dense cluster in the MRCOG region, and the challenges these communities face are unique when compared to more rural places like the Sandoval and Torrance Clusters. The City of Albuquerque, with 560,500 people, has the highest population in the cluster, followed by Rio Rancho with 102,700 people. These two municipalities serve as the primary commercial and service hubs for the cluster.

ABQ METRO CLUSTER COMMUNITIES ECONOMIC PROFILE

The overall population for the ABQ Metro Cluster is 746,733 (ACS 2020 5-year estimate). Between 2010 and 2019, the population for the cluster increased by 3.6%, a more significant increase than Bernalillo County (2.3%) and New Mexico (1.6%).

The median age in the cluster is slightly older (41.2) when compared to the state or the country, as illustrated in [“Figure 54. ABQ Metro Cluster Age distribution.”](#) Communities including Placitas, Corrales, Los Ranchos de Albuquerque, and Sandia Heights skew older. At the same time, Albuquerque and Rio Rancho are similar in their age distribution to the state and the country.

FIGURE 54. [ABQ METRO CLUSTER AGE DISTRIBUTION](#)

	Median Age	Under 18	18-64	Over 65
ABQ Metro	41.2	17.9%	57.7%	23.1%
New Mexico	38.1	23.1%	60.0%	17.4%
United States	38.2	22.4%	62.0%	16.0%

Source: ACS 2020 5-year estimate

A slightly higher number of units are occupied in the Metro cluster compared to the state and the country, as illustrated in [“Figure 54. ABQ Metro Cluster Age distribution.”](#) Median home values are higher when compared with the state but lower when compared with the country as a whole. The number of homes built before 1990 is slightly higher than in the county or state. The need for more affordable housing was a primary concern voiced during the stakeholder engagement. Looking at the data, the high percentage of occupied units supports this need. The higher percentage of homes built before 1990 may also suggest the need for housing rehabilitation and restoration.

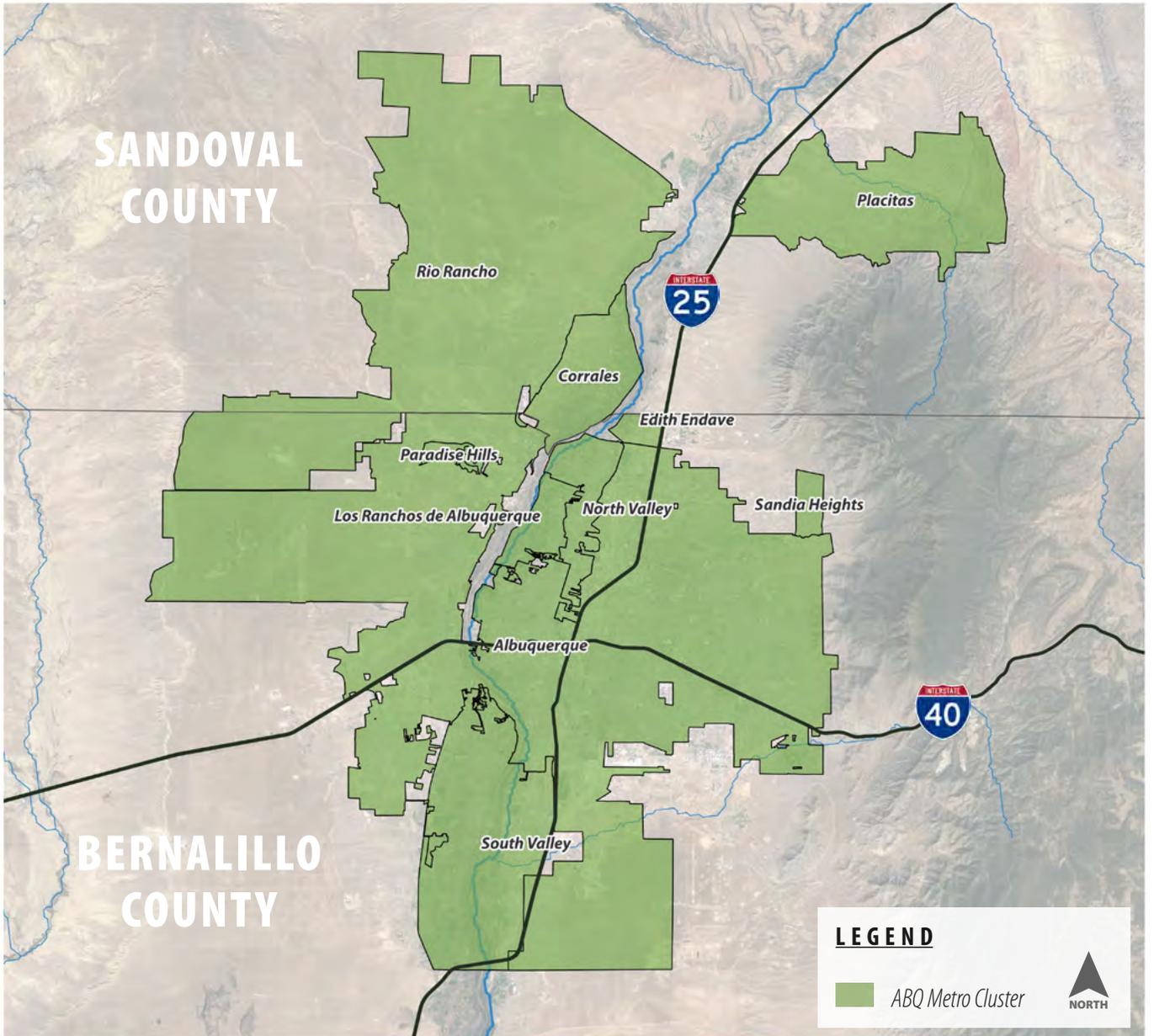
FIGURE 55. [ABQ METRO CLUSTER HOUSING](#)

	Occupied Housing Units	2021 Median Home Value	Persons per HH Average	Homes built before 1990
ABQ Metro	92.8%	\$227,508	2.6	15.6%
New Mexico	68.0%	\$197,184	2.6	12.1%
United States	64.0%	\$264,021	2.6	10.0%

Source: Esri 2021, ACS 2020 5-year estimate

The annual average household income in the ABQ Metro Cluster is higher than the average income in the remainder of the state; however, it is slightly lower than average incomes in the country, as illustrated in [“Figure 56. ABQ Metro Cluster Income Summary.”](#) Per capita incomes are also higher than incomes in the state but lower than incomes in the country. The cluster’s poverty rate is considerably lower than the rest of the state. However, this data is a little skewed. The communities of Corrales (4.9%), Sandia Heights (0.9%), and Placitas (5.1%) have very low poverty rates, whereas, in other areas of the cluster, the poverty rates are significantly higher. While the metro cluster includes some of the wealthiest

FIGURE 60.
MID-REGION - ABQ METRO CLUSTER



communities in New Mexico, it also has some of the worst poverty. Therefore, creating economic opportunities is necessary for this cluster to begin to improve living standards and break the cycle of poverty.

FIGURE 56. ABQ METRO CLUSTER INCOME SUMMARY

	2021 Average Household Income	2021 Average Disposable Income	2021 Per Capita Income	Poverty Rate
ABQ Metro	\$79,934	\$62,463	\$31,979	10.8%
New Mexico	\$71,952	\$56,951	\$27,978	18.6%
United States	\$92,435	\$69,862	\$35,384	12.8%

Source: Esri 2021, ACS 2020 5-year estimate

ABQ METRO CLUSTER INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

This Community Cluster includes the City of Albuquerque and Rio Rancho, amongst others, and encompasses the challenges and opportunities of a mid-sized city in the modern era. For New Mexico and the Mid-Region, this cluster has high levels of economic activity, engines for innovation and workforce development, and cluster development opportunities for many of the state's target industries for economic diversification (NM's target industries are Biosciences, Space & Aerospace, Cyber Security, Film and Television, Outdoor Recreation, Sustainable and Value-Added Agriculture, Intelligent Manufacturing, Global Trade, and Sustainable & Green Energy). In addition, this cluster is home to the main campuses of the University of New Mexico and Central New Mexico Community College, the Air Force Research Laboratory, Kirtland Airforce Base, and Sandia National Labs, along with several business incubators, accelerators, and coworking spaces. This cluster is also the center of risk capital and entrepreneurship for the state. However, these assets are counter-balanced by economic and income inequality, crime and concerns over public safety, and a downtown core suffering from disinvestment and work-from-home trends that keep some employees out of downtown office buildings.

In 2021, this cluster had a 6.3% unemployment rate with a 57.7% working-age labor force participation rate, as illustrated in [“Figure 57. ABQ Metro Cluster Labor Force Characteristics.”](#)

FIGURE 57. ABQ METRO CLUSTER LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

Age Group	Unemployment Rate			Labor Force Participation Rate		
	ABQ Metro	New Mexico	United States	ABQ Metro	New Mexico	United States
>16	6.3%	7.4%	6.2%	60.6%	55.4%	62.3%
16-24	8.5%	9.5%	11%	59.5%	52.1%	56.7%
25-54	5.6%	7.5%	5.7%	78.5%	73.7%	81.6%
55-64	6.3%	6.1%	5.1%	60.1%	56.3%	65.5%
65+	8.5%	5.9%	4.5%	18.5%	17.7%	20.2%

Source: Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.

The cluster's economic dependency ratio (EDR) is 119, which is low compared to the state's EDR of 142 but slightly higher than the countries average of 110.2, as illustrated in [“Figure 58. ABQ Metro Cluster Economic Dependency Ratio.”](#) This EDR generally indicates that the working population of the cluster is not overly burdened, but there is room for more residents to enter the workforce and contribute to the overall economy. Workforce development and training could increase workforce participation and support for businesses that enable people to return to work, such as daycares and elderly care.

FIGURE 58. ABQ METRO CLUSTER ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY RATIO

	Economic Dependency Ratio
ABQ Metro	119
New Mexico	142.1
United States	110.2

Source: Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.

Workers in this cluster are primarily employed in white-collar occupations, with 67.8% holding those jobs. Within the white-collar occupations, Management, Office/Administrative Support, and Sales have the highest percentage of workers.

Core industries for this cluster are identified in “[Figure 59. Core Industries in the ABQ Metro Cluster](#)” on page 131. These are the industries with the highest percentage of employees, number of businesses, are the most specialized according to the location quotient (LQ), and represent the industries with the most significant portion of economic activity.

For the ABQ Metro Cluster, it is also essential to maintain a vibrant and viable downtown core and commercial corridors. This not only helps attract workers and businesses to the area but also maintains a sense of community and pride in place that lends cohesiveness to the cluster. Supporting maintenance and revitalization efforts is necessary for resilience and recovery strategies.

FIGURE 59. CORE INDUSTRIES IN THE ABQ METRO CLUSTER

Core Industry	Percentage of Employees	LQ	# of Businesses
Retail Trade	11%	1	3,698
Healthcare/Social Assistance	18%	1	2,968
Professional/Scientific/Tech	9.8%	1.2	2,953
Accommodation & Food Service	7%	1.25	1,864
Educational Services	10.2%	1	761
Government/Public Administration	6.9%	1	578

Source: Esri Business Analyst 2022.

The New Mexico State Economic Development Strategic Plan outlines ten target industries for economic diversification in the state. These ten industries are:

- Life Sciences /Biosciences
- Space & Aerospace
- Film, Television, & Media
- Cyber Security
- Intelligent/Advanced Manufacturing
- Clean Energy
- Value Added Agriculture
- Global Trade
- Outdoor Recreation
- Uranium Mine Reclamation

Except for Uranium Mine Reclamation and Cyber Security, the ABQ Metro Cluster is poised to take the lead in the state in launching, expanding, and attracting companies in these industries. In addition to the state’s target industries, the cluster is also well positioned in the state to grow the overall tech sector.

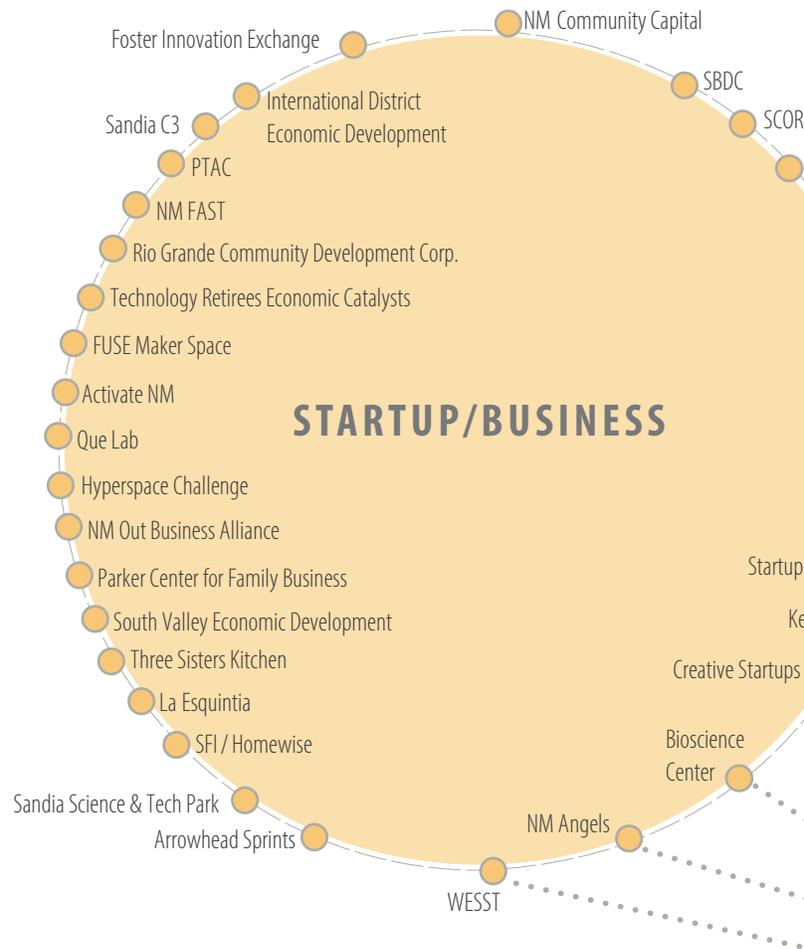
ABQ METRO CLUSTER GAP ANALYSIS

This cluster has numerous community asset-based economic development programs like MainStreet and the Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) that work to assist small businesses and build a more robust downtown and community core. The Albuquerque metro area is also home to many of the state’s innovation assets like Sandia National Labs, the Airforce Research Lab, and the University of New Mexico’s main campus. These are complemented by technology transfer and high-tech entrepreneur assistance programs like UNM Rainforest, the Sandia Science and Tech Park, Q Station, and the Bioscience Center.

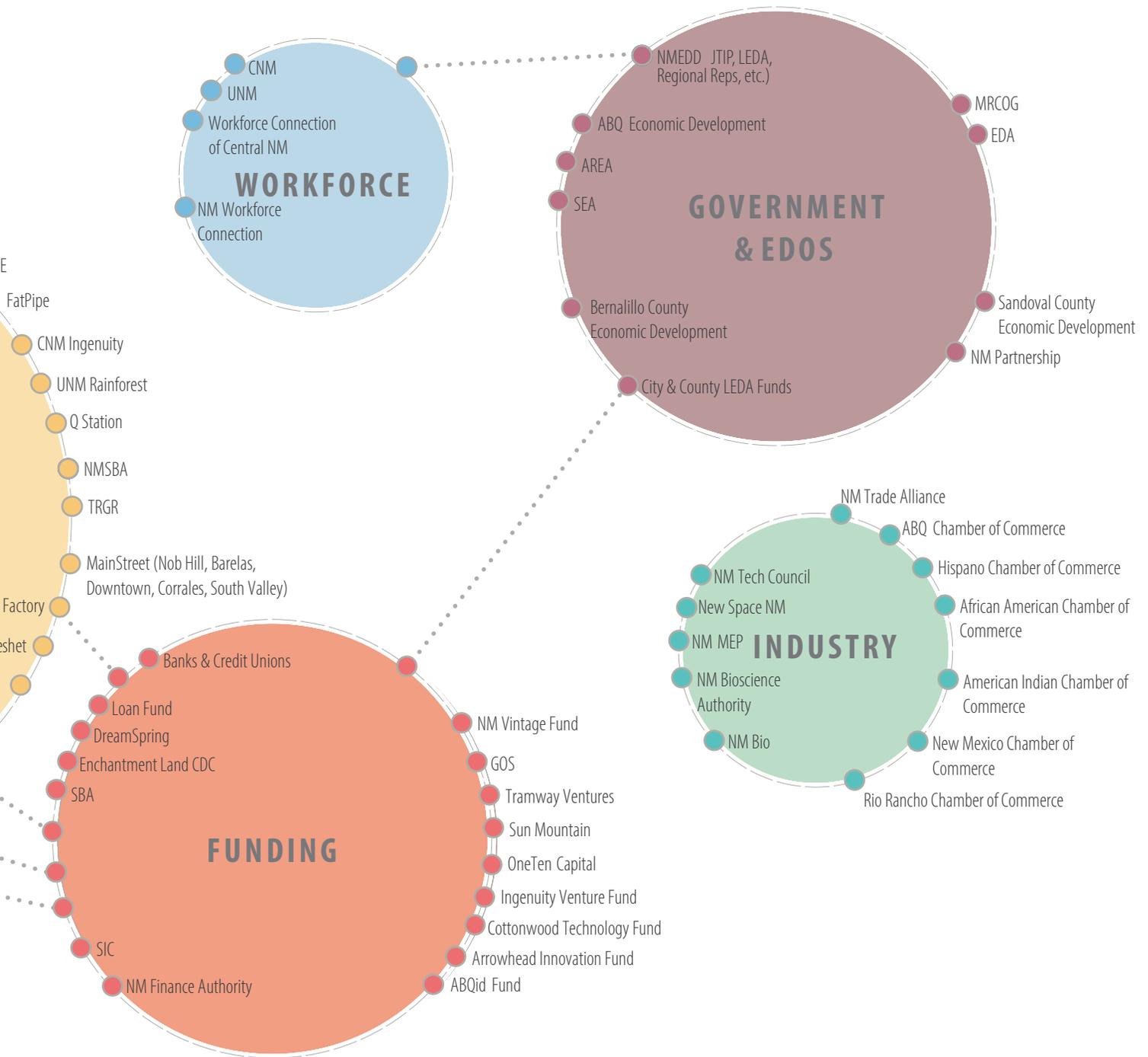
While the ABQ Metro Cluster has many of the elements necessary to grow industries like Bioscience and Aerospace, it lacks adequate facilities and capital to expand them. Many venture capital firms in the gap analysis have a statewide presence even though most of their investments are made in Albuquerque or Santa Fe-based companies. There is insufficient private investment (deal flow) made into businesses in the ABQ Metro Cluster to support growing industries like Bioscience and Aerospace that require private capital to launch, scale, and generate wealth. The 2021 Pitchbook-NVCA Venture Monitor Report ranked states by the number of venture deals and the value of venture deals. New Mexico did not make the top 20 in either category. However, neighboring states Texas, Arizona, Colorado, and Utah made the top 20 in value of deals, and Texas, Colorado, and Utah made the top 20 in several deals.

There is also some momentum in building wet labs (laboratories equipped with plumbing ventilation, and equipment to allow hands-on research and experimentation) or other necessary facilities to help grow these high-tech clusters. Support for these initiatives in the form of grant funding and administration assistance or planning and regulatory assistance can go a long way in accelerating their development.

FIGURE 61. **ABQ METRO CLUSTER GAP ANALYSIS**



Apart from programs run by organizations like WESST and International District Economic Development, capital is difficult for small businesses and micro-enterprises to obtain, especially those founded by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) or historically disadvantaged and marginalized populations. The Collateral Assistance Program (CAP), run out of NMEDD, is designed to fill some gaps, and may be expanded in the next few months with federal



assistance. However, this continues to be an area where small grants or loans can majorly impact the viability and overall future success of small businesses in the cluster. As evidenced by the CARES Act funding (e.g. City of Albuquerque Small Business Economic Relief Grant Program, City of Rio Rancho CARES Act Small Business Grant,

and Bernalillo County CARES Small Business Grant) that helped businesses overcome COVID-related business obstacles, small grants can have large impacts, especially during disasters. These disasters need not be of pandemic scale, but can be internal disasters like a piece of equipment breaking down or an owner being hospitalized.



ABQ METRO CLUSTER SWOT

Each cluster has its unique strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Some of these are unique to each cluster; others are shared. Understanding the unique strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats is important to identify suitable strategies for greater resilience.

The ABQ Metro Cluster SWOT analysis was informed by input received through stakeholder

engagement, the economic analysis of the cluster, and a natural and man-made hazard assessment for the region.

FIGURE 62. **ABQ METRO CLUSTER**

STRENGTH	WEAKNESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Diversity of cultures.</i> <i>Access to the outdoors/outdoor recreation.</i> <i>Existing diversity of local businesses.</i> <i>Renewable energy.</i> <i>Existing richness of startups.</i> <i>Amazon, Netflix, and other Fortune 500 companies.</i> <i>Route 66.</i> <i>History and culture.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Insufficient community engagement.</i> <i>Lack of affordable housing.</i> <i>Perception of crime and feeling unsafe.</i> <i>Lack of community governance leadership.</i> <i>Lack of workforce.</i> <i>Opposition to development with increased density.</i> <i>Need for more investment in transit and active transportation.</i> <i>Sprawl and development patterns that are costly to manage and water intensive.</i> <i>Aging infrastructure.</i>
OPPORTUNITY	THREAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Life sciences/biosciences related businesses and job opportunities.</i> <i>Space & aerospace and related businesses and job opportunities.</i> <i>Film, television, and media and related businesses and job opportunities.</i> <i>Tech and related businesses and job opportunities.</i> <i>Intelligent/advanced manufacturing and related businesses and job opportunities.</i> <i>Defense related businesses and job opportunities.</i> <i>Broadband planning.</i> <i>Impact fees to guide development.</i> <i>Capacity to attract investment and apply for funding.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Drought/Access to Water.</i> <i>Invasive species.</i> <i>Wildfires and flooding.</i> <i>Increase in days with extreme heat.</i> <i>Invasive species threatening range health and biodiversity.</i> <i>Reliance on the federal government as one of the largest employers.</i> <i>Competition with larger metro areas for talent.</i> <i>Crime and public safety.</i>

ABQ METRO CLUSTER KEY FINDINGS:

- 1. The cluster is growing at a faster pace than the state providing the largest pool of skilled workers.*
- 2. The cluster has a high percentage of occupied units and a slightly older housing stock. This supports the need for supplying more affordable housing units and providing support for home repairs and rehabilitations.*
- 3. The high unemployment rates and low rates of labor force participation, especially outside the 25 to 54 age group, create the need for workforce training and other mechanisms to increase workforce participation.*
- 4. Household incomes are higher than incomes in the remainder of the state; creating buying power that can support local businesses.*
- 5. This cluster has high levels of economic activity and is an engine for innovation and workforce development.*
- 6. The cluster suffers from economic and income inequality, crime, and concerns over public safety challenging economic development activities.*
- 7. The cluster's downtown core suffers from disinvestment and work-from-home trends which creates challenges for core revitalization efforts.*
- 8. Core industries include Life/Physical/Social Sciences, Community/Social Services, Healthcare Support, and Architecture/Engineering.*
- 9. Target diversification industries include Life Sciences/Biosciences, Space & Aerospace, Film, Television, & Media, Intelligent/Advanced Manufacturing, Clean Energy, Value Added Agriculture, Global Trade, Outdoor Recreation, and the tech sector.*
- 10. The cluster is home to many essential assets and programs to assist companies throughout their growth cycle.*
- 11. The cluster lacks adequate facilities and capital to expand industry.*

ABQ METRO CLUSTER PRIORITY AREAS

The following Priority Areas for the ABQ Metro Cluster were developed based on the analysis of existing economic conditions, the hazards assessment, and extensive stakeholder engagement. Region-wide Priority Areas are identified in the [“Regional Goals” on page 33](#).

The list below details the top five cluster-specific Priority Areas for the ABQ Metro Cluster. The following section identifies goals, strategies, and projects to guide the ABQ Metro Cluster in addressing each Priority Area. The Priority Areas are based on [“Figure 9. Priority Areas” on page 31](#).

ABQ METRO CLUSTER PRIORITY AREAS

-  **Economic Diversification**
-  **Lack of Workforce/Unemployment**
-  **Crime/Public Safety**
-  **Poverty/Access to Job Opportunities**
-  **Insufficient Public Engagement**
-  **Lack of Affordable Housing** (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)
-  **Drought Mitigation Measures/Access to Water** (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)
-  **Wildfire/flooding** (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)
-  **Energy Independence** (Regional Priority, discussed in Regional Goals Section)

ABQ METRO CLUSTER GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND PROJECTS

The following goals, strategies, and associated projects will support the cluster in achieving greater resilience. While many threats and challenges can disrupt and weaken the economy, the cluster specific Priority Areas are identified as the most impactful in meeting some of the community's most pressing needs.

PRIORITY A. ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION



SOURCE:

- *Ecosystem/Gap Analysis: highest concentration of programming support and funding availability for entrepreneurs/businesses in the state*
- *SWOT:*
 - > *Strength: existing richness of startups; Fortune 500 companies*
 - > *Opportunity: life sciences; technology; space/aerospace; film & media; advanced manufacturing; defense related businesses; capacity to attract investment and apply for funding*
 - > *Threat: dependence on federal government for employment.*

GOAL A.1 Grow the physical infrastructure needed to support life sciences and space/aerospace.

Strategy A.1-1 Support trade, industry, and development organizations in their planning, grants, and capital projects.

Project: *Provide planning assistance and general non-monetary support to companies and organizations who want to invest in infrastructure or other building projects. For example, support a development firm that wants to build a suite of bioscience labs by providing information on water regulations and permitting.*

Partner(s): *County and Community Governing Bodies, Colliers, and Innovate ABQ*

Funding: *EDA- Build to Scale (B2s) Program*

PRIORITY B. LACK OF WORKFORCE/ UNEMPLOYMENT



SOURCE:

- SWOT:
 - > Weakness: lack of affordable housing; lack of workforce
 - > Threat: competition with other, larger metro areas for talent.

GOAL B.1 Increase the number of college university graduates with degrees matching industry needs.

Strategy B.1–1 Support connections in biosciences, space/aerospace, and intelligent manufacturing between industry groups, businesses, UNM, and CNM.

Project: Organize a workforce summit.

Partner(s): Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance (AREA), New Mexico Economic Development Department (NMEDD), Sustainable Economy Task Force, New Mexico Business and Economic Research (BBER), Chamber of Commerce on their industry initiatives in Space, Bioscience, Film & Media, WCCNM, and Intelligent Manufacturing

GOAL B.2 Increase certificates/micro-credentials aimed directly at addressing skills gaps for industry.

Strategy B.2–1 Support connections between skills-building programs (Fuse, Fab Lab, CNM, etc.) and manufacturing, tech., and film and media.

Project: Organize a skills summit (possible to combine with workforce summit - align with implementation of state strategic plan).

Partner(s): AREA, NMEDD, Sustainable Economy Task Force, WCCNM, and the New Mexico Chamber of Commerce on their industry initiatives in Space, Bioscience, Film & Media, and Intelligent Manufacturing

Project: Connect with FabLab Hub and CNM (to start) and compile lists of currently available badges/micro-credentials aligned with industry workforce needs. Compare available micro credentials with industry needs and make recommendations on useful credentials to develop.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, CNM, UNM, Workforce Connection, BBER, WCCNM, and FabLab Hub

PRIORITY C. POVERTY/ACCESS TO JOB OPPORTUNITIES



SOURCE:

- *Economic Profile: lower than average household income; lower than average disposable income; lower per capita income than the country as a whole.*

GOAL C.1 Increase entrepreneurial spirit in teens.

Strategy C.1–1 Introduce the idea of entrepreneurship to teens while still in high school. Specifically, target low-income communities.

Project: Offer entrepreneurship training sessions for high school students.

Partner(s): Albuquerque Economic Development Creative Startups, Schools

Funding: Albuquerque Economic Development, MainStreet, AREA, and Albuquerque Community Foundation

RECOURSE: CREATIVE STARTUPS

Creative Startups is the world's leading accelerator for creative companies. It provides acceleration programs to new, small business enterprises and offers other services to support startups. To learn more, visit: <https://www.creativestartups.org/>



GOAL C.2 Encourage people to join/rejoin the Workforce.

Strategy C.2–1 Provide training, incentives, and startup support to launch businesses that support others joining the workforce: childcare, eldercare, disability support, etc.

Project: Launch an experimental accelerator to support businesses that support others joining the workforce.

Partner(s): Albuquerque Economic Development, AREA, and Creative Startups

Funding: Albuquerque Economic Development - Workforce, EDA, State (LEADS, etc.), MainStreet, and AREA

Strategy C.2–2 Link transportation options to areas of high employment density.

Project: Provide alternative modes of transportation to connect people to places of employment through additional transit, car sharing, shared micromobility, and other available transportation options.

RESOURCE: SHARED MICROMOBILITY

Shared micromobility encompasses any small, low-speed, human- or electric-powered transportation device, including bicycles, scooters, electric-assist bicycles, electric scooters (e-scooters), and other small, lightweight, wheeled conveyances.

<https://nacto.org/shared-micromobility-2019/>

<https://nacto.org/sharedmicromobilityguidelines/>



RESILIENCE ROADMAP

Partner(s): RioMetro, ABQ Ride, and MRCOG

Funding: USDOT FTA - Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities - Section 5310, and RAISE Grants

GOAL C.3 Increase the number of privately owned businesses within communities with the highest poverty rates.

Strategy C.3–1 Provide skills-building and technical assistance to current and aspiring small business owners.

Project: Create a Business Adviser Network with regional Small Business Development Center (SBDC) offices and with the Albuquerque and Santa Fe SCORE chapters to provide mentoring and business assistance to businesses and potential business owners.

Partner(s): Bernalillo County Economic Development Department, SCORE Santa Fe and SCORE Albuquerque

Funding: SCORE Santa Fe, SCORE Albuquerque, State SBDC, and ABQ SBDC

Strategy C.3–2 Launch accelerator programs in the ABQ Metro Cluster targeting specific industries (film, television, & media, value added agriculture, etc.).

Project: Work with Arrowhead Center, NM MainStreet, and Creative Startups to design and launch an accelerator program.

Partner(s): Arrowhead Center, NM MainStreet Frontier & Native American Communities Initiative, and Creative Startups

Funding: NM MainStreet application for technical assistance, NM LEADS Grant, PNM, and NM Gas

PRIORITY D. CRIME AND PUBLIC SAFETY



SOURCE:

- SWOT:

- > Weakness: perception of crime
- > Threat: crime and public safety.

GOAL D.1 Make neighborhood centers activity hubs for art, retail commerce, and entertainment in the region.

Strategy D.1–1 Provide targeted access to funding resources and other support to MainStreet organizations and the Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency (MRA).

Project: Locate government grant funding and convene coalitions of revitalization efforts/organizations to apply for funding.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, and MainStreet
Funding: US Department of Commerce, USDA, DOT, HHS, and HUD

Project: Provide funding to accredited MainStreet organizations in the cluster aimed specifically at economic vitality initiatives.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, initiatives around art and MainStreet
Funding: US Department of Commerce, USDA, DOT, HHS, and HUD

GOAL D.2 Create a clean and safe downtown experience

Strategy D.2–1 Develop public service employment programs that give those in need the opportunity to earn an income by serving their community.

Project: Create/Expand the clean community public service employment programs.

Partner(s): Communities, Shelters (e.g. Hopeworks), City of Albuquerque “There’s a Better Way” and “Street Sweeper Program”
Funding: Community Governing Bodies, and Albuquerque Community Foundation

GOAL D.3 Create attractions that increase activity along MainStreet corridors, communities’ activity centers, and downtown areas.

Strategy D.3–1 Work with the Public Art organizations/ departments to identify spaces for attractions and programming, and develop attractions and regular programming along MainStreet corridors, community activity centers, and downtown areas to increase numbers of visitors.

RESOURCE: STREET TEAM

The Downtown Street Team, a non-profit in Sacramento, CA, created a volunteer work program for people experiencing homelessness. It focuses on cleaning streets, parks, and other public spaces while charting a path out of homelessness. For more information visit: <https://www.streetsteam.org/our-work>

Read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/mv3aeuj8>

EXAMPLE: MICE ON MAINSTREET

In Greenville, South Carolina, nine bronze mice were placed along the Main Street as part of a high school senior project in 2000. As a result, the “Mice on Main Street.” have become a visitor attraction and encourage visitors to stroll down Main Street. For more information visit: <https://www.visitgreenvillesc.com/things-to-do/signature-experiences/mice-on-main/>

RESILIENCY ROADMAP

Project: Install a visually appealing, photogenic attraction or a series of attractions for social media.

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Public Art Department, Fine Art Department, MainStreet, and Schools

Funding: 1% for the arts

Project: Program Civic Plaza or other public space to attract visitors throughout the week

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Public Art Department, and MainStreet

Funding: 1% for the arts

PRIORITY E. INSUFFICIENT PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



SOURCE:

- SWOT:

> Weakness: insufficient community engagement; lack of leadership.

GOAL E.1 Increase community engagement.

Strategy E.1–1 Identify virtual engagement tools to increase participation.

Project: Create a platform for mobile participation (MParticipation).

Partner(s): Community Governing Bodies, Neighborhood Organizations, and Community Advocacy Groups

Funding: McCune Foundation (Foundation Priorities, Influencing Planning of Built Environments)

Strategy E.1–2 Develop an outreach plan/how-to guide to introduce the mobile participation to the community and train community members on this new tool. This can be developed internally and/or as part of the app development scope of work.

Project: Employ mobile participation and develop a how to guide and training.

Partner(s): Communities, Neighborhood Organizations, and Community Advocacy Groups

Funding: Investments Programs and AmeriCorps State Formula Grants

EXAMPLE: LAWN ON D, BOSTON

The Lawn on D is an outdoor event space adjacent to the Boston Convention Center Authority. The space is used to test strategies and interventions to facilitate community engagement and nurture local arts. It has attracted a lot of activity and attention nationwide. For more information visit: <https://www.pps.org/places/the-lawn-on-d>

RESOURCE: PUBLIC OUTREACH GUIDE

The City of Ft. Collins created a Public Outreach guide to create and maintain a community that is educated, aware, motivated, engaged, and fulfilled. The guide aims to create “opportunities for citizens to take part in the conversation, to learn, and to work with others, not just provide input.” This guide is a great resource and could serve as a starting point to re-imagine the public process. For more information visit: <https://www.fcgov.com/excellence/files/publicengagementguide.pdf>

RESOURCE: MOBILE PARTICIPATION

Smartphones open channels of communication between citizens, institutions and administrations, and offer greater access to public information, and facilitate increased participation. The paper ‘Mobile Participation: Citizen Engagement in Urban Planning via Smartphones’ outlines several mobile engagement tools for stakeholder engagement. For more information, visit: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/291749584_Mobile_Participation_Citizen_Engagement_in_Urban_Planning_via_Smartphones

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RESOURCES

OTHER FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES

The following table details a collection of additional funding sources to aid communities to find the right funding for their priority projects. The table outlines the project area, provides a short description of the type of funding, and includes a link to the funding source.

FIGURE 63. **FUNDING RESOURCES:**

AREA OF FUNDING	DESCRIPTION	LINK
Economic Development	<i>The EDA website includes funding opportunities related to economic development.</i>	https://www.eda.gov/funding-opportunities/
	<i>The EDD website includes funding opportunities under the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA). It targets economic development projects that comply with all legal facets of LEDA.</i>	https://edd.newmexico.gov/business-development/edd-programs-for-business/finance-development/leda/
Rural Economic Development	<i>The USDA website includes funding opportunities for rural communities related to economic development.</i>	https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-programs/rural-business-development-grants/nm
	<i>The Rural Efficient Business Program (REBP) offers assistance to small businesses and agricultural producers in New Mexico. They offer resources to reduce energy consumption, increase profits, and implement renewable energy systems.</i>	https://nmruralbiz.com/
Infrastructure, Economic and Community Development Projects	<i>New Mexico FUNDIT connects projects to funding opportunities from over 20 different state and federal entities. FUNDIT is a platform facilitating links between projects and funding agencies.</i>	https://nmfundit.org/
Small Business Relief Grant's	<i>Small Business Recovery and Stimulus Programs by the New Mexico Finance Authority (NMFA) assists businesses throughout the state by administering several recovery and stimulus programs on behalf of the State of New Mexico, including the newly expanded Small Business Recovery Loan Fund and the Business Recovery Grants Program (LEDA Grants) created by the New Mexico Legislature in the 2021 Session.</i>	https://www.nmfinance.com/

FIGURE 63. **FUNDING RESOURCES:**
(CONTINUED)

AREA OF FUNDING	DESCRIPTION	LINK
Technical Assistance	<i>The NMDA website provides a list of funding sources for technical assistance. For example, grants can be used to support grant proposal writing, collaborative planning, federal fund searching, and post-award management, among other activities.</i>	https://www.nmda.nmsu.edu/assistance-programs/
	<i>The Pivotal New Mexico website offers a number of resources, including grant writing training through a Talent Academy.</i>	https://pivotalnm.org/grant-writing-training/
Micromobility	<i>This website provides general information on Micromobility and identifies federal funding opportunities for Micromobility projects.</i>	https://www.spin.app/blog-posts/not-just-a-bill-federal-funding-opportunities-for-micromobility
Water & Environmental Grant	<i>The USDA website summarizes funding opportunities focused on rural water and waste infrastructure needs of rural communities with populations of 10,000 or less.</i>	https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/water-environmental-programs
	<i>The EPA Water & Environmental Grant website includes a list of funding opportunities for water and environmental programs.</i>	https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/water-environmental-programs
Invasive Species Management	<i>The USDA National Invasive Species Information Center website includes a list of funding opportunities related to invasive species management.</i>	https://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/subject/grants-and-funding#:~:text=First%20Round%20of%20Funding%20Will,awarded%20in%20November%20of%202022
Agriculture, Ranching	<i>The USDA website includes funding opportunities related to agriculture, farming, and ranching.</i>	https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/funding-opportunities
Home Repair and Energy Efficiency	<i>The MFA's NM 'EnergySmart Weatherization Program' provides assistance to retrofit homes with energy-saving measures.</i>	https://housingnm.org/home-repair-and-energy-efficiency/energysmart-weatherization-assistance
Various	<i>The Pivotal New Mexico website includes an overview of grant funding opportunities in various topics, including housing and homelessness, educational attainment & career pathways, water, food, and agriculture.</i>	https://pivotalnm.org/thornburganchorumgrant/
	<i>The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) Program includes a list of federal funding opportunities that for various programs.</i>	https://legalaidresourcesdotorg.files.wordpress.com/2021/07/jgp-arp-funding-matrix.pdf

The ‘Other Resources’ table below includes studies, reports, and guides to help communities develop plans, strategies, and policies to create greater, long-lasting resilience in their economy.

FIGURE 64. [OTHER RESOURCES](#)

AREA OF FUNDING	DESCRIPTION	LINK
Rural Workforce Development	<i>The USDA ‘Resource Guide for Rural Workforce Development’ is a guide for community leaders and other local entities to access resources to create jobs, train talent, expand educational opportunities, and provide technical assistance.</i>	https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/usdard_ruralworkforceguide508.pdf
Native American Workforce Development	<i>The ‘Tribal Workforce Development: A Decision-Framing Toolkit’ by the National Congress of American Indians provides innovative approaches to workforce development in Native American communities.</i>	https://www.ncai.org/ptg/NCAL_WORKFORCE_DEVELOPMENT_BRIEF_v2.0_2020.pdf
Albuquerque Metro Cluster Workforce Development	<i>The AREA website lists workforce development programs primarily focused on the Albuquerque metro area.</i>	https://www.abq.org/skilled-workforce/
	<i>The City of Albuquerque has created the ‘Job Training Albuquerque’ program, a workforce development program that connects qualified Albuquerque employers with free employee training opportunities.</i>	https://jobtrainingabq.org/application/
Native American Business Development/Capacity Building	<i>New Mexico Community Capital is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that offers mentorship, financial literacy, digital skills programs, and specialized technical assistance and services to tribes and tribal enterprises.</i>	https://nmccap.org/about/
Poverty Reduction	<i>The Tamarack Institute created ‘A Compendium of Poverty Reduction Strategies and Frameworks’ guide to help communities address poverty.</i>	https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/316071/Resources/Article/Compendium_of_poverty_reduction_strategies-final.pdf
Retail Report	<i>The National League of Cities published the ‘Future of Cities - Reenvisioning Retail’ report, which provides an overview of the impact of the Pandemic on the retail sector and provides strategies to make retail adjust to changing trends.</i>	https://www.nlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CS-Future-of-Cities_Reenvisioning-Retail.pdf
Mobility	<i>The ‘Connecting Low-Income People to Opportunity with Shared Mobility’ report, created by the Institute for Transportation & Development Policy (ITDP) and Living Cities, highlights the potential for shared mobility systems such as bike-share and car-share to benefit low-income individuals.</i>	https://livingcities.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Can-Shared-Mobility-Help-Low-Income-People-Access-Opportunity_.pdf
	<i>The ‘New Mobility and Equity’ report by the Urban Institute provide strategies for medium-sized cities to develop proactive planning and decision-making structures to incorporate new mobility technologies.</i>	https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/102529/new-mobility-and-equity-insight-in-medium-cities_2.pdf
	<i>NMDOT has partnered with Enterprise to create shared commute opportunities through Vanpooling.</i>	https://www.commutewithenterprise.com/nmgo

FIGURE 64. **OTHER RESOURCES**
(CONTINUED)

AREA OF FUNDING	DESCRIPTION	LINK
Infrastructure	The 'Rural Infrastructure Needs Study' by the University of New Mexico's Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER), Bohannon Huston, Inc. (BHI), and The Grant Plant (TGP) is a comprehensive study of New Mexico's rural infrastructure.	https://pivotalnm.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Rural-Infrastructure_FinalReport_1-17-22_FINAL-revised-1.pdf
Drought/Access to Water	The EPA 'Drought Resilience and Water Conservation' webpage provides information on the impact of drought on water quality and availability and offers solutions to help communities become more resilient.	https://www.epa.gov/water-research/drought-resilience-and-water-conservation
Water Quality	The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) program is a federal-state partnership that provides communities with low-cost financing for a wide range of water quality infrastructure projects.	https://www.epa.gov/cwsrf
Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems	The EPA created the 'Financing Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems' guide. This guide helps community leaders and local/state on-site wastewater programs to utilize the Clean Water State Revolving Funding (CWSRF) for decentralized wastewater treatment system projects (i.e., decentralized systems).	https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-02/financing-dwts.pdf



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