

August 2020

I. HOUSING RECRUITMENT

A. Sidney – John and I attended a southeastern NM housing coalition meeting where the risks builders perceive for our region were discussed alongside how to best mitigate those risks. Overall, offering competitive incentives seems to be the biggest motivator we can offer to incoming developers. There will be another meeting sometime in the next month.

B. Sidney- I reached out to Roswell-Chaves County EDC about their new incentive program they are offering incoming developers.

C. Sidney – Reached out to all the local banks and credit unions to see which offered first time home-buyer incentives or programs. I sent this information over to Matt Nelson who is looking into building a few affordable homes here, and wanted to be able to provide information to anyone these programs might be a good fit for.

D. Sidney – Visited Pecos Vista to speak with Stephanie Lengers about how things are progressing. They have an estimated finish date of a month and half from now. Currently approximately 60% of the units they have released to them are filled. They have a steady stream of new resident's signing on, but they have run into quite a few people putting in their notices due to job losses.

E. Sidney – Spoke with James Bradford who was interested in a general update on the state of the housing market in Carlsbad, so that he can inform any potential developers looking at his property. I let him know the need for affordable housing is still very much present despite all the different events over this year. I sent over the latest housing reports and additional housing information to him.

F. Sidney – Spoke with a representative from Indiedwell, a builder of shipping container homes, out of Pueblo, CO. These homes would fall into the affordable housing price range and could be a unique option for housing that can be tailored to meet individual and community needs. I sent him over the latest housing reports.

G. Sidney – Reviewed and catalogued the City's permit requests, specific to new construction of manufactured, single-family, and apartments, from this year.

H. Sidney – Spoke with the Current Argus about Pecos Vista and how this helps meets Carlsbad's housing needs.

II. WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT

A. Sidney – I sent over a couple local resumes I had on file, to Shannon, Susie, and Jason, for the soon to be available Main Street Executive Director position.

B. Sidney – I have been communicating with a new contact for the Fort Hood Solider for Life Transition Assistance Program. All originally scheduled job fairs have been pushed down the calendar to new dates and are now online. There is an online event this November for veterans and active duty. Anyone who may be interested in participating can reach out to me. I am waiting on marketing materials from their team.

C. Sidney – I continue to add job postings to our website as I receive them from members and local entities. Also, I continue to reach out individually to folks who submit their resumes through our online portal, so that I can get more information on what they are looking for and send them any positions that are currently available that meet their needs.

D. Jeff - Unemployment for Eddy County was 10.7% for July, the highest it has been since July 2016 when it was 8.0%. We have not seen double digit unemployment in over a decade. The state as a whole is at 12.7%, with our neighbors in Lea County at 16.5% and Chaves at 13.4%.

III. OIL, GAS & ALTERNATE ENERGY

A. John – Updated the national rig count report for July. As of this week, we are **still leading the entire nation at 26 rigs** in Eddy County. This is down from 60 rigs (or about 60%) in late February. Neighboring Lea County is #2 in nation at 20 active rigs.

B. John- Have met with representatives from a large oilfield service company about our community, available properties, and contacts for planning departments of Eddy County and City of Carlsbad.

IV. MANUFACTURING

A. Jeff –Looking for a 20,000 square foot building for a home manufacturer. Does not require loading docks or high ceilings.

B. John- Made an online presentation of our LEADS Grant Application for this year to NMEDD and a group of SBDC folks from Albuquerque (instead of the Economic Development Commission like we have for prior 7 years). Unfortunately, this year, the CDOD and EDC of Lea County were not funded at all for the first time ever.

C. John- Met with one of our members about providing information to state and NM Partnership about our workforce and the largest employers.

V. MEDICAL

A. John – Met with a local physician and a dentist regarding COVID-related funding under new programs.

VI. NUCLEAR

A. John- The Washington DC ECA/ DOE Waste Conference was moved to an online format this September. As a result, our group will not be travelling to DC to meet with congressional offices or agencies until the spring of 21.

B. John- Met with the new CBFO DOE Manager Reinhart Knerr this month about WIPP and our community. Mayor Janway, the Chamber of Commerce and NWP were all in attendance.

VII. RETAIL/RESTAURANTS/ENTERTAINMENT/HOSPITALITY

A. John- Continue to finish up grant requirements for RLF grant and have assisted City and County with information for grants they are applying for related to COVID relief.

B. John- Have met with three local restaurant owners and one retail company owner, and a physician regarding COVID funding under these new programs.

C. Jeff – Work continues with a local restaurant owner on getting them financial assistance to reopen. They have exhausted several avenues and are now awaiting word on the CARES act funds that the state is supposed to filter down towards the cities. So far, as of this writing, nothing has come down.

D. Jeff – Retail Strategies continues to assist with our retail recruiting efforts. We have a potential new retailer looking at the Bealls location, but nothing has been confirmed yet. On other fronts, things have cooled off quite a bit with the continued business lockdown imposed by the governor.

E. Jeff – Hyatt House hotel is now open on National Parks Highway. This hotel sports 136 rooms. On a related hospitality note, the Best Western Plus, currently under construction on South Canal Street, has changed general contractors. A delay has occurred.

F. Jeff – Continuing to work with Planet Fitness. They are still evaluating the market, and currently have two potential locations they are scouting. With the NM business environment, it remains to be seen if they will locate here during the business lockdown.

G. Jeff – Project Buzz continues to pursue banking opportunities for possible expansion into Carlsbad and New Mexico. He is awaiting feedback from his corporate bank and will advise on what they say, and then he will be ready to move forward or not. He got initial positive feedback from the bank and hopes to hear back soon.

VIII. ADMINISTRATION

A. Jeff – – Completed updates to the CDOD members, Executive board, and Board members pages. If you see anything missing or incorrect, please let me know.

B. Jeff – Efforts continue to push Eddy County residents to answer the US Census. The current response rate as of this writing is 52.5%. Carlsbad's response rate is 52.3%, Artesia's is 57.4% and Loving is 39.4%. The state's response rate is 54.9%. Census enumerators have been going door to door since early August and will continue until the end of September.

C. John – Went on KCCC’s Community Forum radio show and discussed current retail projects, housing and job recruitment, and how COVID has affected all of these activities.

D. John- Met with CDOD member Mark Christiansen about their company’s ongoing projects in area and the effect of COVID on their operations.

E. John- Continue to participate in the NM Icount meetings hosted by the state. We continue to lag behind the National Average on Census returns. Door-to-door census visits will start as soon as COVID restrictions allow, but the Census Bureau still is very short on people to do door-to-door questionnaires.