



2019 SWREDA Conference
Leveraging Local Assets, Building Regional Economies
December 4 – 6, 2019 | Drury Plaza Hotel | Santa Fe, NM

Wednesday, December 4

7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Conference Registration

8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Peer Reviews
Schedule posted at conference registration desk.

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. University Centers Meeting
Representatives from the EDA-funded University Centers in the EDA Austin region are invited to join EDA staff to share information about their programs and learn more about EDA's program objectives.

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Regional Director Meeting with New Executive Directors
EDA Austin Regional Director Jorge Ayala invites all new Economic Development District executive directors (those on the job for three years or less) to join him for an informal meeting.

12:30 – 1:30 p.m. SWREDA Board of Directors Meeting

1:30 – 2:00 p.m. Conference Welcome

- Conference Welcome: Renee Dycus, SWREDA Chair and Executive Director, Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District, Magnolia, AR
- Welcome to New Mexico: Priscilla Lucero, NewMARC Chair and Executive Director, Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments, Silver City, NM
- Welcome to Santa Fe and Northern New Mexico: Monica Abeita, Executive Director, North Central New Mexico Economic Development District, Santa Fe, NM
- Alan Webber, Mayor, Santa Fe, NM

2:00 – 2:45 pm Opening Plenary: *Leveraging Local Assets, Building Regional Economies*

From Opportunity Zones to the film industry, rural to urban, international trade to local markets, small business or large, New Mexico's Economic Development Department covers a wide and diverse range of approaches to building the statewide economy. In this opening plenary session, learn about the State's initiatives to build resilient and economically viable communities and regions.

- Jon Clark, Deputy Cabinet Secretary at New Mexico Economic Development Department, Santa Fe, NM
- Moderator: Sandy Chancey, Secretary-Treasurer, SWREDA and Executive Director, Eastern Plains Economic Development District, Clovis, NM

2:45 – 3:00 p.m. Networking Break

3:00 – 3:45 p.m. Plenary: Federal Legislative Update

As 2019 ends and the nation heads into the 2020 general elections, Congress has a lot to cover. During this session you will hear about the latest activities in Washington that are impacting local and regional development efforts across the nation.

- Joe McKinney, Executive Director, NADO, Washington, DC
- Moderator: Ron Garza, Executive Director, Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council, Weslaco, TX

3:45 – 4:00 p.m. Networking Break

4:00 – 5:00 p.m. 2019 Star of the Southwest Awards Showcase

Across the EDA Austin region are shining examples of economic development projects that are having immediate impacts on the economy. These projects are leading to the creation and retention of jobs, new and expanded businesses, improved infrastructure, and workforce development opportunities that are lifting up local communities and regions. Five of these projects will be honored this year as recipients of the 2019 Star of the Southwest Award. During this session you will learn about the winning projects—partners, funding, impact, and more.

Advanced Manufacturing Training Center

- Renee Dycus, SWREDA Chair and Executive Director, Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District, Magnolia, AR
- Dr. Barbara Jones, President, South Arkansas Community College, El Dorado, AR

South Lafourche Airport Access Corridor Project/Airport Road Turn Project

- Kevin Belanger, CEO, South Central Planning and Development Commission, Houma, LA
- Patrick Gordon, CPO, South Central Planning and Development Commission, Houma, LA

Cascades Project

- Hubert Quintana, Quintana and Associates, Carlsbad, NM

Comprehensive Waterline and Wastewater System Project

- Rich Brierre, Executive Director, INCOG, Tulsa, OK
- Brian Bigbie, Economic Development Planner, INCOG, Tulsa, OK

Explore RGV

- Blanca Davila, Assistant Director of Community & Economic Development, Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council, Weslaco, TX

Facilitator: Heather Smoak Urena, Executive Director, Kisatchie-Delta Regional Planning and Development District, Alexandria, LA

5:00 – 6:30 p.m. Star of the Southwest Awards Roundtable Reception

Over refreshments and light snacks learn more about the Star of the Southwest Awards recipients and meet with project representatives to hear the stories behind these transformative projects.

Thursday, December 5

7:30 – 8:30 a.m. Good Conversations Buffet Breakfast

Over breakfast attendees will be able to join small group table discussions for lively peer-directed information exchanges about topics of relevance to you and your work. Topics will include building partnerships with University Centers, Creative Approaches to Staffing, Project Development, and much more.

Facilitator: Heather Smoak Urena, Executive Director, Kisatchie-Delta Regional Planning and Development District, Alexandria, LA

9:00 – 10:15 a.m. Concurrent Sessions

Building Stronger Economies through Alternative Approaches to Energy

Learn about exciting strategies to power communities and regions using renewable energy while simultaneously satisfying workforce training needs and employment opportunities. Pick up ideas about ways communities impacted by the changing coal industry are retooling and diversifying their economies.

- Camilla Bustamante, PhD, MPH, Dean for the schools of Trades and Advanced Technologies Business, Professional Studies, and Education, Santa Fe Community College, Santa Fe, NM
- John Groesbeck, PhD, President, Mesalands Community College, Tucumcari, NM
- Emily Gojkovich, Economic Development Planner, Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments, Silver City, NM
- Moderator: Sandy Chancey, Secretary-Treasurer, SWREDA and Executive Director, Eastern Plains Economic Development District, Clovis, NM

When Silicon Valley Comes to Town

In recent years, New Mexico has benefited from investments from Silicon Valley tech and entertainment companies that are creating new jobs and reshaping local economies. During this session, learn what impacts transformative businesses like Facebook and Netflix are having on local communities and what opportunities and challenges are presented by their arrival.

- Todd Christensen, Director, New Mexico State Film Office, Santa Fe, NM
- Ralph Mims, Economic Development Manager, Village of Los Lunas, NM
- Mark Roper, Division Director, New Mexico Economic Development Department, Santa Fe, NM
- Moderator: Raymond Mondragon, EDA & Government Affairs, Eastern Plains Council of Governments, Clovis, NM

10:15 – 10:30 a.m. Networking Break

10:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Mobile Workshop to Meow Wolf

Founded in 2008 as an art collective based in Santa Fe, Meow Wolf has over 400 employees that create and support all forms of art including sculpture, painting, photography, music, and much more. The premise of Meow Wolf is to create interactive experiences using art installations, video and music production, and other forms of artistic media. Meow Wolf is committed to paying artists wages similar to other skill level professionals and to giving back to the community. Join the mobile workshop for a behind the scenes tour and to learn more about Meow Wolf. *Tour limited to 20 attendees; additional registration fee of \$30 to attend.*

10:30 – 11:45 a.m. Concurrent Sessions

Developing Strong Projects

How do you make sure your EDA project is both competitive and technically accurate? What makes a strong project versus a weak one, and what about the ones when the scope just doesn't tell the story? The Austin EDA staff will be discussing how they review project applications and what can make or break a project.

- Trisha Korbas, Economic Development Representative
- Corey Dunn, Project Engineer and Regional Environmental Officer
- Chris Rys, Senior Economic Development Specialist
- Happy Rahman, Regional Counsel
- Jessica Falk, Area Director
- Moderator: Betty Voights, Executive Director, CAPCOG, Austin, TX

Creating a Sense of Place: Placemaking and Economic Development

Many communities and regions are embracing placemaking strategies and Main Street initiatives to improve the quality of life for their residents, grow businesses, and increase tourism opportunities. In this session, learn about

best practices and examples from across the EDA Austin region of places that are creating authentic spaces and experiences for residents and visitors alike through a mix of programs and projects.

- Michelle Negrette, Revitalization Specialist, Creative Economy and Cultural Planning, New Mexico MainStreet, Santa Fe, NM
- Ron Garza, Executive Director, Lower River Grande Valley Development Council, Weslaco, TX
- John Waters, Executive Director, Carlsbad Department of Development, Carlsbad, NM
- Moderator: Debora Glasgow, Executive Director, SWODA, Burns Flat, OK

12:00 – 1:30 p.m. Luncheon Plenary: EDA National Program Updates

- The Honorable John Fleming, MD, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development, Washington, DC
- The Honorable Howie Morales, Lieutenant Governor, State of New Mexico, Santa Fe, NM
- Moderator: Dennis Alvord, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Development and Chief Operating Officer, U.S. Economic Development Administration, Washington, DC

1:30 – 4:45p.m. Mobile Workshop: A Visit to the Santa Fe Railyard

Fifty acres of underused land along Guadalupe Street and Cerrillos Road have been transformed into the Santa Fe Railyard Arts District, a vibrant and bustling area that contains studios, galleries, museums, the Santa Fe Farmers Market, retail and restaurant spaces, homes, live-in artists studios, and a movie theater. Additionally, 13 acres of open space house a park, plaza, and pedestrian promenade where water-harvesting and other environmentally innovative systems are in use. On this tour, staff and board members of the Santa Fe Railyard Community Corporation will describe the formation and development of this unique infill site and how it is impacting the local and regional economies. *Tour limited to 30 attendees; additional registration fee of \$30 to attend.*

1:45 – 3:00 p.m. Concurrent Sessions

Broadband and Economic Development

Fast and reliable broadband service is critical to support regional economic development efforts, grow and sustain local businesses, and improve overall quality of life in communities. This session will discuss the importance of broadband to economic development and share ways that small and rural communities are working to assure coverage.

- Jonathan Cross, Executive Director, Northern Oklahoma Development Authority, Enid, OK
- Justin Fazzari, Telecommunications Data Analyst, BroadbandUSA, NTIA, Boulder, CO
- Terry McDermott, Community Solutions Specialist, Partnership Innovation Center, USDA RD, Albuquerque, NM
- Brian Smith, Telecom General Field Representative, USDA RD, Goodyear, AZ
- Moderator: Dwayne Pratt, Executive Director, West Central Arkansas PDD, Hot Springs, AR

Creative Communities and Economic Development

The National Endowment of the Arts says creative placemaking occurs when public, private, not-for-profit, and community sectors partner to strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, tribe, city, or region around arts and cultural activities. This session will share exciting ways that local and regional entities are fostering creative communities that in turn promote economic growth.

- Ginny Sterpka, Program Manager, Creative Placemaking Programs, Creative Startups, Santa Fe, NM
- Jamie Lenfestey, Director of Santa Fe Operations, AMP Concerts, Santa Fe, NM
- Maggie Woodruff, Director of Economic Development, Regional Planning Commission, New Orleans, LA
- Moderator: Jamie Brockwell, Chief of Staff, East Arkansas Planning and Development District, Jonesboro, AR

3:00 – 3:15 p.m. Networking Break

3:15 – 4:30 p.m. Concurrent Sessions

Human Resources: Insights from the Field

Hear from a former EDD executive director about various aspects of HR with a focus on onboarding staff and nurturing staff, navigating through difficult situations, creating a transition plan, and much more.

- Jeff Kiely, Former Executive Director, Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments, Gallup, NM
- Moderator: Renee Dycus, SWREDA Chair and Executive Director, Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District, Magnolia, AR

Getting the Most Out of Opportunity Zones

Created as part of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, Opportunity Zones (OZs) are a federal economic development tool aiming to improve the outcomes of distressed communities around the country. During this session, learn strategies for leveraging OZs to better position your region to benefit from this incentive and support wider regional economic development.

- Monique Boulet, Executive Director, Acadiana Planning Commission, Lafayette, LA
- Kelly Davila, Director of Regional Services, South Plains Association of Governments, Lubbock, TX
- David Ives, Interim Director, Performance & National Programs Division/Planning Coordinator, U.S. Economic Development Administration, Washington, DC
- Moderator: Errin Clocker, Deputy Executive Director/CFO, Grand Gateway EDA, Big Cabin, OK

Friday, December 6

8:00 – 9:30 a.m. Plenary Breakfast with EDA: State of the Region Report

EDA Austin Regional Director Jorge Ayala will provide the *2019 State of the Region Report*.

- Jorge Ayala, Regional Director, Austin EDA Regional Office, Austin, TX

9:30 – 9:45 a.m. Networking Break

9:45 – 10:45 a.m. Plenary Session: Empowering Regions through the CEDS Process

With the release of the CEDS Content Guidelines in 2015, EDA empowered Economic Development Districts, tribes, and other regional organizations to make the CEDS process one that is more inclusive, engaging, and supportive of local efforts to foster resilient and prosperous regions. This session will provide an overview of the past, present, and future for CEDS planning efforts and share examples of best practices and approaches.

- David Ives, Interim Director, Performance & National Programs Division/Planning Coordinator, U.S. Economic Development Administration, Washington, DC
- Ann Simon, Economic Development Program Manager, Mid-Region Council of Governments, Albuquerque, NM
- Jason Wilson, Economic Development Representative, U.S. Economic Development Administration, Austin Regional Office, Austin, TX
- Moderator: Brett Schwartz, Associate Director, NADO Research Foundation, Washington, DC

10:45 – 11:00 a.m. Closing Comments and Conference Adjournment

- SWREDA Chair (to be elected during the SWREDA Board of Directors meeting on December 4, 2019)

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. SWREDA Membership Meeting

All SWREDA members are encouraged to attend.