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## **New Mexico Economic Development Department Awards 15 Communities \$176,200 in Grants for Rural Economic Development Projects**

Santa Fe, NM - Today, New Mexico Economic Development Department (NMEDD) Cabinet Secretary Jon Barela announces 15 rural economic development projects were selected to receive Local Economic Assistance & Development Support (LEADS). The newly created LEADS program will leverage \$176,260 to supplement the work of local communities in their efforts to diversify their economy and create good-paying jobs that have a multiplier effect.

"New Mexico's rural communities are resilient and showing great promise in their economic development efforts," Secretary Barela said. "LEADS is a wonderful new tool to stimulate economic-base job growth by working strategically with these communities and together stretch limited resources."

Projects for LEADS can include a sales mission or trade show; business visitation program, property site design, permitting and development plan; an incubator, accelerator, shared space or commercial kitchen or workforce development. LEADS is a retooling of the current Certified Community Initiative (CCI) award process while maintaining the certification itself.

The selection process was competitive; eligible entities applied for a grant. Funding criteria for the LEADS program was measured on whether a project can help recruit, retain or create jobs in economic-base industries; develop the tax base; or encourage business development. NMEDD's Community, Business and Rural Development team's regional representatives worked with economic development organizations to identify eligible projects and prepare grant applications.

The Economic Development Department received 30 applications requesting in excess of \$400,000. Fifteen were selected, which represent a strong variety of marketing & attraction; business retention & expansion; workforce; entrepreneurial/training hubs; and real-estate type projects. Ninety-one percent of the funding will benefit rural and frontier areas of the state (34 percent frontier and 57 percent rural).

The list of awardees are:

Greater Springer Area Economic Development Corp.	\$ 1,200
Village of Los Lunas	\$ 10,000
Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corp.	\$ 10,000
Union County Community Development Corp.	\$ 14,000
GrowRaton! Greater Raton Economic Development Corp.	\$ 15,000
Las Vegas San Miguel Economic Development Corp.	\$ 15,000
City of Aztec	\$ 15,000
Mora County Economic Development Corp.	\$ 10,000
Sandoval County	\$ 15,000
Southern Luna County Economic & Community Development Corp.	\$ 5,000
Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance	\$ 6,000
Greater Gallup Economic Development Corp.	\$ 15,000
Lovington Economic Development Corp	\$ 15,000
Clovis Industrial Development Corporation	\$ 15,000
Otero County Economic Development Council, Inc	\$ 15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 176,200</b>

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