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## **New Mexico Economic Development Department's MainStreet Program Announces Expansion of Frontier Communities Initiative**

*Lordsburg and Carrizozo will benefit from unutilized funding which allows for the additional assistance*

**Santa Fe** - The New Mexico MainStreet program in the New Mexico Economic Development Department announces the expansion of its Frontier Communities Initiative. Unutilized funding will allow the addition of Lordsburg to the initiative and for further work in Carrizozo, a current Frontier Initiative community. The Frontier Communities Initiative is a new program that provides technical assistance to select small rural communities.

"The Frontier Communities Initiative is a wonderful opportunity to provide assistance to develop historic, unique and important economic areas in the state's smallest of communities," said New Mexico Economic Development Cabinet Secretary Jon Barela. "We are pleased that Lordsburg and Carrizozo are able to participate in the initiative as they work to bring tourists and shoppers to local businesses and encourage growth."

The City of Lordsburg is a new Frontier Community that will receive urban design assistance on street improvements and revitalizing Motel Drive through the center of town. Motel Drive is the "Main Street" in Lordsburg that once was a thriving and prosperous place for Lordsburg's economy. With the demise of the railroad as an economic engine, the area has gone into a deteriorated condition. However, Motel Drive is still the corridor that visitors travel when exiting and entering Interstate 10, and utilizing the Amtrak stop. The city plans to improve the streetscape along the road, making the drive more appealing to visitors and residents by drawing them to the shops and service industry that are in the heart of the city.

The Town of Carrizozo will receive additional technical assistance on their historic commercial core that includes State Highway 54 and 12th Street. The New Mexico Department of Transportation has initiated a transportation improvement project along the Highway 54 corridor and this project will inform that process as well as provide revitalization strategies to the city's historic downtown area on 12th Street. The project will increase the visitor and tourism economy, improve pedestrian safety, and provide incentives for private reinvestment in the downtown buildings and properties.

The Frontier Communities Initiative was established by the New Mexico state legislature and signed into law by Governor Martinez in 2013. This economic development partnership program provides technical assistance to select small rural communities (less than 7,500 in population). Frontier Communities is not a grant program, and direct funding for selected projects is not included with services and resources provided for the project. Rather, the goal is to increase capacity and promote a keystone economic development project in each historic commercial district.

For more information about the Frontier Communities Initiative or New Mexico MainStreet log on to <http://www.gonm.biz/Mainstreet.aspx> and <http://nmmainstreet.org/>.

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