



## 2023 Performance Report La Plata County, Colorado

The Region 9 Economic Development District of Southwest Colorado Inc. (Region 9) is a nonprofit, 501 (c) 6 public-private partnership that promotes and coordinates economic and community development efforts throughout Southwest Colorado. Region 9 covers 5 counties, 10 municipalities and the 2 Native American Tribes in Colorado (Ute Mountain Ute and Southern Ute). Incorporated in 1989, Region 9 is led by a 26-member Board of Directors; 17 from local governmental jurisdictions and 9 from the private sector.

### 2023 La Plata Representatives

**Ashleigh Tarkington/Katie Sickles** – Bayfield  
**Clyde Church/Matt Salka** – La Plata County  
**Colleen O’Brien** – Treasurer, At large, La Plata  
**Eric Jones** – Loan Committee  
**Gina Piccoli** – Loan Committee  
**Kris Oyler** – Loan Committee  
**Terryl Peterson** – Loan Committee  
**Olivier Bosmans/Tommy Crosby** – Durango  
**Mark Garcia/Michala Riley** – Ignacio, SWCCOG  
**Colton Black/Meade Harbison** – Southern Ute Indian Tribe  
**Justin Osborn** – At large, La Plata  
**Nathaniel Peach** – At-large, Fort Lewis College  
**Robert Whitson** – At large, La Plata



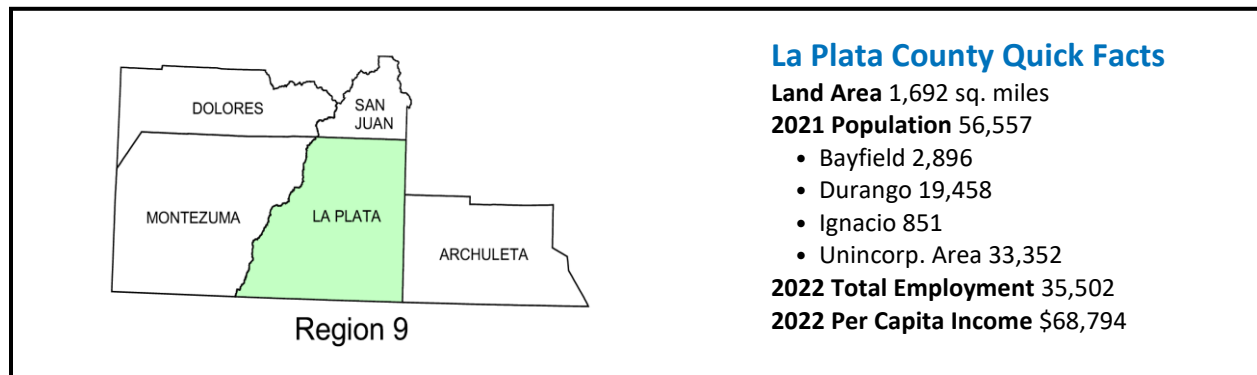
### Region 9 Staff and Contractors

**Laura Lewis Marchino** – Executive Director  
**Brian Rose** – Deputy Director  
**Jenny Stollar** – Business Loan Officer  
**Terry Blair-Burton** – Program Administrator  
**Shirley Jones** – Comptroller  
**Stephani Burditt** – Grant Compliance Specialist  
**Elizabeth Heine** – Office Manager

**Heather Otter** – Economic Development Project Manager  
**Shak Powers** – Regional Projects Manager  
**Tiffany Brodersen** – Community Grant Writer  
**Claire West** – SWORD Project Coordinator  
**Donna Graves**, Information Services  
**Elizabeth Marsh** – SCAPE Executive Director  
**Brittany Cupp** – SCAPE Program & Community Manager

## Region 9 Programs and Services

- Business loans
- Regional broadband, housing, transportation
- Colorado State Data Center local affiliate
- Technical assistance and special projects
- Southwest Enterprise Zone administration
- Research for community and regional projects
- Southwest Colorado Accelerator Program for Entrepreneurs (SCAPE)
- Grant Navigator
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
- Administrative support for San Juan Development Association with financials and microloan program
- Administrative support for San Juan Resource Conservation District, All Hazards, SWIMT
- Facilitation for SouthWEST Opioid Response District (SWORD)



**Technical Assistance** – Region 9 provides technical assistance in La Plata County and area municipalities by participating in community meetings and initiatives, researching and administering grants, and advocating for communities at the Regional, State, and Federal levels. Activities are listed below.

### County-Wide

#### Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- Responded to 502 inquiries, including 15 from the Southern Ute Indian Tribe regarding business resources, loans, EZ Contribution Project inquiries, grant, and data requests. Inquiries were up from 406 in 2022.
- Provided economic updates and presentations to La Plata Economic Alliance and Durango BID.
- Presented at SBDC Starting Your Small Business workshops for La Plata County businesses.
- Served on the San Juan Basin Health Community Health Plan Advisory Committee, La Plata Healthcare Improvement Coalition Advisory Council, and the La Plata County Grant Award Selection Committee
- Served on the advisory board for Small Capital, Inc from Durango (a disruptive lending platform aimed at financing business acquisitions).
- Served on the Ignacio Creative District Board and participated in events.
- Served on the Durango Independent Film Festival Board.
- Worked with La Plata County Commissioners on approval and extension of CDBG funds.
- Assisted with Durango Midtown Enterprise Zone Boundary Amendment.

- Hosted a Brownfields Workshop with Colorado Brownfields Partnership and Community Builders in Durango.
- Co-hosted Region9’s quarterly Eco Devo Meet Up with Tommy Crosby in Durango.
- Sponsored and attended Bayfield’s USDA “Let’s Talk Shop”, the Food Business Funding Event in Bayfield put on by the La Plata County Food Equity Coalition, and the La Plata Economic Alliance Summit.
- Attended as guests on Durango Chamber’s Radio show and presented the Nonprofit of the year award at Durango Chamber ROCKS award event.
- Successfully submitted the La Plata Electric Association Education Grant application for SW Rural Philanthropy Days.
- Assisted Durango to Hermosa Trail on CDOT Transportation Alternatives Program application.
- Provided economic data dashboards for the La Plata Economic Alliance website.

### Workforce Development & Education

- Provided professional phone call practice sessions with area high school students as part of internship training.
- Served on the Project RUN Advisory Committee Meeting for the La Plata Economic Alliance.
- Presented to the Durango Chamber’s YPOD group Fall 2023.

### Housing

- Coordinated and led Colorado Division of Housing staff and CHFA on a tour of regional housing projects with visits to Ignacio and Durango.
- Participated in the Housing Colorado Southwest Colorado Stakeholder Outreach & Engagement series in Durango.
- Met with Senator Jeff Bridges and Representative Barbara McLachlan and Senator Simpson in Bayfield to hear housing concerns.

### Broadband

- Worked with La Plata County to successfully bid to Deeply Digital, remodel, and lease the Old Main Post Office building for a CNL.
- Assisted with first Internet Service Provider (TING) placing equipment in the La Plata CNL.
- Presented broadband readiness at Broadband 101 workshop with La Plata County Commissioners.

**Regional Highlights** – Region 9 EDD serves La Plata County and municipalities through regional initiatives and programming including broadband, transportation, and transit initiatives, as well as coordination around regional housing including.

- Facilitated monthly SouthWEST Opioid Response District (SWORD) meetings. Region 9 EDD received a completed feasibility study to identify the best options to fill existing treatment gaps.
- Responded to 1,661 inquiries covering business resources, grants, and data requests. This number decreased slightly from 1,786 in 2022. Inquiries were 1,760 in 2021 and 1,228 in 2020.
- Conducted long needed audit of SCAN (Southwest Colorado Access Network) fiber.

- Received 1.55M in new funding including \$870K in CDBG funding; \$500K Colorado Forest Service Loan Fund, \$36,458 SBA Microloan and Technical Assistance funds; \$41K for Rural Technical Assistance Program (RTAP) for High Alpine recreation geospatial study as pass through for the High Alpine Roadmap groups; \$100K in Grant Navigator funds; \$40K for CEDS implementation funds to assist with SWORD Coordinator position.
- Successfully sponsored Higher Purpose Homes as Rural Jumpstart Business.
- Received NADO Impact Award for integration of Southwest Colorado Council of Governments (SWCCOG).
- Made 49 presentations to community organizations covering everything from Enterprise Zone, Grant readiness, Rural Economic development, businesses financing and data.
- Reestablished quarterly County/Town Administrator luncheons.
- Conducted quarterly Economic Development meetups for economic development professionals in the region.
- Provided significant technical assistance around Prop 123 baseline data and educating communities and counties on impacts.
- Provided quarterly e-newsletter and monthly Grant Digest.
- Established Transit website (southwestrtc.com).
- Hosted weekly collaboration meetings for broadband stakeholders and housing stakeholders across the region.

**Southwest Colorado Accelerator Program for Entrepreneurs (SCAPE)** offers in-depth mentoring, education, and access to equity funding for early stage and growing companies. The program has launched 52 companies based in rural Southwest Colorado. These businesses raised \$54M in capital contributing to the creation of 230 local jobs. SCAPE is the hub of the entrepreneurial ecosystem and hosts regional investment and startup initiatives. Visit [www.goscape.org/](http://www.goscape.org/). Region 9 is a proud investor in this program.

**Enterprise Zone Program** – Region 9 EDD is the Southwest Colorado Rural Enterprise Zone (EZ) Administrator and determines if a business is located within EZ boundaries, processes EZ tax certification forms, and administers the designation of EZ Contribution Projects and certifies donations. Businesses in the EZ boundaries are eligible for a variety of tax credits. Currently, all of Montezuma, San Juan and Dolores Counties, and sections of La Plata and Archuleta Counties, are designated EZ areas. Archuleta, Montezuma, Dolores, and San Juan Counties have also been designated as Enhanced Rural Enterprise Zones (EREZ) through 2024.

Between 2003-2023, La Plata County businesses made \$342M in eligible investments, claimed \$12M in certified tax credits and reported 2123 new jobs. In 2023, Region 9 received 792 inquiries regarding the Enterprise Zone Program. La Plata County and communities generated 280 of those inquiries. Thirty-three businesses invested \$4.7M, claimed \$142k in tax credits and reported no new job creation, showing a loss of one job from the participating businesses.

An **EZ Contribution Project** allows donor contributions of at least \$100 (depending on the organization) to Enterprise Zone projects which are eligible for a 25% State tax credit on cash donations, and a 12.5% State tax credit on in-kind donations. Regional wide in 2023, there were 26 designated Enterprise Zone

Contribution Projects. There were 7 new projects added, six renewals, and five projects ended. Projects generated \$1.6M in economic activity economic activity through direct and in-kind contributions. This continues a declining participation trend when compared to 2022’s 25-Projects at \$1.3M, 2021’s \$1.46M; and 2020’s 30 projects at \$2.35M. The decline was expected because the region lost active projects to the new Homeless Contribution Tax credit and many of our approved projects are from smaller organizations.

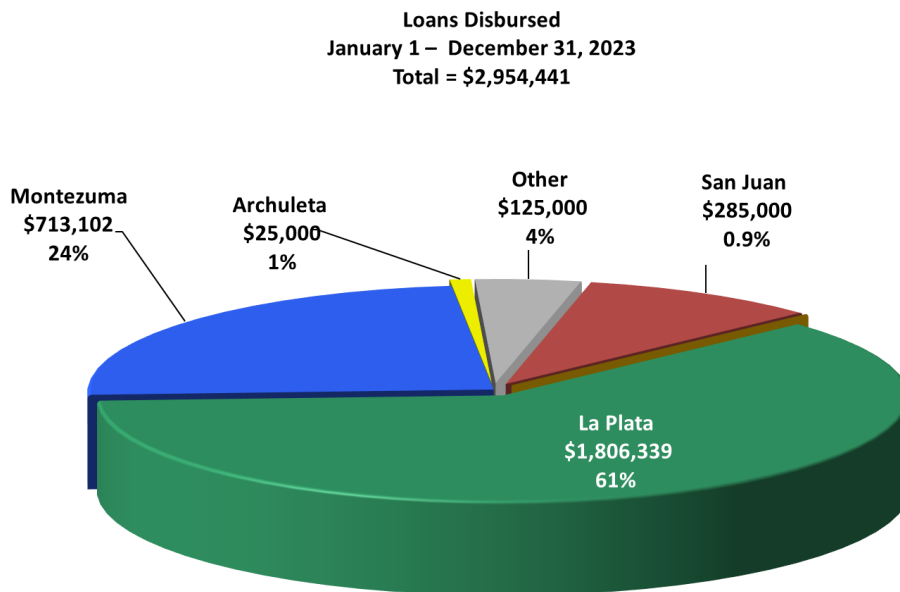
Enterprise Zone Contribution Projects that impacted La Plata County in 2023

- Region 9 Economic Development District of SW Colorado – Broadband Project
- Dancing Spirit Community Arts Center
- Durango Arts Center
- Fort Lewis College Foundation-Infrastructure, Community Garden, Nursing Collaborative
- Habitat for Humanity of La Plata County
- Mercy Health Foundation

**Data** – Region 9 offered data tools and prepared strategy and research reports that included data specific to La Plata County in 2023. Region 9 is a Colorado State Data Center local affiliate and provides reliable, unbiased, and timely regional socio-economic data to citizens and policymakers. All the District’s reports and data tools can be found at [www.region9edd.org](http://www.region9edd.org) under the Data tab.

- Region 9 Economic Snapshot 2024
- Regional Data Dashboard
- Regional Commercial Property Search Tool

**Loans** – In 2023, La Plata County and communities had 18 new loans and 11 loans were paid off. These loans represented 61% of all the loans dispersed by Region 9.



As a primary lender for start-up businesses, Region 9 provides commercial loans to businesses. Loan funding supports businesses in creating and retaining jobs, leveraging other funds, or exporting a good or service from the local economy. The Business Loan Fund (BLF) includes several Federal and State sources: Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) from the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) (contracted through La Plata County and the 5-county region through an inter-governmental agreement); the USDA Intermediary Re-lending (IRP) & Rural Micro Entrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP); the Economic Development Administration (EDA); Start Up Loan Fund through OEDIT; Small Business Administration Microloan Program (SBA) and revolved funds from previously restricted funds that are re-distributed in the community. Loan clients from La Plata County communities are listed below.

### County (Unincorporated Area)

ADC Services **NEW**

Dancing Raven Stoneworks

Kingdom Builders

Megan Slater Acupuncture

Momentum Tree Service

Ohana Physical Therapy

Shampooch Mobile Grooming

Table to Farm Compost

Timber Age System

TNT Innovations

Trautner Geotech

Well on Wheels

### City of Durango

AFV, LLC **NEW**

Advertising Innovations

Alpine Mobile Crete **NEW**

Alpine Aerial Acrobatics

April's Garden

Balcony Bar and Grill

Bella Dance Studio

Blackwood Tattoo

Bookkeeping Services of Durango

Bo Dean's Towing and Repair

Cantera

Chavez Tortilleria Factory

Chill Out-Ma'Dame Ice **NEW**

Cliffside Ski & Sport

Coldstone Ice Cream

Deborah Kelroy Fine Art **NEW**

Durango Insurance Professionals

Durango Mobile RV Repair **NEW**

Durango RV Rental **NEW**

Durango Space

Enliven

Euphoria Salon

Franklin Drilling & Blasting

Fresh off the Press **NEW**

Gazpacho **NEW**

Hanna Wilson Photography **NEW**

Happy Pappy's

Heart Stone Properties

Jitter's Java

Joyful Nook Gallery

Jungle Gym DGO **NEW**

Local NEWS Network

Meadow Market **NEW**

Modstreet **NEW**

Old Tymer's Café

Pause Studio

Pediatric Associates of Durango

Phoenix Physical Therapy

Remedy Body Center

Rodeo Odyssey **NEW**

Rust Empire

San Juan Angler **NEW**

San Juan Waterworks

Ski Barn

Soup Palette **NEW**

Tandem Hospitality

Taste Coffee

Texas Ty's Smoke Train BBQ **NEW**

**Town of Bayfield**

Et Voila Catering  
Four Corners Business Solutions  
Grasshoppers Landscaping  
Safety Connection  
TDL Recycling **NEW**

**Town of Hesperus**

Eclipse DOT

**Town of Ignacio**

Mike's Dispos-All

**Paid Off**

**County**

Black Bear Bakery  
Mountain Home and Design  
Peaks & Tides  
TBR Service

**Durango**

360 Durango  
Eperature  
Habit  
Modstreet  
Mountain Jedi  
R&D Suspension

**Ignacio**

Walker Holding Company