

# Business Friendly Check-Up Webinar

September 28, 2023



# Our Team



**Josh Metz**

District Manager, SMEDD;  
Economic Development Strategic  
Services Consultant, RGS



**Carrie Rogers**

Senior Advisor, SMEDD;  
Economic Development Strategic  
Services Consultant, RGS



**Chris Sliz**

Senior Organizational  
Development Advisor, RGS  
**Moderator**

# Overview

 **Introduction**

 **Business Friendly Check-Up Tool**

 **Next Steps**

 **Q&A**

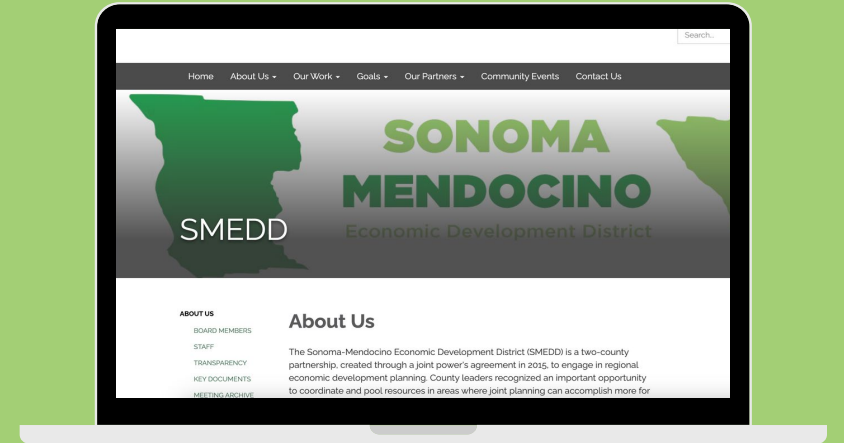
# Regional Government Services (RGS)

- **Joint Powers Authority (JPA)** established in 2001, operating statewide, **providing administrative and consultative services** to local agencies, nonprofits & universities
- **RGS fields Advisors from the public sector talent pool** with extensive professional & public administration experience
- **Advisors work in [distributed teams](#)** to deliver high quality programs and services



# Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD)

- **Economic Development Administration (EDA) designated special district** established in 2015 to serve regional interests of Sonoma and Mendocino
- **Charged with supporting progress on Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) projects** and providing other economic development support services
- **SMEDD contracted with RGS** to provide Administrative and Professional services in furtherance of its mission



**Monthly Board meetings:**  
1-3pm, each 3rd Friday of the  
month

Learn more at **SMEDD.org**

# Recovery & Resiliency Workplan

# CARES Act Supplemental Grant

**Task 1: SMEDD Education, Awareness, and Capacity**

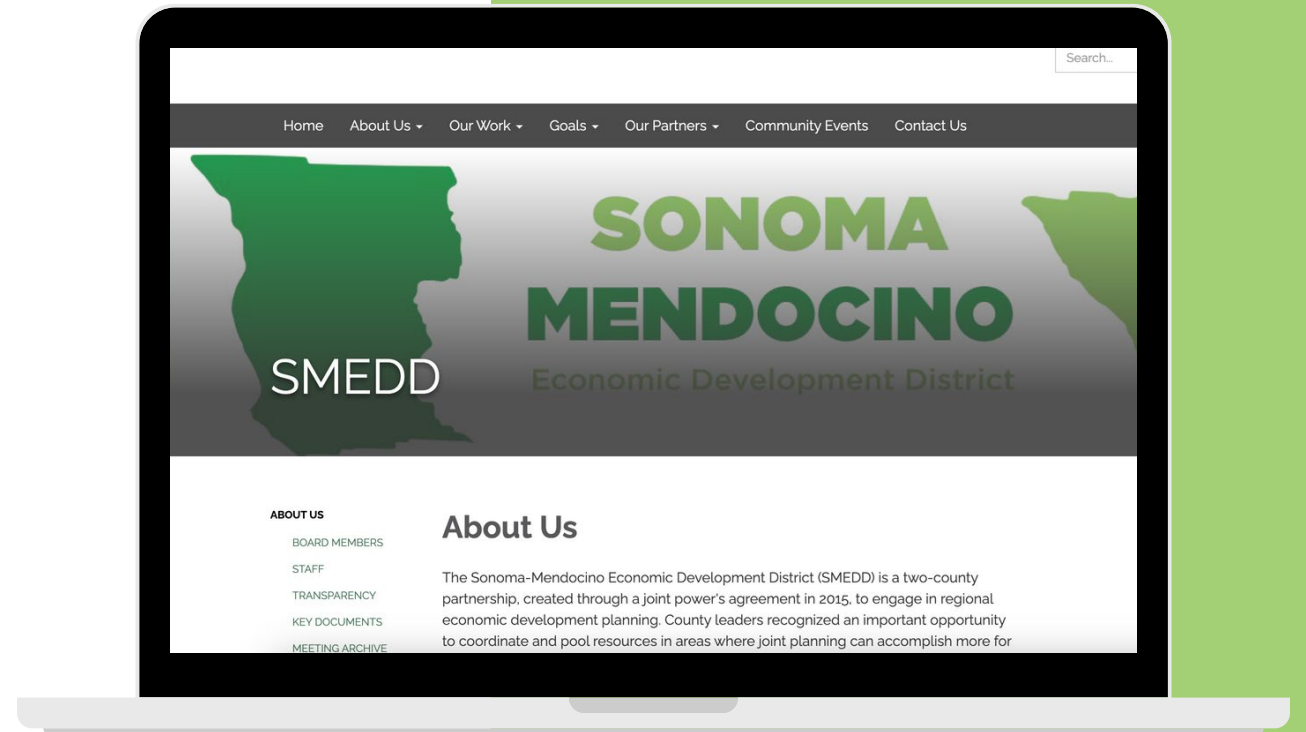
**Task 2: Recovery and Resiliency Technical Assistance**

**Task 3: Recovery and Resiliency Funding**

**Task 4: Grant Compliance and Oversight**

# SMEDD Education, Awareness & Capacity

- Stakeholder Convening
- Board Member Recruitment
- EDA Regional Roundtable
- Web Content Development
- Outreach & Communications
- Agency Coordination
- [SMEDD.org](http://SMEDD.org)







# Recovery & Resiliency Technical Assistance

- **Business Friendly Communities**
  - Community outreach and coordination
  - Community assessment
  - Recommendations
- **[Webinar Sept 28 10-11am](#)**
  - What can your City do to attract and retain more businesses?
  - Where should you focus your efforts to get started?
  - How business friendly is your City?



# Recovery & Resiliency Funding



- Readiness Assessments
- Content Development
- Funding Technical Assistance



- Funding and Partner Agency Coordination
- Content Management
- Communications



# Climate Smart Agri-Food Tech Innovation Hub

- [Brainstorming Session | May 30, 2023](#)  
**UCANR Hopland Research & Extension Center**
  - Concept overview
  - Alignment with statewide initiatives
  - Explore potential alignment with existing programs in the region
  - Unique Sonoma-Mendocino value proposition
  - Answer questions, establish coalition of interest
  - Next steps towards feasibility study
  - [Event Slides](#)
  - [Event Report](#)



Targeting EDA Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance  
**\$250k Feasibility Study Grant**



# NOAA Climate Resilience Challenge

## Supporting 2-county Phase 1 Submission

- [Funding Opportunity](#)
- Regional Focus:
  - Harbor Economic & Climate Resilience
  - Ocean Ecosystem Restoration
  - Blue Economy STEM Workforce
  - Estuary Resilience & Flooding
  - Capacity Building
- Track 2: \$50M Implementation Grant
- **Letter of Intent Submitted: Monday Aug 28**



OFFICE FOR  
**COASTAL  
MANAGEMENT**

### Partners

Sonoma County  
Sonoma County Water Agency  
Sonoma Regional Parks  
Kashia Band of Pomo  
Mendocino County  
Noyo Ocean Science Center  
UC Davis, Bodega Marine  
Laboratory



# Grant Compliance and Oversight

Grant Narratives

Status of Recovery & Resiliency Projects

Fiscal Reporting

Success Metrics



# FY 23-24 CEDS Update

# Process

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- SMEDD BOD reviewed plan (June meeting)
- Developed outreach material drafts
- Requesting additional SMEDD Board feedback
- Coordinate with CEDS Strategy Committee
- Reach out to attendees to secure dates ← we are here
- Host 4 workshops October - February
- Produce CEDS Update Report

# Virtual Workshops

## Goals

- Get updates on projects
- Create a forum for connection
- Identify common threads and roadblocks

## Target Workshops

- October 2023
- November
- February 2024
- March





# Business Friendly Check-up

# Business Friendly Check-Up



## Business Friendly Check-Up SMEDD



Welcome to the Business Friendly Check-Up survey!

Business friendly communities are better able to attract and retain competitive and market leading businesses, providing quality jobs, robust tax revenues to fund critical community amenities and infrastructure, and an enhanced quality of life for residents and visitors. The Business Friendly Check-up establishes a baseline of key metrics that city/county and community leaders can reference to better understand their communities' strengths and weaknesses in this area. Such understanding is useful for crafting effective and relevant policies to support continuous improvement in community vitality.

This check-up is designed to answer the following questions for cities/counties:

- What can your City/County do to attract and retain more businesses?
- Where should you focus your efforts to get started?
- How business friendly is your City/County?

This check-up will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. You may save your answers and finish the check-up later by clicking the "Save and Continue" link in the toolbar below and entering your email address. If you would like a paper copy of the check-up to complete before submitting the online form, please [download and print the PDF](#).

Thank you for taking the time to complete this check-up and for your commitment to fostering a business friendly city/county! Many cities/counties have shared that the objective business friendly evaluation of their strengths and associated identification of areas of improvement have been a catalyst to making their cities/counties more business friendly.

# Key Components

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Business Friendly Attributes	Incentives & Special Zones
Building Permit & Review	Economic Development
Taxes	Communication with Businesses
Fees	Commitment to Cutting Red Tape



# Rankings

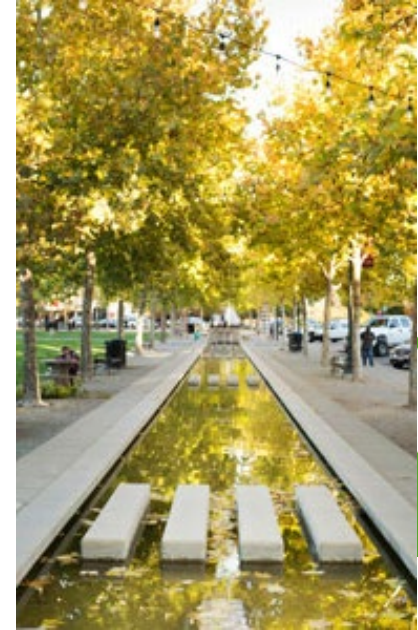
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Excellent

Good

Satisfactory

Opportunity for Improvement



# Business Friendly Check-Up Results Report

## Check-Up Report

Below are your results. Your full survey responses and report will be emailed to you once you click the Submit button below.



### **SMEDD CITY, CA**

Business friendly communities are better able to attract and retain competitive and market leading businesses, providing quality jobs, robust tax revenues to fund critical community amenities and infrastructure, and an enhanced quality of life for residents and visitors. The Business Friendly Check-up establishes a baseline of key metrics that city and community leaders can reference to better understand their communities' strengths and weaknesses in this area. Such understanding is useful for crafting effective and relevant policies to support continuous improvement in community vitality.

As part of the Sonoma Mendocino County Economic Development District's (SMEDD) Supplemental Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grant, managed by Regional Government Services (RGS), an initial online assessment was conducted to ascertain each of the 13 cities' business friendly attributes. Congratulations, SMEDD City, your City is utilizing business friendly practices, including:

- Business Resources
- City Profile & Projections Report
- How to Start a Business Guide
- Online Business License & Permits
- Streamlined Building Permits
- Link to Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

Collaboration among the thirteen cities in the SMEDD region is flourishing as an integral component of the SMEDD Comprehensive Economic Development

# Question

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## *Building Permit Review & Approval*

How long does your City/County take to review and approve a minor building permit (\$500,000 or less)?

- 1-15 days
- 16-30 days
- 31-45 days
- 46+ days



# Business Friendly Results Report (cont.)

## YOUR RESULTS

### 1. BUILDING PERMIT REVIEW & APPROVAL

Congratulations! It looks like your City's/County's permit approval timelines are quick and streamlined. Your City/County understands the importance of having clear, reasonable and predictable processes for the development of land to facilitate job creation. Business Friendly cities regularly review their approach to working with businesses and refine the process continuously, while department heads meet regularly to identify opportunities to streamline and eliminate duplication of effort.

**YOUR SCORE: 18 out of 18 | Excellent**

# Business Friendly Results Report (cont.)

## 2. TAXES

Your City/County has made headway in business tax rates, and it looks like there may be additional opportunities for improvement. Taxes matter to businesses. Business taxes affect business decisions, job creation and retention, location, and competitiveness. Most importantly, taxes diminish business profits. Business Friendly Cities/Counties offer low tax rates to attract investment, new businesses and encourage existing businesses to stay and expand locally. Business tax revenue supports essential community assets including public employees, parks and amenities, roads and infrastructure, public safety, and housing funding.

**YOUR SCORE: 9 out of 13 | Good**



# Business Friendly Results Report (cont.)

## **3. FEES**

It looks like your City/County is off to a good start and has the opportunity for continued improvement in business fees. Business Friendly Cities/Counties offer low fees to attract investment, new businesses and encourage existing businesses to stay and expand locally. Finding the right balance in terms of fees and taxation increases business productivity and output, employment, wages, and prosperity for the community over the long term.

**YOUR SCORE: 8 out of 14 | Satisfactory**

# Business Friendly Results Report (cont.)

## 4. INCENTIVES & SPECIAL ZONES

Your City/County has the opportunity for on-going continued improvement in expanding available incentives and special zones. Business Friendly Cities/Counties offer competitive advantages in targeted areas that save businesses time and money. Examples include: Sales Tax Sharing Agreements, Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) Sharing Agreements, Disposition and Development Agreements, Operating Covenant Agreements, Reimbursement Agreements, expedited permits, fee reductions and/or waivers, Shop Local Program, Hire Local Program, Façade Improvement Program, specific plans, assistance with lease negotiations to help reduce vacancies, and the Business Watch program, similar to the Neighborhood Watch program.

**YOUR SCORE: 2 out of 15 | Opportunity for Improvement**

# Next Steps



# Q&A

Click the Q&A button below and submit your questions.



THANK  
YOU

[SMEDD.org](http://SMEDD.org)  
(707) 216-1725

