



State Coordinator's Annual Report

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Compiled with the assistance of Revitalization Specialist Michelle Negrette
for the New Mexico Arts Commission for the 2023 Calendar Year

The annual Arts & Cultural Districts (ACD) report for the 2023 calendar year was compiled using information from a semi-annual electronic survey, interviews and from on-site performance reviews conducted by New Mexico MainStreet (NMMS) staff and consultants. The electronic survey provides consistent reporting areas for all ACD's and was established in collaboration with New Mexico Arts, a Division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, and consists of three key reporting areas:

- *A "snapshot" identifying growth of arts, cultural and creative businesses in the Arts & Cultural District and any physical/infrastructure improvements undertaken within the District boundaries.*
- *Identification of key supports to arts/creative entrepreneurs provided by the ACD organization, including events, projects, and activities supporting arts/cultural enterprises, creative industries targeted, and assistance with rehabilitation or adaptive reuse of historic or cultural properties in the district.*
- *Identification of resources solicited and received to support creative economy endeavors implemented by the ACD organization and its partners.*

The annual survey questions reflect progress in each district and some of the ongoing needs for support and technical assistance. An overview of aggregate results is provided below, with brief summaries of activities for individual districts in key performance areas.

A. Program Updates

Currently, there are 10 State Authorized Arts & Cultural Districts: Albuquerque, Artesia, Carlsbad, Gallup, Las Cruces (Self-Designated in 2018), Las Vegas, Los Alamos, Mora (Arts & Cultural Compound), Raton, and Silver City. Two ACD Start-Ups: Corrales and Farmington, that are currently working on their Cultural Plans in anticipation of State Authorization in 2024-2025. In 2023, NMMS welcomed Belen MS as an ACD Start UP and Alamogordo MS as an ACD Jump Start.

ACD Program Development

Arts and culture continue to be a strong economic driver in the ACD community. In the 13 affiliated ACD's, over 100 creative economy businesses were gained and/or expanded in 2023, adding 263 new jobs. ACD district communities experienced over \$25M in local community private reinvestment in the reporting

year. Local programs are seeing a continued increase in event participation and attendance. Signature events continue to grow, with some communities experiencing significant attendance increases. Several communities have reported an increase in attendees and sales at existing local growers' markets with the addition of arts and craft vendors.

In 2023, many local ACD efforts have focused on projects and programs to provide direct support to local artists and arts and cultural organizations. Many communities have indicated challenges with meeting the local demand for spaces for artists galleries, arts programming, ARTS education, and places for direct sales. Local ACD's have requested NMMS technical support to identify opportunities to support space needs, grants to support artist trainings, business education and programming support. ACD communities are working with local arts and cultural organizations to streamline marketing and promotion, consolidate calendars, reduce event redundancy, and build support for the local creative economy. Districts are requesting technical assistance in developing innovative strategies for meeting the demand for the arts that address affordability, access, and inclusion.

The NMMS program continues to support project-based arts and cultural work throughout the state through the NMMS Frontier and Rural, Native American, and Urban Neighborhood Commercial Corridor Project-Based Initiatives. NMMS worked with Sunland Park to conduct a placemaking study to access capacity for a plaza for arts and culture within the entertainment district. The plan accessed the public right-of-way, worked with community stakeholders, and identified issues and opportunities with developing a public space to showcase local arts and culture. The study will inform transportation planning efforts for 2024 and is anticipated to be implemented in 2025. In 2023, Aqua Fria Traditional Village applied to the Frontier/Rural Community Initiative to develop a study for facilities to meet arts and cultural programming needs. NMMS MainStreet began providing technical support in the fall of 2023 and will continue to work with the community to assess and determine programmatic needs for cultural preservation, local agriculture, food security, arts, and heritage.

In 2021, NMMS program developed the Creative Economy Jumpstart for communities interested in becoming State Authorized Arts & Cultural Districts. The intent behind the program is to work with communities to develop arts and cultural projects and programs and build local capacity to position themselves to apply for State Authorization when NMMS resources permit for new applications. The City of Belen was selected as a pilot community for this program based on their unique assets which include the Harvey House Museum, The Judy Chicago Museum/Through the Flower Gallery, The Bugg Lights Museum, the Belen Library as well as many local creative businesses ranging from local wineries to glass blowing. As a result of the community's effort in the Jumpstart and completing ACD benchmark requirements, Belen MS received capital outlay funds to begin the Cultural Planning Process in 2023 and is working toward completion of the plan in 2024. In 2022, Alamogordo MainStreet was accepted as the second MainStreet community in the Creative Economy JumpStart Program. In 2023, Alamogordo has developed a working group focused on Arts and Culture, leveraged grants for new murals, activated an alley with art and culture, developed a strong partnership with the local arts council District and has expressed interest in becoming a State Authorized ACD in the future.

Trainings and Coordination

NMMS continues to provide trainings and technical assistance to the arts and cultural districts. Creative economy, historical preservation, and supportive ecosystems for the arts are consistent themes. Statewide Main Street Conferences and Institutes provide opportunities for education, resource and knowledge sharing, and networking. Monthly virtual roundtables have provided a resource to our network for discussions and networking on focus topics. NMMS continues to offer ACD Start-Up

communities Revitalization Specialist support for identity/promotion development, signature event development, website development, and organizational capacity/board development.

In 2023, NMMS has responded to the increase in interest in arts and culture with more focused technical support around the creative economy. Many of our communities are pivoting from events as a primary focus to supporting artists and entrepreneurs. NMMS technical assistance has supported creatives with startup business development, grant training and funding support, marketing and promotional assistance, development of incubator and makers spaces, supporting more opportunities for direct artists sales and increasing creative programming and education in state authorized districts.

In 2024, NMMS will focus on offering quarterly trainings to our Arts & Cultural Districts and their Art Council Partners via the NMMS Round Table Series on Zoom. Our initial ACD Round Tables will host our ACD partners, NM Arts and Historic Preservation, to introduce their division and the resources they can provide to support arts and cultural work. Additional Round Tables envisioned for 2024 and 2025 may feature a local ACD lead community project, support for creative entrepreneurs and businesses, and information on grants and sources for arts and cultural funding. The ACD State Council will continue to incorporate relevant content into NMMS's Annual Institute and Winter Conference to support the arts and the creative economy and will engage in opportunities to educate community leaders on the impact of the creative sector on the local economy.

NMMS will continue to support our three Start Up ACD and one Creative Economy JumpStart communities toward State Authorization. We anticipate that Corrales and Farmington will complete their cultural plan in late 2024/early 2025. Additionally, we will continue to support our newest ACD Jump Start Community, Alamogordo in becoming an ACD Startup. We will continue to strengthen inter-department (NMMS, State Historic Preservation and NM Arts) partnership as well as NMEDD's new Creative Industries Division to expand the resources and support we provide to our districts.

ACD Policy Development and Updates

The demand for resources supporting artists, arts programming, and cultural venues is strong throughout the ACD community. Community collaboration, local support, and government backing for the arts are advancing beyond cultural tourism and events. Interest in the arts is growing, with an increasing emphasis on heritage preservation, cultural engagement, creative placemaking, and economic development. Efforts are directed toward creating meaningful places and experiences for residents, enhancing local quality of life, fostering impactful community engagement, and preserving the distinctive community.

The NMMS program remains dedicated to offering support and direct technical assistance to our local Arts & Cultural Districts (ACDs). Revising and streamlining program structures and policy documents are ongoing priorities of the NMMS ACD Taskforce. The NMMS ACD Taskforce includes NMMS Director/ACD Coordinator Daniel Gutierrez; NMMS Creative Economy Specialist Michelle Negrette; NMMS Organization and NMMS Project Coordinator Lucas Pedraza. Goals/Priorities for 2024 include:

- Eliminate redundancies and create a streamlined set of cohesive ACD Policy Documents that clearly outline the work, program structure, goals, and benchmarks required for local programs and stakeholders to understand and achieve State Authorization.
- Continue to create a cohesive program around MainStreet and Arts & Cultural District trainings, meetings, conferences, and institutes.

- Continue to build partnerships with NM Arts, Historic Preservation and Creative Industries Division through coordinated trainings, resources sharing and development, and ongoing communication.
- Continuing the Creative Economy Jump Start as a project-based pathway for ACD Start-Ups.
 - Work with local Main Street Program to access capacity and identify opportunity with respect to Creative Economy Work
 - *Candidates:* MainStreet communities interested in pursuing State Arts & Cultural District Authorization; Communities interested in leveraging Creative and Cultural assets; and Communities interested in identifying/cultivating potential creative clusters or hubs.

Service Delivery

In 2023, NMMS provided technical assistance to each of the local ACD communities. All the communities participated in an annual review and development of organizational and operational plans for the coming year. In addition, ACD members were provided access to trainings and networking opportunities provided through the annual NMMS Winter Conference, the NMMS Institute in Carlsbad, NM and the 2023 National MainStreet Conference in Boston, MA.

B. General Assessment Indicators

New Mexico’s Arts & Cultural Districts continue to see growth and reinvestment. 80 new creative economy businesses were reported, up from 54 in 2022. Arts & Cultural Districts demonstrated significant reinvestment impact in 2023 with communities reported over \$25.3M in private reinvestment and \$1.9 Million in public investment. The following is an overview of survey responses for 2023. A breakdown of arts and cultural activity in each community follows.

2023 Total New Creative Economy Businesses: 80

Districts reporting new businesses: 11

Albuquerque (23), Artesia (7), Carlsbad (5), Belen (2), Corrales (11), Farmington (5), Gallup (2), Las Cruces (15), Las Vegas (2), Raton (3), Silver City (5)

2023 Individual Artistes Support: 878 (in 5 districts)

2023 Volunteer Hours: 10,271/\$343K (based on Independent Sector volunteer hour rate of \$33.49)

2023 Public Investment: \$ 1.9M

2023 Private Investment: \$ 25.3M

2023 Total Grant Funds Received: \$ 580K

2023 Total New Creative Economy Jobs: 263

C. Key District Projects and Activities – Highlights and Planned Projects

As part of the annual self-assessment process, ACD leaders were asked for information relative to progress on creative economy efforts. Below is a summary of responses by community. The summary includes key projects, programs and actions taken by local ACDs to further work outlined in their Cultural Economic Development plan and to address the needs of the local creative community. Additionally, the local ACD summaries include local observations and plans for ACD work in 2024.

Downtown Albuquerque Arts and Cultural District

In 2023, the Downtown Albuquerque Arts and Cultural District continued work on several arts and cultural projects related to their cultural plan, including Abq Artblock, Abq Artwalk, the expansion the downtown grower's market, and have introduced new arts and cultural programming. The district has seen recent reinvestment, including the adaptive reuse of historic buildings, new murals, and remodels. The perception of safety, parking, and access to funding opportunities present challenges to the growth of the district.

The Downtown Albuquerque Arts & Cultural District continues to see a steady increase of creative economy businesses. In 2023, twenty-three new creative businesses located within the district adding 89 new jobs. New business sectors primarily included Food and Agriculture and Visual Arts. An additional 18 jobs were added due to the expansion of 5 existing creative businesses. The district lost seven creative businesses in 2023. Challenges to creative businesses include affordable retail and artists spaces. The district has identified a need for affordable artist housing and artist studios.

The Downtown Growers Market continues to expand and the ACD is working to address the growing needs of the market. The goal is to expand the market into a year-round experience and develop farm tours with Visit ABQ funding.

The ACD supports local artists through vending opportunities at local markets, the ABQ Artwalk, marketing businesses and events and coordinating downtown activities and events. They are working with the City of Albuquerque to identify potential places for artist studios and housing in vacant downtown buildings and supporting regular meet ups of artist groups at local coffee shops.

Downtown events continue to attract large numbers and new events have been added this year including Drink Local Downtown, the Artists Blend, and High Desert Playback. Though local leaders have reported that the district continues to struggle to attract patrons to creative businesses and programming due to the perception of safety, parking challenges, and awareness.

The district continues to see a need for affordable artist housing, artist support services including business development and vending locations, marketing/branding, and studio space. Challenges in the district continue to include organization, funding, parking, the perceived safety of downtown and historical racism, sexism, elitism, and power struggles. The district has identified the need to update the 10-year-old Arts & Cultural Plan to focus on these areas.

Total Volunteer Hours in 2023: 409 hours.

2023 New Creative Businesses: 89

Private Reinvestment: \$ 2M

Public Reinvestment: \$1 M

Grant Funds Received: \$22K

2023 Goals and Creative Industries Targeted

In 2023, the Downtown Albuquerque ACD will continue its efforts on the Grower's Market expansion, street events and the Artist Collective. They will develop a Fermentation and Fungi Festival and will work with the Raynold's Neighborhood Association and Off Center Arts to host Neighborhood pop ups.

Artesia Arts and Cultural District



The Artesia Arts & Cultural District has been focusing on the development of new murals and the restoration and preservation of existing murals. In 2023, the district added four new murals and five murals were restored and preserved. The ACD is developing partnerships with local schools for student credit on mural development and restoration. A local mural artist has been awarded a major commission to restore a mural in Carlsbad, NM. The Artesia ACD supports and updates a website dedicated to mural information and provides technical support to other communities regarding developing and maintaining murals, becoming a key community network resource.

Creative businesses are growing in the district. Seven new businesses, primarily in the Visual Arts Sector, located in the district in 2023. Two businesses relocated outside of the district and one business closed in 2023.

The district saw a major increase in the attendance of the signature event “Red Dirt/Black Gold”. Total attendance for 2023 was 5,500 attendees with an increase of 2,500 people. The ACD has also partnered with existing local events to expand programming and increase opportunities for arts and artisans.

The ACD continues to struggle to compete for funding with other community nonprofits.

Total Volunteer Hours in 2023: 900 hours.

2023 New Creative Businesses: 7

2023 New Creative Economy Jobs: 13

2023 Private Reinvestment: \$ 56.5 K (murals)

2023 Grants Received: \$19,500

2024 Goals and Creative Industries Targeted: The Artesia ACD will be issuing two mural RFP’s and are working on plans for a student mural.

Carlsbad Pearl on the Pecos Arts & Cultural District



Carlsbad Arts and Cultural District, also known as Pearl of the Pecos, completed their Cultural Economic Development Plan in 2023, the capstone of their start up program and received State Authorization from the New Mexico Arts Commission during the February commission meeting. This has been a major focus

of the district’s work for the past 5 years. The district is also working toward becoming a Certified Local Government and has City Council approval for the creation of the board.

Creative sector businesses continue to be attracted to the district. Five new creative businesses, primarily in the Food and Agriculture, Health, Wellness and Beauty and Visual Arts sectors brought 13 new jobs to the district. The district lost two creative businesses in 2023. The ACD has observed that a major setback to business retention and growth relates to the lack of a general workforce and that many businesses are owned and operated by one person impacting the hours of operation preventing a predictable retail environment downtown. Some of the businesses lost are due to people relocating out of state. However, retail spaces are not remaining vacant for long due to interest in the district.

The district continues to support the Cavern Theater restoration now entering phase 5. The restoration project is now fully funded. The theater hosted its first event in 2023 since the renovations began.

The district saw public and private reinvestment in 2023. A new mural has been added, featuring a national artist with a strong social media following and a beloved mural has been restored. The district has installed speakers for music during downtown events and holidays and identified a space for new historical garden featuring local historical figures.

Local arts and cultural events and weekly markets are not only providing opportunities for artists, but also are drawing people downtown to support local businesses. The Third Thursdays event draws almost double the attendance as compared to the weekly Thursdays Farmers and Makers Market. The “Third Thursdays” event also was offered on Saturdays in the second half of the year with great success. One participating vendor has opened a brick-and-mortar store in the district. The district created a POPup Art Event which drew 150-200 people featuring a handful of artists at a local brewery. This event provided a unique opportunity for people to engage with artists, paint and learn more about arts and culture in the district in a relaxed environment. The district also saw an increase in both signature event attendance and Lodgers’ tax related to CavernFest.

The district has identified a need for an “open creative space” and is working to develop potential partnerships to support this need. The district is looking to address a lack of opportunities for creatives to sell and showcase work year-round.

Total Volunteer Hours in 2023: 510 hours.
2023 New Creative Businesses: 5
2023 Private Reinvestment: \$ 1000
2023 Public Investment: \$ 31K (not including the theater)
2023 Grant Funds Received: \$925K

2024 Goals and Creative Industries Targeted

In 2024, they will begin to start projects identified in the Creative Economic Development Plan including the alley activation project. The ACD will continue to actively support the Cavern Theater Renovations, host another POPup Art event focused on women in March.

Belen MS/ACD JumpStart

In 2022, Belen MainStreet became a pilot community for the Creative Economy JumpStart, a project-based initiative for communities who may have interest in becoming an arts and cultural district.

Communities are considered for this program based on creative and cultural assets and interest in exploring growing their local creative economy.

Belen MS is interested in leveraging their cultural assets, which include the Harvey House Museum, Bugg Light Museum, Judy Chicago's Through the Flower gallery, the local arts council gallery and local creative economy businesses to attract tourism. The initial focus of the JumpStart revolved around understanding stakeholder interest in developing an arts and cultural district and to hear stakeholder project interest and goals to identify potential challenges and barriers. As a result of the 18-month process, the community has come together to support a shared vision and has received a NMMS Capital Outlay grant to develop a Cultural Economic Development Plan, a key component in meeting the requirements for recommendation for State Authorization.

2023 marks the initial year for ACD reporting for Belen MS. In the first half of 2023, Belen MS reported the opening of three new creative businesses, including a café, an art collective and a railroad museum. They have indicated that there is a need for a historic hotel and/or a Bed and Breakfast to accommodate tourists in the downtown district.

The ACD welcomed a new mural and is working to develop a template for an Art Walk, a communication plan for ACD work and expanding Public Art. Other art related initiatives in the district include a large number of events which provide opportunities for artist sales and promotion of the district. The Belen Public Library is a key resource for the ACD, providing meeting space, hosting children's art shows in conjunction with the Belen Public Schools, providing youth programming including art and music classes as well as internships and scholarships.

The historic private property within the district faces infrastructure challenges and need general building improvements. Two buildings, Silver Bar Studios and the ART Collective have received façade grants. Public buildings also struggle to secure funding. The Harvey House Museum is in need of a new roof and the Old City Hall building requires extensive renovations to be leveraged as a community asset.

The district recently completed construction on the first phase of the Great Blocks project which improved sidewalks, landscaping, drainage, and lighting along two blocks of Becker Avenue. In FY24, Belen MS received a \$1,690,000 NMMS Capital Outlay grant to complete the second phase. Belen also received a \$100,000 NMEDD Creative Industries Grant for projects and programs to support the local arts community in 2024.

Total Volunteer Hours in 2023: 723

2023 New Creative Businesses: 3

2023 Private Reinvestment: \$ 2000

2024 Goals and Creative Industries Targeted

In 2024, Belen MS/ACD will begin work on the second phase of Great Blocks project, improve parking and accessibility at the Harvey House Museum and the public library, and begin work on the Arts and Cultural Economic Development Plan. The ACD will also implement the trainings and resources supported through the Creative Industries grant.

Corrales MainStreet/Arts & Cultural District

Corrales ACD continues to move toward the goal of State Authorization and is looking to complete the Cultural Economic Plan in the Summer/Fall of 2024. The district continues to attract new creative sector businesses and is building strong partnerships with local nonprofit organizations. District challenges include lack of commercial/retail space to meet artist demand in the district, walkability and safety, and attracting patrons to local businesses.

In 2023, Corrales ACD has focused on the development of a new signature event, Viva Corrales, and the cultural economic development plan. Viva Corrales is an effort to showcase all the local arts and culture in Corrales, to provide opportunity for cross collaboration in the arts and agriculture communities, and to build strong partnerships among once siloed organizations. After a successful trial run, the ACD is looking to build the event over three weekends in the spring to bring more opportunities for collaborative events and to consolidate the number of existing community events into larger more impactful experiences for locals and visitors.

The district has done extensive community outreach to support the cultural economic plan and has supported over 20 stakeholder meetings with creative sector organizations, commissions, and businesses, conducted a survey of local businesses, residents, and arts and cultural organizations, and managed community outreach and focus groups. This effort has led to many networking opportunities and fostered collaboration between organizations in addition to collecting in depth information for future work in the ACD.

New businesses continue to locate in the district quickly filling any spaces vacated. The district indicates that a few new food related businesses are drawing traffic in areas struggling to attract commerce. New businesses are also bringing reinvestment dollars and making renovations and improvements to existing buildings.

The ACD has been working to consolidate event efforts and streamline work by engaging in more partnerships with local nonprofit organizations. Through the cultural economic plan process, many organizations have expressed similar challenges and needs – more volunteers, younger volunteers, events support, and interest in collaboration. Viva Corrales has been an important new event which has provided new opportunities to meet these needs.

Challenges for the district continue to be limited retail space, lack of spaces for meeting and community activities, attracting younger audiences, pedestrian safety, and perception of lack of parking. The community is interested in seeing performing art spaces, commercial kitchen spaces, and spaces for meeting and making art. The village has recently acquired new land and there is a possibility that some of these spaces could be made available for these needs.

Total Volunteer Hours in 2023:

2023 New Creative Businesses: 5

2023 New Creative Jobs: 25

2023 Private Reinvestment: \$ 55K +

2024 Goals and Creative Industries Targeted

Goals for 2024 include completing the Cultural Economy Economic Development plan and attaining State Authorization. The ACD will expand the signature event “Viva Corrales”. The ACD will continue to look for

opportunities to support collaboration of local arts and culture organizations and work with the village to accommodate the space needs of the ACD.

Farmington MainStreet/Arts & Cultural District



Farmington MainStreet/Arts & Cultural District has been a start up ACD since 2018 and is working toward State Authorization in 2024. The community continues to see growth in the creative economy with the opening of 5 new creative economy businesses and the expansion of 4 existing creative businesses. Reinvestment in the district is strong with new murals, remodels, and pocket parks. Additionally, the district has hosted events, art walks, and developed a new art sculpture residency for downtown.

Creative Economy businesses are steadily increasing in the district. These businesses are diverse including outdoor recreation, visual arts, food and agriculture and health, wellness, and beauty sectors. The ACD reports that there is an increase in awareness of creative opportunities in the district and has observed that there is a need for more restaurants, clothing boutiques and regional art galleries to provide more experiences to meet tourist expectations.

Reinvestment in the district continues to build off the with the completion of the Complete Streets Streetscaping project. Four new murals have been completed, a private gallery has invested \$23K into a pocket park and gallery renovations. The investments are creating vibrancy and supporting new programming such as open galleries on First Fridays, an evening event drawing people downtown.

The Farmington ACD continues to support an impressive list of events in the district. These events are diverse and provide opportunities for artists, makers, and outdoor recreation. Many of the events draw regionally and in numbers approaching 1000 attendees. The district reports the events have positive impact for local restaurants and retail shops.

New for 2023 is the Artist Residency Program that invites artists to display and sell artwork in the downtown area. In the first year, the district hosted 9 pieces of art through a regional call for a one-year residency. The program will be continued in 2024. Farmington MS/ACD also received \$50,000 in FY24 NMMS Capital Outlay to develop construction documents for the Revitalization of Orchard Park. T

Total Volunteer Hours in 2023: 979 hours via Art Council Partnership

2023 New Creative Businesses: 5

2023 New Creative Jobs: 19 plus (some not reported)

2023 Private Reinvestment: \$ 26K

2023 Public Reinvestments: \$ 900 (mural projects)

2023 Capital Outlay Received: \$ FY23 \$40K, FY24 \$50K

2024 Goals and Creative Industries Targeted

The ACD will hire a consultant to support the development of an arts and cultural plan, the capstone for State Authorization. In addition, the district will continue to host events and offer the artist residency. The district is interested in historic plaquing.

Gallup MainStreet Arts and Cultural District



In 2023, Gallup MainStreet ACD continued to work on several of their cultural plan projects; the Coal Avenue Commons construction mitigation project, Tiny Art Public Art Project, and has begun conceptual plans for the Courthouse Plaza improvements. Gallup continues to host the Levitt AMP concert series, this year consisting of 11 concerts with around 500 attendees per concert. The ACD has hired a permanent director, who has served previously as a MS/ACD director in Farmington, NM.

Two new creative economy businesses opened in the ACD, Windsong Intensive Outpatient Treatment for Drug and Alcohol Abuse and The Green Scene Medical and Recreational Cannabis, together bringing nine new jobs to the district. The ACD lost Crashing Thunder Gallery and R.C. Gorman Gallery Philander Begay Jewelry. Additional reinvestment in the ACD in 2023 included a new mural, replacing an older vandalized mural.

The ACD has been working on several efforts to support creatives. They have utilized NMMS technical to transition the Business Resource Center into a media maker's space. The ACD has also hosted several pop up maker's markets in November and December and hosted high school interns for a second summer as part of the McKinley County's summer work program. Youth participating in the program indicated that they are interested in seeing different restaurants, active wear stores, sporting goods stores, and game/escape room type businesses. Opportunities exist as well to support community youth through partnerships with Gallup Arts to provide mentorship and access to careers in fine arts, crafts and performing arts.

Gallup ACD continues to struggle with businesses looking for spaces while buildings remain vacant. Some buildings need considerable work to meet current code requirements. In some cases, building owners are difficult to locate. A new museum and a jewelry maker from Zuni are examples of businesses looking to locate in the district. The ACD has utilized NMMS technical assistance for the remodel of a coffee shop/café in the Crashing Thunder Gallery building and continues to look for grant opportunities to support building improvements.

The ACD is working to preserve historic buildings in the district by providing support for façade improvements to the Historic Morris Building and to the Grand Hotel/Rica Mercantile Building with the NPS Façade Grant. Additional historic preservation efforts include providing historic property education, historic tax credit information and historical plaques.

Total Volunteer Hours in 2023: 2118 hours.

New Creative Businesses: 2

Grant Funds Received: Levitt AMP grant, \$3K

2024 Goals and Creative Industries Targeted

In 2024 Gallup MainStreet Arts & Cultural District will be working toward the completion of the Coal Avenue Alley Paseo Project, the conceptual planning of the Courthouse Plaza, hosting the Levitt AMP series and to continue to support arts and cultural businesses in the district.

Las Cruces MainStreet and Arts & Cultural District



Las Cruces MainStreet and Arts and Cultural district has continued to see expansion in the creative businesses and programming in 2023. The district has a new executive director (formerly the assistant director) and is rebuilding its coordinating council and partnerships with local nonprofit organizations. The district continues to support local events, markets and programming and is identifying the need to provide support to micro entrepreneurs and makers.

In 2023, fourteen new creative sector businesses opened, and one business expanded within the district adding 60 new jobs. New growth is primary in the Food and Agriculture, Health Wellness and Beauty and Visual Arts sectors. The district lost eight businesses with 26 jobs primarily in the Food and Agriculture sector. The district indicates that there are not enough small spaces at street level to accommodate the needs of emerging businesses. Efforts have been taken to divide some of the larger buildings into smaller spaces, but there is competition for these spaces with office and professional services. Micro businesses also struggle to produce enough inventory for brick-and-mortar spaces. Some micro businesses are offering whares via consignment. Others are selling at special events and downtown festivals. One business has sublet a small space within a brick-and-mortar retail space.

The district has attracted new property owners with a vision for live, work and play environment for downtown. Private and public investment in the district remains strong via building renovations, Hotel rehabilitation and parking lot updates and new restrooms. Private security, funded through the TIDD, have improved safety in the district and the redesign of the Campo Street continue to improve safety. The district has supported the local creative business community by working to locate spaces, marketing audits with NMMS RS technical assistance, printable map/directory and financial assistance, and grant opportunities.

The ACD continues to offer writer's monthly programming and Lit Fest, the Generations Community Writing Project, the District BR&E program and the ACD Icons video promotion project. The Zombie Walk attracts 7,000 annually and the Chile Drop draws 6,000 annually. These events were featured on CNN and USA Today respectively.

Total Volunteer Hours in 2023: 351 hours.

New Creative Businesses: 14

2023 New Creative Jobs: 60

2023 Private Reinvestment: \$ 1.1 M

2023 Public Investment: \$ 2M+

2023 Grants: \$13K

2023 Fundraising/Events/Programming: \$115K

2024 Goals and Creative Industries Targeted

Las Cruces will continue to develop the Lit Fest/Generations Community Writing Program and host the Creative Economy Seminars.

Los Alamos Creative District



In 2023, Los Alamos Creative District integrated with Los Alamos MainStreet and has hired new support staff. The Creative District is evolving from event facilitation to supporting creatives, entrepreneurs, historic preservation and is strengthening collaborations and networks with local nonprofits. The district is focusing on events and activities which support artists and entrepreneurs. They no longer are responsible for parade events as these take up lots of staff time. They have also identified that Trick or Treat on MainStreet, which also draws large numbers, no longer is a benefit to local businesses

Los Alamos Creative District reports no new creative businesses or losses. Due to the lack of commercial space, creative businesses struggle to locate in the district. Gallery space and space for creatives to live is an ongoing challenge in the small community which is challenged to meet the housing and space needs for the labs.

The district continues to build programming. In 2023, they supported the Atomic Follies, an effort to provide artistic entertainment for adults in the community. The Tuesday Concert series relaunched at a new location with new programming drawing lunchtime traffic. The district also introduced a Big Band Dance and Play Crawl (alcohol free activities for adults) during ScienceFest. The district curated a photography exhibit in collaboration with the Manhattan National Park to activate empty storefronts with historical photographs. District volunteers cleaned spaces and installed artwork. The district has formalized its participation in the National Month of Arts and Humanities through a county proclamation, the establishment of a Day of Arts and Culture in collaboration with the Arts council and the development of a new guide of arts and cultural activities in October.

The district has identified a need for more education, funds, and support for historic preservation. Many buildings, such as Oppenheimer's home, the Little Theater and the Women's Dormitory, all relics of the Los Alamos Project years, need extensive repair. The county has plans for the Women's Dormitory as a potential visitor's center, but timeline is unknown. The district is also interested in learning more about historic plaquing. The district is interested in modification to their existing boundaries to include the Little Theater/Performing Arts Center which is located just outside. The district is contemplating a Historic Preservation Plan.

The district has continued efforts to support local arts and cultural nonprofits. They have advocated on behalf of the local arts council and partnered to support local community events. They have provided marketing material and collaborated on programming with the Los Alamos Little Theater and have leveraged NMMS technical support to redesign the landscaping and parking lot at the SALA Event center to support outdoor community programming.

Total Volunteer Hours in 2023: 50 hours.

2024 Goals and Creative Industries Targeted

In 2024, the Los Alamos Creative District hopes to revisit the Cultural Plan and expand the district boundaries. The district will continue to grow the Tuesday Series at the Square, ScienceFest, and initiate

the Los Alamos Pop Up mural as well as support and partner with local nonprofits to continue to grow existing projects and programs.

Las Vegas Arts & Cultural District



Las Vegas Arts & Cultural District has been experiencing positive feedback and interest in ACD work and arts and cultural programming. In 2023, reinvestment in the district has centered around arts and culture. The district continues to see challenges with vacant and underutilized buildings, funds for building rehabilitation, as well as housing for artists. Projects in 2023 focused on working with community leaders to draw attention to these issues.

Local galleries, music stores and First Friday Events are drawing people to the district. Workshops and Highland University programming are also a community draw. Visitors are bringing more traffic to local bars and restaurants. The district has attracted a long-time theater group to relocated into a permanent location at the Masonic Lodge Building. This will bring their large following to support district businesses.

Investment in the community remains strong. A food truck park and pergola were added to a plaza, 8 new artists' studios were created in an old church building and a new art studio located in the district. The district has been working with a NEA grant to develop two murals and have worked to relocate a mosaic wall to the Las Vegas Art Park where they will host outdoor sculpture exhibits.

The district has hosted a community forum for artists and creatives to learn more about needs and challenges. In addition, the ACD has co-hosted a housing summit with ULI in Albuquerque for a housing assessment of 500 abandoned properties in Las Vegas.

The ACD worked in 2023 to connect artists to local resources and to help market and promote the district and its creatives. Outreach to artists to the community provided information on local resources and activities. The ACD has raised funds to host a travel writer to write about Las Vegas. This effort resulted in an article which appeared in 157 newspapers throughout the United States. \$6000 for this effort was raised through a GoFundMe campaign. Additional funding is needed to further other promotional projects.

Total Volunteer Hours in 2023: 204 hours.

New Creative Businesses: 2

Private Reinvestment: \$ 167K

Public Investment: \$ 32K

2024 Goals and Creative Industries Targeted

The Las Vegas ACD will continue to work on the development of two additional murals within the district, are developing a public art exhibit and will continue to support district artists and creatives through marketing and programming.

Mora Arts and Cultural Compound

In 2023, the Mora Arts & Cultural Compound held steady. While no new creative economy businesses opened in the district, none were lost. The ACD focused on developing a new website, an inventory of main street businesses, worked with a NMMS Revitalization Specialist to start an inventory of building conditions and continued to host the Fall Festival and summer youth programming.

Mora ACC has identified the need for more education around the creative economy and the value of the community history. In addition, spaces are needed for arts and craft vending. The ACD has identified crowd funding as a potential opportunity to support community funded art projects and creative enterprises.

A partnership with Highland University assisted in removing graffiti from the St. Vrain Mill and other places in the compound. This effort has brought the community together and fostered pride and ownership. Other potential needs for community clean up include tree trimming and cleaning up main street. These efforts could not only improve the appearance of the community but could also leverage the unique cultural heritage for tourist immersive experiences.

The district continues to struggle with lack of wifi and transportation access. This is seen as an impediment to next generation creatives who struggle to keep up with technology and have limited access to community events and activities. As a small community, there is a smaller pool of creative professionals and organizations.

Total Volunteer Hours in 2023: 47 hours.

Public Investment: \$ 1000

Raton MainStreet/Arts & Cultural District



In 2023, the Raton ACD creative business remained strong, gaining three new creative businesses, adding 10 new jobs in the district, and suffering no business losses. These new creative businesses in the Food and Agriculture and Outdoor Recreation Sectors. The district reporting indicates that additional restaurants are needed.

The ACD has experienced reinvestment in private buildings which has had a positive impact on the appearance of the district. The ACD has been working to support the reuse of the Coors Building, an MRA project and offers a Façade Improvement grant. Upcoming physical improvements for 2024 include more murals and the identification of funds to finish the historic train depot. The ACD continues to struggle with absent property owners.

The district has been focusing on the Raton Adventure Center, the Train Depot, and Gate City Music Festival. Additionally, the ACD has been providing marketing and entrepreneurial support to all creative sectors.

The district continues to support artists through events including street fairs and community events where artists can rent vendor booth space. These events attract between 500-7400 people. The Old Pass Gallery provides physical opportunities for artists to sell, and the Raton Art Council's website provides online vending for artists. The ACD has been developing more opportunities for youth to participate through a Youth Board Member position and an Internship Program debuting in 2024.

Total Volunteer Hours in 2023: 963 hours.

New Creative Businesses: 3

New Creative Jobs: 10

Private Reinvestment: \$ 10K

2024 Goals and Creative Industries Targeted

The Raton ACD will continue to focus on the \$2M Historic Train Depot renovation, youth programming and performances and support of the Shuler Theater plumbing project. The district is interested in developing more murals.

Silver City Arts & Cultural District

In 2023, Silver City ACD has experienced both growth and losses in creative businesses in the district. Growth is primarily in the Visual Arts Sector with three new galleries. Two businesses have expanded and added jobs within the local creative economy as well. Losses have been primarily in the retail and restaurant business. The district has reported that there is demand for more restaurants, expanded restaurant hours and more diverse food offerings and attributes the loss of restaurants to higher rents and requirements not supportive restaurant establishments.

The district continues to see both private and public reinvestment. Façade improvements and murals are bringing new life to older buildings. Several projects from the cultural plan are moving forward, including bench swings, the Love Local promotion, the Kids Summer Film Series and Community Collaboration Meetings.

The ACD is also assisting artists and creatives to find spaces downtown and is promoting local artists. The district indicates that artists are struggling to find spaces downtown due to increasing rent and safety concerns related to the unhoused. The district is challenged with building owners not interested in selling or renovating vacant and underutilized buildings.

Total Volunteer Hours in 2023: 363 hours.

2023 New Creative Businesses: 5

2023 New Creative Jobs: 8

Private Reinvestment: \$ 128K

Public Investment: \$ 22K

Grant Funds Received: \$ 4K

2024 Goals and Creative Industries Targeted

The ACD is working to relocate the Southwest Regional Museum of Art to a significant building downtown and will continue to work with local artists and creatives to support space needs.