

City Council Economic Vitality Committee

Meeting Agenda

Friday, December 15, 2023

City Hall

749 Main Street

1:30 PM

Members of the public are welcome to attend and give comments remotely; however, the in-person meeting may continue even if technology issues prevent remote participation.

- You can call in to [+1 346 248 7799](tel:+13462487799) or [833 548 0282](tel:8335480282) (toll free) Webinar ID [#838 1396 0621](tel:83813960621)
- You can log in via your computer. Please visit the City's website here to link to the meeting: www.louisvilleco.gov/council.

The Board will accommodate public comments during the meeting. Anyone may also email comments to the Board prior to the meeting at ABrown@LouisvilleCO.gov.

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Meeting Minutes: October 27, 2023
5. Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda
6. Staff Updates
7. Discussion – Bag Tax Funded Sustainability Programs Overview
8. Discussion – EVC Purpose Statement
9. Discussion – 2023 EVC Work Plan
10. Recent Articles

Persons planning to attend the meeting who need sign language interpretation, translation services, assisted listening systems, Braille, taped material, or special transportation, should contact the City Clerk's Office at 303.335-4536 or MeredythM@LouisvilleCO.gov. A forty-eight-hour notice is requested.

Si requiere una copia en español de esta publicación o necesita un intérprete durante la reunión, por favor llame a la Ciudad al 303.335.4536 o 303.335.4574.

11. Discussion Items for Next Meeting
12. Adjourn

City Council
Economic Vitality Committee
Meeting Minutes
Friday, October 27, 2023
Regular Meeting

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Leh called the meeting to order at 1:36 PM.
2. **Roll Call:** The following members of the City Council were present: Chair Leh and Mayor Pro Tem Fahey. Councilmember Kern was also in attendance as a guest. Also present was Community Development Director Rob Zuccaro. Two members of the public was present.
3. **Approval of Agenda:** Mayor Pro Tem Fahey made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Chair Leh. Motion passed.
4. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:** Mayor Pro Tem Fahey made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of September 15, 2023. The motion was seconded by Chair Leh. Motion passed.
5. **Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda:** None.
6. **Staff Updates:**
Director Zuccaro gave a brief update on Amendments to the BAP Ordinance. City Council passed an ordinance codifying the practice of rebating consumer use tax. He noted that there may be future amendments returning to City Council.

Director Zuccaro continued with an update on the property at 916 Main Street. The owner has submitted an application for direct financial assistance which will go to the Louisville Revitalization Commission (LRC) for review and approval in December.

Next, Director Zuccaro shared that the Recreation Services will be taking over the management and operations of Old Town Skate, the City's ice rink. He added that the fee structure has been finalized.

Chair Leh noted that he was surprised about some of the discussion around the budget and revenue projections for next year.

The proposed Dark Sky Lighting ordinance was rejected by City Council during its October 2 hearing. Director Zuccaro noted that staff can bring the ordinance back to Council if directed to do so.

Director Zuccaro stated that staff is currently working on energy code amendments. He added that some new issues have been recently identified around all-electric requirements which require research into case law and coordination with the City Attorney.

Zuccaro shared that 6-month Downtown Vision Plan for Streetscapes and Public Spaces is just getting underway. The process will include public outreach and engagement with City Boards and Commissions.

Director Zuccaro concluded his comments with updates on the LRC, including the 2023 Budget, a joint meeting with the DBA, and the new proposed Property Improvement Program.

7. Discussion/Direction – Business Forum Update:

Director Zuccaro gave a recap of the previous discussion around the Business Forum and presented an overview of the survey that was created in order to collect feedback from the business community. The survey was distributed to the City's business email list, but has so far only received two responses.

Director Zuccaro ran through the questions and the responses received so far and asked for feedback from the EVC. Of the eight responses collected, six were from downtown and one each from the CTC and the McCaslin Corridor.

Director Zuccaro noted that staff will continue to push the survey out to the business community in hopes of receiving more feedback. Eric Lund, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce noted that the Chamber will plan to send the survey out to its mailing list.

Chair Leh noted that how the City communicates with the business can be almost as important as what it communicated. He wondered how communications could potentially be reimaged in the future, or how the City could better engage with the business community on items like this.

Public Comment from Eric Lund: Mr. Lund noted that the City can continue to rely on organizations like the Chamber and Downtown Business Association to help with communications.

8. Recent Articles:

No comments.

9. **Discussion Items for Next Meeting:**

Chair Leh asked about timing of the Energy Code amendments. Director Zuccaro gave an update on the current timing and asked whether the EVC would like to discuss energy code updates at a future meeting.

The next regular meeting would be scheduled for November 17, 2023. However the EVC decided not to meet in November. The EVC will reconvene on December 15, 2023.

10. **Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 2:47 PM.

SUBJECT: STAFF UPDATES

DATE: DECEMBER 15, 2023

PRESENTED BY: AUSTIN BROWN, INTERIM ECONOMIC VITALITY MANAGER

SUMMARY:

In the following, staff provides updates on recent activity related to core economic vitality functions.

Property Updates

The third party financial review of the proforma for the proposed Radiance MedSpa project (916 Main Street) is currently being reviewed by Environmental and Planning Systems (EPS). This review will evaluate the need for possible direct assistance funding to assist with any funding gaps to make the project feasible. The review will return to the LRC for consideration at its November meeting. If the LRC recommends assistance, the application will be presented to City Council for consideration.

Ice Rink Update

Old Town Skate opened on Friday, December 1st at 3 PM, just in time for the Parade of Lights. The grand opening included free hot chocolate for the first 100 customers and light shows throughout the evening. The opening was delayed from the November 23 anticipated opening date due to equipment delays and electrical issues. The rink is being managed by Parks and Recreation. City staff will continue to engage with the contractor and will begin planning for next year's rink.

Downtown Vision Plan

MIG, the consultant hired to produce the Downtown Vision Plan, invited key stakeholders to join them for a site walk on Wednesday December 6. The group included local businesses, members of the LRC, DBA, Chamber of Commerce, and other City Boards and Commissions.

MIG and City staff also facilitated public outreach and engagement at both the Turkey Trot and Parade of Lights. Attendees were invited to share feedback on things that they like about downtown Louisville, things that they would like to change in downtown Louisville, and other questions. Participants can also fill out the survey [online](#).

Comprehensive Plan Update

The Louisville Comprehensive Plan Update is gearing up. The project will formally kick off in 2024 and is expected to be completed by summer 2025. There will be multiple opportunities for the public and the business community to provide input on the plan throughout the process. Additional information on the Comprehensive Plan Update is available [online](#).

SUBJECT: STAFF UPDATES

DATE: DECEMBER 15, 2023

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Community Decarbonization Plan

The third and final workshop for the Community Decarbonization Plan will be held on Wednesday, December 13. It's anticipated that the final plan will be presented to City Council in March.

LRC Update

The LRC approved an amendment to its 2023 Budget during its October meeting. City Council approved the 2024 LRC Budget will go to City Council on November 6. The LRC adopted its 2024 Budget during its November meeting.

Staff is in the process of preparing program criteria for the new Property Improvement Program, which would extend Façade Improvement Program funding beyond work to exterior facades to the entire building/property. Examples of additional projects that may be considered for grant funding include entire building exterior renovations, back of building and alleyway improvements, trash enclosures, internal building modifications and upgrades/replacement of core systems (HVAC, electrical, plumbing), incorporation of murals and/or public art on private property, resiliency improvements (i.e., natural disaster mitigation improvements), landscaping, etc.

ATTACHMENT(S):

None.

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION - BAG TAX FUNDED SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

DATE: DECEMBER 15, 2023

**PRESENTED BY: AUSTIN BROWN, INTERIM ECONOMIC VITALITY MANAGER
HANNAH MILLER, SUSTAINABILITY SPECIALIST
KAYLA BETZOLD, SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER**

SUMMARY:

In 2020, Louisville voters approved Ballot Question 2A, which aims to reduce single-use bag consumption within the community by applying a \$0.25 tax on every paper and plastic bag provided to customers by Louisville retailers. The bag tax went into effect January 1, 2022. After Council approval in March 2023, the Sustainability Division created six new commercial sustainability programs funded by the disposable bag tax revenue. These programs will begin in early 2024.

DISCUSSION:

The objective of the bag-tax funded sustainability programs is to utilize the collected revenue to provide programs and services to the Louisville community that continue to reduce waste and advance sustainability in the commercial sector. When the Sustainability division developed the waste programs proposal, staff intended to develop a variety of programs, so that individual businesses are able to choose the program that best suits the needs of the specific business.

Businesses that provide disposable bags to customers and remit bag tax will have the option to choose one waste reduction program per calendar year and the estimated value of all waste reduction programs are \$1,000, so that the value of each program option is comparable to the other program options. If funding allows, all other Louisville businesses will be eligible to participate in the programs in Q4 of 2024.

Staff proposes the following five bag tax funded waste reduction programs:

1. Bulk Supply of Reusable Bags
2. One Year Subscription to Hard-to-Recycle Pick Up Services
3. Establish Commercial Recycling or Composting Services
4. Reusable Takeout Pilot Program
5. Commercial Sustainability Grant

Additional information on each of these programs is included in *Attachment #1*.

Eligible businesses may self-select the program in which they would like to enroll through January. Staff will meet individually with each participating business in March to confirm program selection and define expectations before programs begin in April. It's anticipated that there will also be a program evaluation survey distributed to participating businesses in August.

SUBJECT: BAG TAX FUNDED SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

DATE: DECEMBER 15, 2023

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RECOMMENDATION:

For information only.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment #1: Bag Tax Funded Sustainability Programs
- Attachment #2: Presentation Materials

Bag Tax Funded Sustainability Programs

All bag tax businesses are eligible for \$1,000 towards one of the five programming options below. Each program offering is equally valued at \$1,000 and programs will start January 1, 2024.

Below is a summary of the program offerings.

Program 1: Supply of Reusable Bags

Register for a supply of reusable bags to exempt customers from the \$0.25 bag tax. This program is suitable for various business sectors: food, vendor, retail, service, and grocery. Ensure adequate storage on location; bags must be picked up within 72 hours of delivery at City Hall.

Stipend will fund approximately 420 bags however, exact quantity will vary based on participation. EcoPromotional Products, a women-owned and B-Corp certified business, provides the bags.

Program 1 is a fitting choice for businesses aiming to provide an alternative to disposable bags without delving into extensive waste reduction efforts.

Program 2: One-Year Hard-to-Recycle Service

Program 2 provides businesses in Louisville with a one-year subscription to Ridwell's hard-to-recycle pickup services. Ridwell offers pop-up displays to collect various items:

- multi-layer plastic
- plastic film
- household batteries
- light bulbs
- clothes, shoes, textiles
- plastic clamshell containers

Residents can also drop off items at these displays.

This program is suitable for multiple business sectors including food, vendor, service, retail, and grocery. Should the business wish to continue the service after the stipend period, a 10% discount will be applied.

Overall, Program 2 is an excellent option for businesses looking to enhance their waste reduction efforts with minimal administrative burden.

Program 3: Establish Commercial Recycling or Composting Services

Introduce commercial recycling or composting services to your business! This initiative, in partnership with Boulder County Resource Conservation District (RCD) and Partners for a Clean Environment (PACE), is geared towards businesses in the food, service, retail, and grocery sectors.

Businesses can receive a \$1,150 rebate to jumpstart these services, with \$150 from RCD and an additional \$1,000 from the City. To claim the incentive, businesses commit to a minimum of one year of new recycling or composting services.

For context: Setting up commercial recycling costs approximately \$125, with monthly service charges varying from \$130 to \$200 for weekly pickup, based on container size. The program covers roughly 5-8 months of service costs.

Overall, Program 3 is a valuable option for businesses seeking additional support to initiate commercial recycling or composting. While businesses should plan for long-term recycling/composting costs, this program provides a substantial supplement for about 6 months.

Bag Tax Funded Sustainability Programs

All bag tax businesses are eligible for \$1,000 towards one of the five programming options below. Each program offering is equally valued at \$1,000 and programs will start January 1, 2024.

Below is a summary of the program offerings.

Program 4: Reusable Takeout Pilot Program

The City is partnering with DeliverZero, a company specializing in reusable takeout services, to bring this initiative to Louisville restaurants. DeliverZero seamlessly integrates with restaurant pPoint of sSale systems, allowing customers to choose DeliverZero for reusable container packaging. The restaurant provides the containers, and once the order is picked up or delivered, DeliverZero arranges for container pickup, cleaning, sanitization, and return.

This program is best suited for the food sector.

For the first six months, the City will subsidize participation, offering up to \$1,000 per business. Initial costs cover restaurant recruitment, container procurement, stocking, cleaning, and customer subsidies. The company will manage container logistics and restocking.

Overall, Program 4 is an innovative initiative for restaurants to adopt. Given evolving policies on compostable service ware and the upcoming Styrofoam ban in Colorado, reusable takeout solutions offer an excellent alternative.

Program 5: Commercial Sustainability Grant

Program 5 offers Louisville businesses the chance to propose and execute sustainability projects to address their unique needs. This initiative caters to businesses that may not find suitable solutions in programs 1-4. Upon approval, the City will collaborate with the business by providing funding on a reimbursement basis to support their sustainability endeavor.

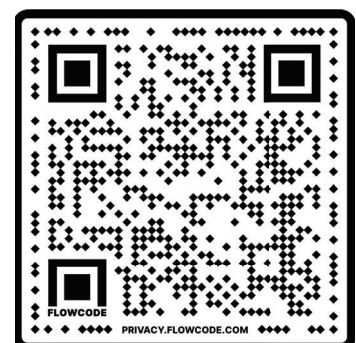
Examples of potential Sustainability Grant projects include:

- Introducing reusable kitchenware (plates, glasses, silverware) for employee kitchens.
- Installing a heat pump or upgrading the building's energy efficiency
- Adopting reusable straws, napkins, or alternatives to disposables.
- Swapping turf for xeriscape landscaping
- Implementing commercial dishwashing etc

This program spans all business sectors, including food, vendor, retail, service, and grocery. Businesses can receive up to \$1,000 from the City to implement a project promoting general sustainability. If a business opts for this program, city staff will provide an additional form for submitting the project idea. Submissions will be evaluated based on criteria including feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and potential for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, City grant funding can be bundled with other incentives from Boulder County PACE, Xcel Energy rebates, and Resource Central etc.

Overall, Program 5 offers businesses a flexible and impactful route to proactively embrace sustainability in their operations.

Ready to pick your program? Scan the QR code to self-enroll on the waitlist.



Bag Tax Funded, No-Cost, Sustainability Programs Overview

City of Louisville Sustainability Division
Hannah Miller, Sustainability Specialist

Agenda

Background

Eligibility Criteria

Program 1: Supply of Reusable Bags

Program 2: One Year Hard-to-Recycle Pick Up Service

Program 3: Commercial Recycling or Composting Service

Program 4: Reusable Takeout Pilot

Program 5: Sustainability Grant

Program Timeline and Administrative Tasks

Questions



Background

November 2020 - Louisville voters approved ballot question 2A, which aims to reduce single-use bag consumption through the \$0.25 disposable bag tax

May 2021 – State passes Plastic Pollution Reduction Act (PPRA)

January 1, 2022 – Louisville \$0.25 disposable bag tax in effect

- Applies to disposable paper, plastic and compostable bags at all retailers

January 1, 2023 – Statewide \$0.10 bag fee in effect

- Applies to disposable paper and plastic bags at large stores (grocery, retail)

March 2023 – Louisville City Council approves six new bag tax funded commercial programs

January 1, 2024 – Statewide Styrofoam and plastic bag **ban** will go into effect

Eligibility Criteria

Phase 1

- Business that provide disposable bags to customers and remit bag tax are eligible for a \$1,000 stipend towards one of the five programming options that will be outlined further in the presentation.

Phase 2

- If funding allows, programs will be available to all Louisville businesses in Q4 of 2024.

Program Overviews

Program 1: Supply of Reusable Bags

- Register for a supply of reusable bags to exempt customers from the \$0.25 bag tax.
- Stipend will fund approximately 420 bags however, exact quantity will vary based on participation.
- Program 1 is a fitting choice for businesses aiming to provide an alternative to disposable bags without delving into extensive waste reduction efforts.
- This program is suitable for various business sectors: food, vendor, retail, service, and grocery.



Program 2: One Year Hard-to-Recycle Pick Up Service

- Register for a one-year subscription to Ridwell's hard-to-recycle pick up services- items for pick up include:
 - multi-layer plastic
 - plastic film
 - household batteries
 - light bulbs
 - clothes, shoes, textiles
 - plastic clamshell containers
- Residents can also drop off items at these displays, which may increase foot traffic at participating business locations.
- This program is suitable for multiple business sectors including food, vendor, service, retail, and grocery.



Program 3: Incentive toward Commercial Recycling or Composting Service

- Businesses receive a \$1,150 rebate to jumpstart services, with \$150 from Boulder County's Resource Conservation District and an additional \$1,000 from the City.
- To claim the incentive, businesses commit to a minimum of one year of new recycling or composting services.
- This program is suitable for multiple business sectors including food, service, retail, and grocery.



Program 4: Reusable Takeout Pilot

- DeliverZero integrates with restaurant point of sale (POS) systems, allowing customers to choose DeliverZero for reusable container packaging. The restaurant packages the order in containers, and once the order is picked up or delivered, DeliverZero arranges for container pickup, cleaning, sanitization, and return.
- City stipend will cover ~six months of participation
- This program is best suited for the food sector.



Program 5: Sustainability Grant

- Program 5 offers Louisville businesses the chance to propose and execute sustainability projects to address their unique needs.
- This initiative caters to businesses that may not find suitable solutions in programs 1-4.
- Upon approval, the City will collaborate with the business by providing funding on a reimbursement basis to support their sustainability endeavor.



Administrative Processes

Administrative Caveats

- Businesses will be grouped into cohorts based on program selection. The purpose of this is to build relationships, source feedback and learn the sustainability needs of the business community, identify efficiencies and optimizations, and track program impacts.
 - Eligible businesses may select one of the five programs. Programs may be available to all businesses in the future, if funding allows.
 - There is no obligation to fund the program after the \$1,000 stipend.
- *Commercial Recycling/Composting pickup service has a one year cost obligation.

Program Timeline

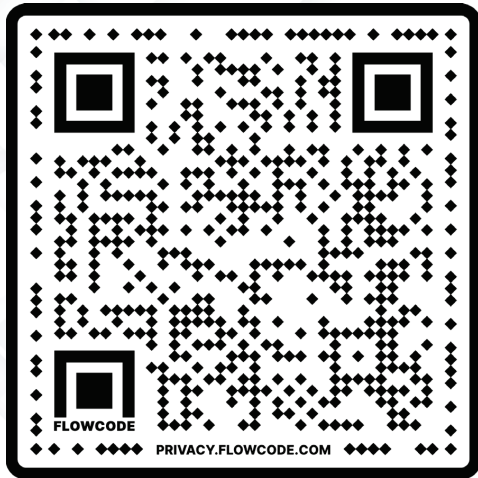
Project Timeline

- October- January: Business self-selects the program they would like to enroll in
- February 16: Program waitlist closes
- March: 1:1 confirmation of program selection, define expectations, and meet program partners
- April: First cohort meeting and programs begin
- July: Second cohort meeting
- August: Last cohort meeting and program evaluation survey

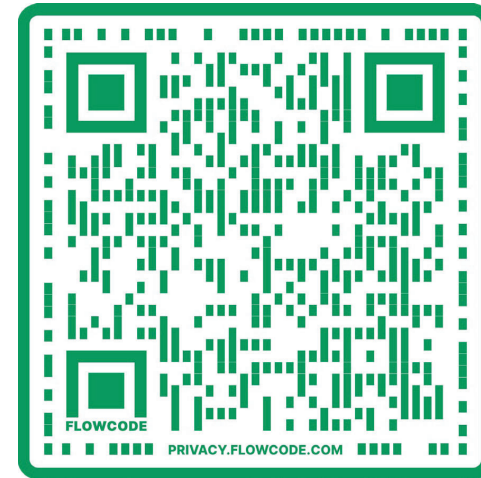
Thank you!

Questions?

Scan the QR code below to self-select program.



To read more about the programs, scan the QR code.



SUBJECT: DISCUSSION/DIRECTION- EVC PURPOSE STATEMENT

DATE: DECEMBER 15, 2023

PRESENTED BY: AUSTIN BROWN, INTERIM ECONOMIC VITALITY MANAGER

SUMMARY:

The Economic Vitality Committee (EVC) updated its purpose statement in 2023 to better align with the current goals and role of the EVC.

DISCUSSION:

Following the creation of the Economic Vitality Committee (EVC) in 2020, the EVC decided to develop a Purpose and Objectives to guide its work. The original EVC purpose statement is included below:

***Purpose:** The Louisville Economic Vitality Committee (EVC) provides leadership, policy recommendations, and support for the City's programs to promote a thriving business climate that provides job opportunities, facilitates investment, and produces reliable revenue to support City services.*

In 2023, the EVC discussed updating its purpose statement. Following a workshopping session and several revisions, the EVC developed the following new purpose statement during its April 21 meeting.

The Louisville Economic Vitality Committee (EVC):

- *Provides leadership, policy recommendations, and support for the City's programs;*
- *Facilitates open and results-oriented communication and collaboration with the local business community;*
- *Advises City Council by providing feedback and recommendations as to issues affecting new and existing businesses of all sizes; and*
- *Advocates for and promotes the retention and expansion of existing businesses, attraction of new businesses, encouragement of innovation, generation of revenue, and cultivation of a thriving business climate.*

RECOMMENDATION:

For information only. If the EVC wishes to further discuss or revise its purpose statement, staff recommends that this discussion take place in 2024.

ATTACHMENTS:

None.

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION/DIRECTION- ECONOMIC VITALITY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

DATE: DECEMBER 15, 2023

PRESENTED BY: AUSTIN BROWN, INTERIM ECONOMIC VITALITY MANAGER

SUMMARY:

The Economic Vitality Committee (EVC) previously discussed creating its own work plan, which will be guided by the existing Economic Vitality Strategic Plan, as well as the 2023 City Council Work Plan. City Council set its 2023 Work Plan on January 17, 2023.

DISCUSSION:

Following the creation of the Economic Vitality Committee (EVC) in 2020, the EVC decided to develop a Purpose and Objectives to guide its work. These statements are included below:

Purpose: *The Louisville Economic Vitality Committee (EVC) provides leadership, policy recommendations, and support for the City's programs to promote a thriving business climate that provides job opportunities, facilitates investment, and produces reliable revenue to support City services.*

Objectives:

- 1) Facilitate the development of an Economic Vitality Strategic Plan, including goals and specific supporting actions.*
- 2) Make recommendations in support of the City's Economic Prosperity Program by maintaining positive business relationships; assisting property owners, brokers, and companies in finding locations and/or constructing new buildings; and attracting/retaining a diverse mix of businesses that provide employment opportunities for Louisville residents.*
- 3) Monitor progress toward the Economic Vitality Strategic Plan goals through Key Performance Indicators and annually review prioritization.*

With the established Purpose and Objectives in mind, the EVC then focused on developing its Vision Statement and Strategic Goals, which were used to guide the creation of the Economic Vitality Strategic Plan. The final Vision Statement and Strategic Goals are included below:

Vision Statement: *Louisville is dedicated to producing reliable revenue to support City services which enhance our quality of life by fostering an economic environment that generates high quality jobs, innovative companies, and a diversity of businesses, employees, and customers.*

SUBJECT: ECONOMIC VITALITY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

DATE: DECEMBER 15, 2023

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Strategic Goals:

- *Focus retention and attraction strategies on underutilized retail spaces, blighted properties, and long-term vacancies;*
- *Improve our business climate through collaborative relationships and affective processes;*
- *Develop differentiated tools and programs focused on increasing total retail sales and sources of revenue generating activities;*
- *Facilitate a mix of diverse and quality job opportunities for Louisville residents; and*
- *Invest in green practices and programs that enhance environmental sustainability in our business community.*

In addition to the Economic Vitality Strategic Plan, the EVC expressed interest in developing its own Work Plan. The creation of an EVC Work Plan was intended to help the EVC identify its priorities for 2023, while also ensuring that there is adequate time to discuss items before they are heard by City Council. The development of an EVC Work Plan did not require City Council approval or direction.

The EVC approved its 2023 Work Plan in May. Staff has continued to update the Work Plan throughout 2023. The most recently-updated EVC Work Plan is included as *Attachment #1*.

RECOMMENDATION:

For information only. The EVC may want to consider discussing a 2024 Work Plan in January.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment #1: 2023 EVC Work Plan

**ECONOMIC VITALITY COMMITTEE
2023 Work Plan**



**2023 Priorities – June through December
Updated 12.8.23**

Project	Possible Actions
Process Improvement Initiatives for Business-Related Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review availability of services and support online as well as presented in English & Spanish; update and add as needed. • Brainstorm on barriers to entry (from business perspective). • Work with City departments, chamber, and use info from retention visits and prior business survey. • Prioritize processes for improvement initiatives (includes analyzing existing planning/zoning and building permit review processes for improvements). (Concept Plan)
Semi-Annual Business Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Business Forum in Q1/Q2 2024. • Ensure opportunity for questions and input from businesses. • Work with business community to identify topics of interest to address. • Continue collecting responses to the business forum survey.
Market Gap Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic & Planning Systems (EPS) will conduct market analysis including leakage/gap analysis. • Prioritize outcomes and develop new strategies for retail attraction. • Will be completed as part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan Process.
Business Retention Visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct visits with existing businesses to develop relationships, identify issues and address concerns. • Work on strategy for a more formalized business retention program.
Business Satisfaction Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late 2023/24: draft RFP for consultant services to conduct focus groups. • Consultant will develop 3rd party report identifying business concerns, needs, etc. and identify actionable items/opportunities for the City to implement to better support the business community.
Identify Barriers to Renewable Energy Participation and Possible Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with Sustainability staff. • Energy Code Amendments. (In process) • Dark Sky Lighting Ordinance. (rejected at 10/2 City Council) • General Renewable Energy Enhancements. • Financing/Incentive opportunities (i.e. PACE). • Community Decarbonization Plan
EDI Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with EDI Manager to ensure EDI is integrated into EV efforts.



OCTOBER 20, 2023 | 11:43:12 AM

CU grad founder brings Umoja Biopharma to Louisville

 **Lucas High**



The interior of Umoja's research and development and production facility at the Colorado Laboratory & Innovative Manufacturing Building at 725 Tech Court in Louisville. Courtesy Umoja.

=====  LATEST NEWS =====

November residential real estate results mixed in Boulder Valley, Northern Colorado

Vail: Epic Pass sales up, 2.4M committed guests expected this season

Zayo partners with national lab, Rice University on geothermal mapping project

FRCC, School of Mines ink partnership to benefit engineering students

Community Foundation of Boulder County awards \$75K in equity grants

LOUISVILLE — One of the founders of Umoja Biopharma Inc., a Seattle-born oncological cell therapy developer that recently established a large research and development and manufacturing operation in Louisville, is no stranger to Boulder County.

“Started my drug-development career off” at the University of Colorado Boulder, Umoja co-founder and chief technical officer Ryan Crisman told BizWest, where he got his doctorate degree in engineering. “I actually wanted to stay in Boulder” after school.

Instead, his career track took him first to Washington for leadership roles in several life-sciences firms, then into an entirely different industry.

“I started a brewery, because that’s what engineers do in Colorado,” he said, and Crisman and a group of co-founders launched Long Table Brewhouse in Denver’s Park Hill neighborhood.

In 2019, Crisman and partners turned back toward the biotech space and founded Umoja in Seattle.

As the company has advanced its in-vivo T-cell reprogramming therapies, Umoja has scoured the country for expansion opportunities.

“We did a big search for where the best place was to build our development and manufacturing building,” Crisman said. “We looked at Boston, San Francisco, Seattle, San Diego and ultimately we ended on Colorado.”

Compared with more established biotech hubs on the coast, Boulder “is an untapped market in terms of talent” coming out of local universities and laboratories. “There’s a ton of experience in drug development” among Boulder-area companies and workers. “There’s a long history of knowing how to take products from the (lab) bench to clinicals to commercial in Colorado.”

The company ultimately landed on a space in the Colorado Laboratory & Innovative Manufacturing Building at 725 Tech Court in Louisville.

Umoja’s roughly 60-person Colorado workforce is initially operating out of 77,000 square feet, which houses R&D, office and production functions. The company has access to a total of 146,000 square feet in which it can expand.

“It’s just really inefficient” to always be scrambling to find more space, Crisman said, “so I wanted to make sure we have the footprint to be able to expand within one facility.”

Umoja expects its first manufacturing run of clinical material in the first quarter of 2024.



Tags: [Umoja Biopharma Inc.](#)

Lucas High



A Maryland native, Lucas has worked at news agencies from Wyoming to South Carolina before putting roots down in Colorado. He loves sports (Go

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From the Denver Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/denver/news/2023/10/31/sierra-space-dream-chaser-iss-cargo-tom-vice-nasa.html>

SUBSCRIBER CONTENT:

Manufacturing

Sierra Space celebrates first Dream Chaser's completion in metro-area factory



Image: Denver Business Journal

Sierra Space CEO Tom Vice addresses hundreds of company workers in front of the first Dream Chaser space plane at the company's Louisville space flight and production center on Oct. 30, 2023.

GREG AVERY



By Greg Avery – Senior Reporter, Denver Business Journal
Oct 31, 2023

Listen to this article 7 min



Sierra Space is delivering the cargo module for its Dream Chaser space plane to NASA for final testing and will soon do the same with the winged spacecraft in preparation for a scheduled spring debut launch.

The Louisville-based company gathered hundreds of workers involved in Dream Chaser's development and assembly together at the company's factory Monday afternoon to celebrate more than a decade of work on the spacecraft.

Pablo Gonzalez, vice president in charge of Dream Chaser's cargo module systems, sounded sentimental, noting he recently had been telling workers to bring family to see the cargo module and the first Dream Chaser before they leave the facility forever.

He likened celebrating Dream Chaser's departure to the birth of a child.

"I really felt like I should be handing out cigars," he said.

Once loaded on a truck for delivery to NASA, the spacecraft isn't expected to return to Louisville.

Florida will become its home once Dream Chaser begins flying NASA missions to the International Space Station. Spacecraft refurbishment and preparation for flights will occur at Sierra Space facilities there.

Gonzalez expressed eagerness that Sierra Space's 2,200 employees will be able to show the world what they've been doing.

Sierra Space CEO Tom Vice described the company's space plane project as audacious and revolutionary, calling the first Dream Chaser's completion a profound milestone.

"This will change how we travel from Earth to space and back again. This will change everything," he said to hundreds of employees assembled on the factory floor and motioning to the Dream Chaser on a platform behind him.

Spacecraft shows tenacity

The Dream Chaser's 15-foot-long cargo module recently left for NASA's Neil Armstrong Test Facility, in Sandusky, Ohio, where spacecraft are put through rigorous tests meant to mimic the conditions of launch and orbital flight.

Dream Chaser will soon follow.



Sierra Space's Tenacity DC 101, the first Dream Chaser spacecraft, at the company's Louisville headquarters Oct. 30, 2023. The autonomous space plane, an uncrewed cargo hauler, has its wings folded up, which allows it to fit inside the fairing of the rocket used to launch it into orbit.

GREG AVERY

The spacecraft, named Tenacity DC 101, is essentially waiting to be trucked away. Exactly when Dream Chaser departs isn't being made public for security reasons, the company said.

Vice and other Sierra Space executives thanked employees for getting it ready.

He noted that many employees have had days where they've gone home late, missed family occasions and had to schedule parts of their lives around the needs of building Dream Chaser.

"I know we sacrifice, but what we do is worth it," Vice said.

As soon as April, the first Dream Chaser is slated to launch from Cape Canaveral, Florida, carrying about 12,000 pounds of supplies to the orbiting ISS.

Dream Chaser will blast off atop a Vulcan Centaur rocket that's made and flown by Centennial-based United Launch Alliance on what is scheduled to be the new rocket's

second flight.

The Dream Chaser spacecraft is built to fly autonomously without crew and with only occasional input from ground control. It's expected to return from the ISS after 45 days, flying back through the atmosphere at 17,500 miles per hour and gliding to land itself on the former space shuttle landing strip at Kennedy Space Center, Florida.

Each Dream Chaser is designed to fly such missions at least 15 times. NASA has contracted Dream Chaser for seven ISS cargo deliveries.

The space agency contracted Dream Chaser in 2014, originally aiming to have Sierra Space start its resupply missions in 2019 and finish the sixth in 2024.

Bringing the project in house

Slower-than-expected spacecraft development has pushed back Dream Chaser's debut. Widespread supply chain issues during the first couple of years of the Covid-19 pandemic delayed things further.

Parts for Dream Chaser sometimes didn't arrive when promised by suppliers or didn't always come in the sequence that was expected, delaying planned work, Sierra Space employees said.

The experience taught the company to bring more manufacturing in-house and Sierra Space to make more of Dream Chaser itself, Vice said.

All of Dream Chaser's internal wire harnessing, its solar panels and power systems and its propulsion thrusters are now made at company facilities. Soon, Dream Chaser's heat-resistant tiling, the key to protecting the spacecraft during atmospheric reentry, will be made on site, the company says.

It saves time and helps ensure that the company gets supply chain timing and economics right for future spacecraft production, Vice said.

Dozens of employees have been working in shifts all day and overnight finishing the first Dream Chaser.

Sierra Space designed the spacecraft to be able to land and be refurbished to fly again in 90 days.

Dream Chasers use non-toxic fuel for in-orbit propulsion, which will allow quick recovery of items brought back from space to a runway.

The ability to gently return experiments in a spacecraft that lands like a plane and is immediately approachable without hazardous material suits is a major change from capsules parachuting back into oceans, as is typically done today.

It was part of the reason NASA originally gave for choosing Dream Chaser nine years ago.

"We've got a great vehicle," said Angie Wise, Sierra Space's senior vice president of mission assurance and Dream Chaser's chief safety officer. "Now we've got to prove she can do what we say she can do."

Wise has worked for more than a decade at Sierra Space, having come from NASA's space shuttle program and working on thermal protection systems for the shuttle after the 2003 Columbia disaster that killed seven astronauts.



Angie Wise, lower left, chief safety officer for Sierra Space's Dream Chaser program, shows off the first Dream Chaser space plane as workers put finishing touches on it in the company's Louisville production and space flight center.

GREG AVERY

Building the next generation

Sierra Space is designing a Dream Chaser variant to fly astronauts. The company hopes to have the first crew version ready in 2026.

A crewed Dream Chaser will play a major role in Sierra Space's vision of building space stations and providing transport to orbit for commercial customers, NASA and other civil space agencies.

Sierra Space also is developing commercial space stations, known as Orbital Reef, in partnership with Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin space business and other companies.

Recent reports in two news publications suggested the Sierra Space and Blue Origin partnership could dissolve as Blue Origin's attention turns to other space projects. Both Sierra Space and Blue Origin have in recent weeks publicly said they're committed to Orbital Reef. Vice said Monday that the companies' relationship is strong, and the reports of problems were "a lot of press over nothing."

Sierra Space is already building its second Dream Chaser in Louisville, starting to add systems to the light composite spacecraft body that was produced in Fort Worth, Texas by Lockheed Martin, which Sierra Space has contracted to build all Dream Chaser core structures.

Vice noted that the two spacecraft in the Louisville factory Monday will be able to fly at least 30 orbital flights.

The company is in talks with NASA about a second commercial ISS cargo contract, Vice said. NASA isn't likely to be the only customer for the Dream Chasers in Sierra Space's factory now.

Sierra Space also is aiming to launch its first Orbital Reef space station as a replacement for the ISS before 2028.

That means some of the flights by the Dream Chaser being built now could be to Sierra Space's own orbiting outpost.

"The next-generation stations they will fly to – we're building them," Vice said.

T H E L I S T

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CU plans housing at Regal Cinebarre property in Louisville

BizWest Staff



The University of Colorado Boulder has contracted to purchase the Regal Cinebarre property in Louisville. Source: University of Colorado Boulder.

BOULDER and LOUISVILLE — The University of Colorado Boulder has contracted to acquire the Regal Cinebarre theater in Louisville for use as a transit-oriented development to house faculty and students.

The 8.85-acre property at 1164 W. Dillon Road, near the interchange of U.S. Highway 36 and McCaslin Boulevard, will be acquired for \$10 million. The purchase was approved by the CU Board of Regents, Nov. 7, but still must be approved by the Capital Development Committee of the Colorado General Assembly.

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The acquisition is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2024.

"1164 W. Dillon is a strategic acquisition for future university use that presents an excellent opportunity for housing and transit-oriented, mixed-use redevelopment that can help reactivate the McCaslin corridor," according to a press release issued by the university.

"CU Boulder anticipates this property becoming a model for transit-oriented development that complements Louisville planning efforts. The university will begin discussions with City of Louisville leaders and the community to inform the future of the site."

CU Boulder faculty, staff and students all receive Regional Transportation District EcoPasses, and the Louisville location provides "an excellent spot for walkable, transit-oriented development that reduces vehicle miles traveled and carbon emissions," the university said.

More than 600 CU Boulder faculty and staff and roughly 200 students reside in Louisville.



"The 1164 W. Dillon purchase is not aimed at increasing enrollment at CU Boulder but rather investing in the communities where our people currently live and providing more transit-oriented housing options, reducing pressure on the local housing market, vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions. The location could also provide a closer living option for members of the CU Boulder community who currently commute from farther away."

The Regents also approved a new on-campus apartment-style building in Boulder at 19th and Athens streets, two blocks east of Boulder High School. The project, called

Residence one, is scheduled to break ground in March 2024, creating 332 beds targeted toward non-first-year undergraduate students.

Residence One will include studios and one-, two-, four- and five-bedroom units. The building will also include a multipurpose room, as well as amenities such as a
Occupancy is planned for August 2026.

A second residential building at the same location, Residence Two, will be considered by the Board of Regents in 2024, with occupancy expected in August 2027.



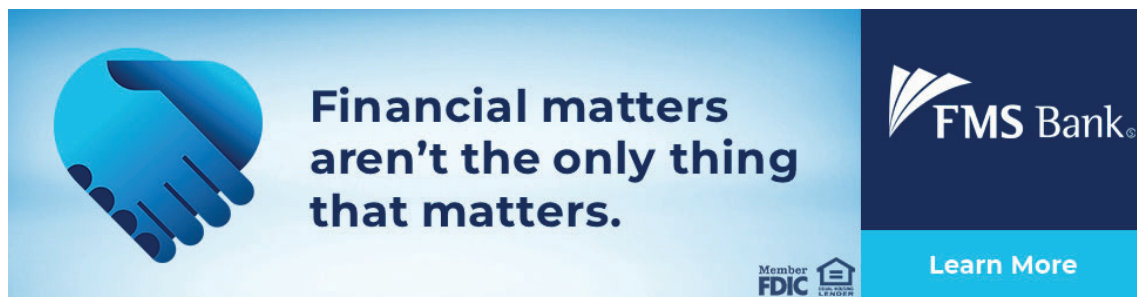
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Spaceplane maker lays off workers after completing first spacecraft




Image: Denver Business Journal

Sierra Space CEO Tom Vice addresses hundreds of company workers in front of the first Dream Chaser space plane the company is readying truck out of its Louisville space flight and production center. Sierra Space celebrated the spacecraft's completion Oct. 30, 2023, ahead of the Dream Chaser's departure to a NASA testing facility.

GREG AVERY



By Greg Avery – Senior Reporter, Denver Business Journal
Nov 17, 2023

 Listen to this article 4 min



Sierra Space is laying off many employees and contractors after completing the construction of its first Dream Chaser spacecraft.

The Louisville-based company, which employed about 2,200 people nationwide, informed about 165 employees and an unknown number of contract workers this week that their jobs were ending.

News of the jobs cuts was first reported by CNBC and confirmed by a company spokesperson.

The layoffs come just after Sierra Space sent its first completed Dream Chaser spacecraft off to a NASA testing facility ahead of the space plane's first launch, which is targeting an April liftoff.

On Oct. 30, top Sierra Space executives gathered employees at the company's Louisville production facility to celebrate the completion of Dream Chaser's assembly. CEO Tom Vice talked of the company transitioning from a spacecraft development business to an operational spaceflight company.

The Dream Chaser is a couple of years behind schedule launching the first of seven cargo resupply flights to the International Space Station that NASA has contracted Sierra Space to fly.

The company had ramped up this year to have shifts of workers around the clock finishing the first Dream Chaser as quickly as possible.

It had hired many contractors and employees to bring some production of spacecraft components in-house after sorting out issues with third-party suppliers.

Dream Chaser is a 30-foot-long space plane that Sierra Space built to be launched into orbit atop a rocket without a crew on board, berth with ISS and fly autonomously back to Earth for a runway landing.

Each Dream Chaser can be re-flown multiple times.



Sierra Space's Tenacity DC 101, the first Dream Chaser spacecraft, at the company's Louisville headquarters Oct. 30, 2023. The autonomous space plane, an uncrewed cargo hauler, has its wings folded up, which allows it to fit inside the fairing of the rocket used to launch it into orbit.

GREG AVERY

While Sierra Space is cutting employment related to its spacecraft manufacturing, the business is starting a military space push. It's bringing about 150 full-time employees with national security clearances over from its sister company, Sierra Nevada Corp., to staff its national security space team, the spokesperson said.

Sierra Space has been developing Dream Chaser for more than a decade, and this isn't the first time the program has grown and then cut workers.

Prior to winning the ISS resupply flight contract in 2014 under NASA's commercial cargo program, the company was passed over by NASA's commercial crew program that contracted SpaceX and Boeing Co. to ferry astronauts back and forth from the ISS. The loss of the crew contract led to the company shrinking and letting dozens of workers go.

The company was then a business division of Sierra Nevada Corp., a privately held defense contractor. Two years ago, Sierra Space spun out to be a standalone subsidiary focused on commercial spaceflight and building privately owned space stations.

Sierra Space has received the body of its second Dream Chaser spacecraft from its supplier, Lockheed Martin Corp., and is beginning to assemble it.

But that may not require as many people.

Angie Wise, Sierra Space's chief safety officer, said during last month's celebration that the early construction of the second Dream Chaser spacecraft was going twice as fast given all the lessons learned building the first. Company executives talked about smoothing out supply chain issues during the first Dream Chaser, which promised to make it easier to keep on schedule.

The company doesn't face as much of a time crunch to complete a second Dream Chaser. NASA is expected to want two Dream Chaser cargo flights to the ISS annually.

Each spacecraft is designed to fly a minimum of 15 missions. The space plane can be refurbished and readied to fly again as quickly as 90 days after landing, Wise said.

THE LIST

2023 Denver- area Aerospace Companies

Total Denver-area employees as of Jan. 1, 2023

Rank	Prior Rank	Business name
1	1	Lockheed Martin
2	2	Ball Corporation
3	3	Raytheon Intelligence & Space

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From the Denver Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/denver/news/2023/11/29/arcfield-acquires-orion-space-solutions.html>

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Orion's Sortie CubeSat deploying from the International Space Station.

COURTESY PHOTO / ORION



By Cassidy Ritter – Reporter and Colorado Inno Editor, Denver Business Journal
Nov 29, 2023 **Updated** Dec 1, 2023 1:19pm MST

 Listen to this article 5 min



See Correction/Clarification at the end of this article.

Louisville-based space and defense company Orion Space Systems was acquired Wednesday by defense company Arcfield.

Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Orion Space Systems, founded in 2005, is a space exploration company that primarily operates in low Earth orbit and extremely low Earth orbit. It's developing small spacecraft called SmallSats and CubeSats, miniature satellites in the shape of a cube. Working with both government and commercial businesses, Orion is developing tools to measure space weather, conduct situational awareness in space, aid in ISR missions and more.

Chantilly, Virginia-based Arcfield spun out of Veritas in 2021 and primarily works with government entities to engineer space solutions, including simulations, launch

planning, risk management and reduction. The company also has a cybersecurity arm to help .mil and .gov sites and organizations protect their data and infrastructure when communicating between classification levels and other enterprises.

The acquisition of Orion expands Arcfield's customer base and enhances its work in the space industry.

Orion and Arcfield began working together about a year and a half ago on "collaborative business development opportunities," Kevin Kelly, chairman and CEO of Arcfield, told the Denver Business Journal.



Kevin Kelly is the chairman and chief executive officer of Arcfield.

COURTESY PHOTO / ARCFIELD

"We have very collaborative cultures, and no overlap between our two businesses," Kelly added. "So one thing led to another. It made sense for us to start talking about a combination and that took some time to come to fruition, but we're happy to finally be across the goal line."

All of Orion's 100 employees are expected to join Arcfield, bringing Arcfield's headcount to approximately 1,555 people. Kelly said no layoffs or consolidations are expected and that there's a good chance additional hiring will take place.

"The bulk of [Orion] employees work in Louisville," Kelly said. "Being a satellite integrator and an innovator, they have their own laboratories, they have their own capabilities to do burn-in testing, thermal-vac [tests]. ... That doesn't exist anywhere else within our field today, so there's no benefit to doing consolidation. ... There's a lot of reasons to keep us here in Louisville."

The Louisville office adds to Arcfield's 16 global offices.

Kelly said there's a good chance additional hiring will take place in the Denver area. Arcfield has hired more than 300 people this year. If Orion and Arcfield win some "game-changing" government contracts, both companies will "do some real meaningful hiring," Kelly said.

Orion will also continue to operate under its current name and be a subsidiary of Arcfield.

Orion CEO Geoff Crowley will serve as Arcfield's chief scientist. Orion Chief Operating Officer Chad Fish is now the president and general manager of Orion, which will operate as the fourth business sector of Arcfield.

"As a leader in systems engineering and integration and space and mission launch assurance, Arcfield is highly complementary to Orion, and the combination will help us

expand our core capabilities and develop new, cutting-edge space-based technologies for our customers,” Crowley said in a statement.

This is Arcfield’s second acquisition in three months. The company acquired Strategic Technology Consulting, a full-spectrum model-based systems engineering and digital engineering services businesses, in August for an undisclosed amount.

Arcfield previously focused its efforts on working with the U.S. Department of Defense, but having since acquired Orion and Strategic Technology Consulting, is expanding to non-government customers.

“We’re in the early phases of building what is a very comprehensive space hypersonics and cyber platform, and we’ve made two important acquisitions,” Kelly said. “We’re very picky about what it is that we choose to add to the enterprise. I would say stay tuned for more work and more progress, and along those lines, we are aggressively trying to identify capabilities that we need to build internally or solutions that we may need to acquire externally.”

Correction/Clarification

We originally reported more than 120 employees would join Arcfield. Orion employs 100 people, all of whom are expected to join Archfield.

BUSINESS

Video streamer Gaia promotes operations exec to CEO in C-suite shakeup



Gaia, a Louisville-based media company also recorded a 10th straight quarter of positive earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization. (Christopher Wood/BizWest / Courtesy photo)



By **BIZWEST STAFF**

December 6, 2023 at 9:28 a.m.



LOUISVILLE — Streaming video provider Gaia Inc.'s (Nasdaq: GAIA) founder Jirka Rysavy is taking on the role of executive chairman with chief operating officer James Colquhoun filling the CEO chair.

Colquhoun, a Gaia board member, was [elevated to the newly created chief operating officer position](#) less than six months ago.

He was founder and CEO of Food Matters TV, a health- and wellness-focused online video subscription service until its acquisition by Gaia in June 2019.

“We had a very good experience with the FMTV transition and James’ participation with Gaia so far,” Rysavy said in a prepared statement. “I had an eye on him since the FMTV acquisition, and I’m thankful for James’ willingness to relocate from Australia to join us full time. He brings strong digital marketing and brand building skills, and I’m looking forward to working with him in his new expanded role.”

Gaia’s financial position benefited greatly from the COVID-19 pandemic, when consumers were relying heavily on streaming video services. Following the recovery, the company has struggled with profitability. However Gaia grew its year-over-year sales and reduced its net losses, while [growing its user base in the third quarter of 2023](#).

This article was first published by BizWest, an independent news organization, and is published under a license agreement. © 2023 BizWest Media LLC. You can view the original here: [Video streamer Gaia promotes operations exec to CEO in C-suite shakeup](#)

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