

Economic Development Alliance Update: November 2020



NEXT INVESTOR MEETING IS 12.8.2020



UPDATE FROM STAFF

PPP Forgiveness Applications are now being reviewed. EZ PPP Loan Forgiveness Application can be found [here](#) and instructions can be found [here](#). Revised PPP Loan Forgiveness Application can be found [here](#) and instructions can be found [here](#).

This week our community is moving to Safer at Home Level Red due to the significant rise in COVID cases in our community.. Previously the Safer at Home Level Red was the stay at home level, but the state has added a new level, purple, changing the definition of Safer at Home Level Red. What does this mean for our businesses and what can we do as a community to get back on track? The Alliance is here to help your business prepare for Level Red.

There are three main factors that affect our county's level of protection:

Percent of positive cases:

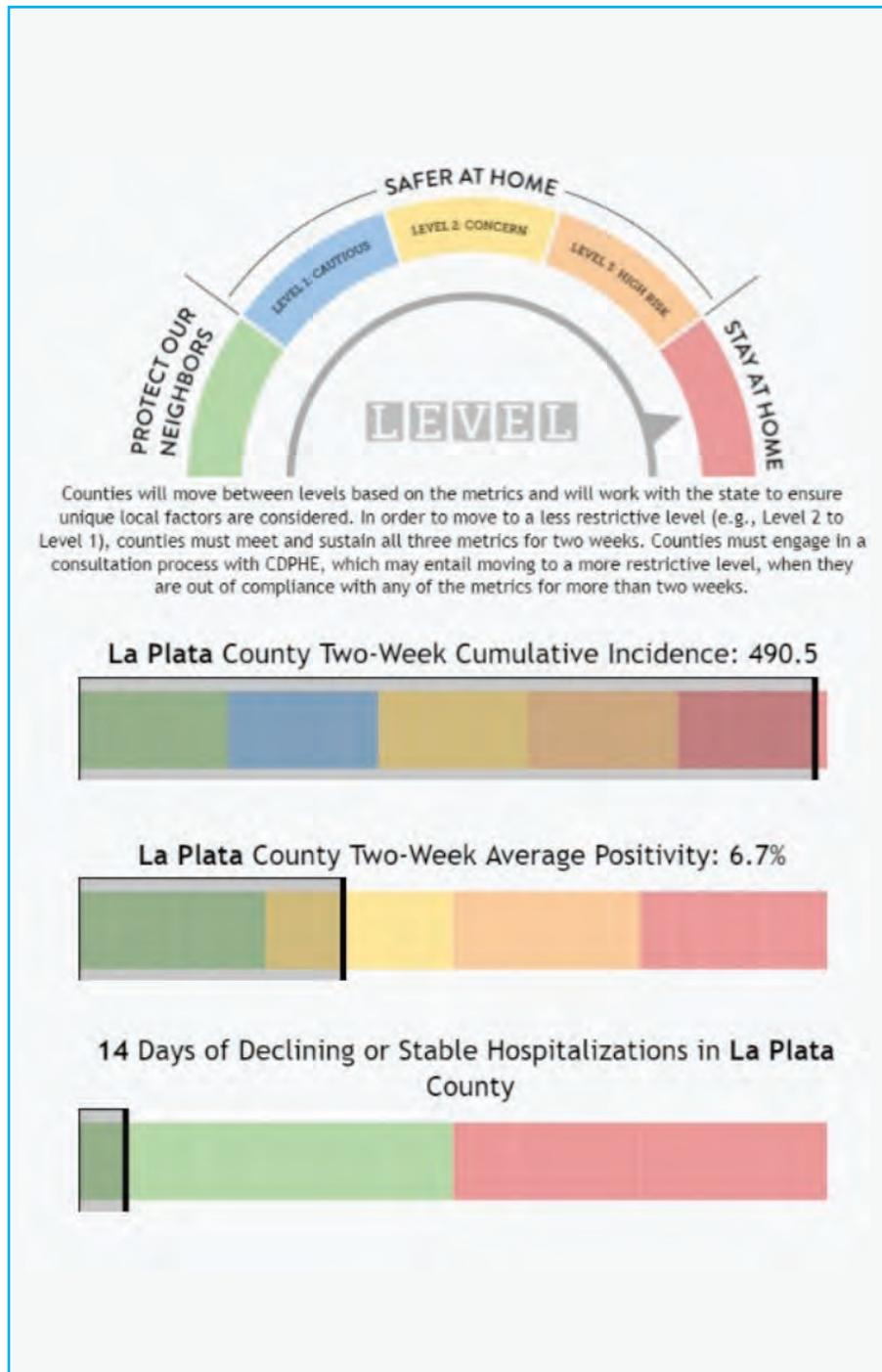
The percent positivity is defined as the percent of tests that come back positive, out of the total number of tests performed. The global standard to ensure that we are doing enough testing is a percent positivity of less than 5%. La Plata County is currently at 6.63%. We are nearly in the red for this metric.

Amount of cases in a two-week period:

The w-week incidence, per 100,000 population, helps us understand how much the virus is circulating in a community. This is the number of cases for every 100,000 people in the past two weeks. We are in the yellow for this metric.

Stable or declining hospitalizations:

One of our key goals is to ensure that every person who needs hospital care can receive it. This metric ensures that there is sufficient hospital capacity available. Stable is defined as no greater than a 25% increase in the county's referral hospitals or no more than 2 new hospital admissions with COVID-19 on a single day, in the past 14 days. We are in the green for this metric, meaning we are doing okay on hospitalizations.



You can find the details of where we fall on these three metrics here. Based on our current case load and percent of positive cases, we have moved to Safer at Home Level Red.

Level Red guidelines are as follows:

- No social gatherings with people outside of your household
- P-12 schools: remote or hybrid learning suggested, limited in-person as appropriate
- Places of Workship: remote, virtual service, or outdoor are strongly encouraged
- Restaurants: take out or delivery only; outdoor seating
- Offices: closed
- Bars: Closed
- Retail: 25% capacity
- Personal services: closed
- Events (Indoor unseated): closed
- Events (outdoor unseated): closed
- Events (outdoor seated): closed

More specific guidelines from San Juan Basin Public Health can be found in their recently released public health advisory [here](#).

How you and your business can do your part:

The increase in COVID-19 transmission rates has been attributed to two main factors: Social gatherings and transmission in the workplace. We can all do our part to reduce these transmissions.

Move to remote:

If possible, encourage your employees to work from home as much as possible during this time. Make sure that you review cleaning protocols with your staff for when they are in the office.

Create a plan for employees that plan to travel for the holidays:

Do your staff plan to travel home for Thanksgiving or Christmas? Provide them with guidelines on what it will take for them to return to work in person. You might require testing or a quarantine before coming back in person. Please note that the ideal waiting time for a test is 5-7 days after potential exposure for an asymptomatic person.

Prepare for the worst:

If the worst case scenario happens and we have to re-shut down, or if you have to reduce your employees hours, you can help your employees prepare. The state's unemployment system may become overwhelmed, so encourage your staff to get registered in the system n

Health Coverage for Individuals and Small Business via Southwest Health Alliance - Enrollment is now Open through December 15th, 2020



Information can be found here
<https://southwesthealthalliance.org/faq/>

Via Southwest Health, a business or individual can get ACA-compliant coverage, more local access, and broad coverage. If you live in La Plata, Montezuma, Dolores, or San Juan counties, you can sign up beginning November 1st through December 15th.

Pre-existing conditions are covered

Preventive covered 100%, including annual checkups, flu shots, mammograms, etc.

Pediatric dental and vision coverage

Expanded mental health provider access with low or no-copay

Large network includes Centura Hospitals throughout Colorado, including Mercy Hospital. Animas Surgical Hospital is also included!

Low-cost virtual visits: Convenient and innovative care with just a phone call or internet connection

Options such as unlimited primary care visits are available

Plans through Bright Health Include Popular Independent Providers

Pediatric Partners of the Southwest

Animas Orthopedic

Southwest Women's Health

La Plata Family Medicine

Ignacio Family Practice

Southwest Internal Medicine

Dr. Hope Barkhurst



Municipalities
City of Durango

I want to start by saying thank you to the community for their continued diligence of wearing masks and practicing social distancing while in public spaces. As we move into the colder winter months, we are expecting adjustments to the levels of service provided by our City of Durango departments. This is a continuously evolving situation, and things move quickly with state and local health regulations. Please visit our website for the most up-to-date City of Durango information at DurangoGov.org/emergency. Just like the adjustments we implemented earlier this year, these upcoming service changes are necessary to protect our staff, members or the community, and the continuity of our operations. We are all in this together, and I believe our resilient community will get through this crisis just like we have done so many times before.

Thanks again for your dedication.
José Madrigal, City Manager

Town of Bayfield

The town of Bayfield has distributed \$58,300 in COVID-19 relief grants to 24 local businesses in the last month. The Bayfield relief grants ranged from \$1,500 to \$3,000 and either reimbursed past coronavirus-related expenses or future costs. Personal protective equipment was also a significant need, along with online commerce. The first-ever municipal partnership with the Fort Lewis College Career Center will provide marketing, social media and e-commerce interns to several businesses, including those who didn't apply for the funding. Five restaurants received funding for outdoor tents, propane fire pits and structures to expand outdoor seating into the winter months.

beth@bayfieldgov.org

Town of Ignacio

The Town Board had a Joint Work Session with SEH Engineers on Thursday, October 1, 2020. SEH gave a presentation on affordable housing and presented options for the use of Rock Creek property. To access the presentation, please click [HERE](#). Sales Tax numbers remain strong and we are looking at adding to our reserves as we end 2020.

La Plata County

Thank you to everyone who showed up and voted in the 2020 elections. You can find out the election results for La Plata County [here](#).

Ballot Measure Results:

In our last newsletter we took a stance on two ballot measures, DURANGO SCHOOL DISTRICT 9-R BALLOT ISSUE 4A and Amendment B (Gallagher repeal) both of which have passed. You can find the unofficial election results on all ballot measures [here](#).

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Fort Lewis College

As La Plata County has moved to [COVID-19 Dial Level Red: Severe Risk](#), FLC has modified fall operations and moved most classes online for the remainder of the semester.

Students must take a COVID-19 test and receive a negative result before returning to their home communities. Tests are free for FLC community members -- register today!

[REGISTER FOR A COVID-19 TEST NOW](#)

FLC announces Virtual Winter Commencement

Fort Lewis College's Virtual Winter Commencement will take place Friday, December 4 at 3 p.m. Professors, friends, and families can celebrate with this fall's graduates from afar, tuning in to hear remarks from President Tom Stritikus, Provost Cheryl Nixon, and Student Body President Carson Ingram. Professor of Philosophy Dugald Owen will give the commencement address.

"I am already so proud of what these graduating students have accomplished, especially under current circumstances," says President Tom Stritikus. "I know they will accomplish great things with their degrees and I look forward to supporting them as alumni."

About 150 students will graduate. Each student will be recognized by name by an associate dean from their division. Students are encouraged to submit videos of them moving their tassels, which will accompany their names being read.

Milepost 30 will perform an honor song to conclude the ceremony.

[Submit a shout out to a graduate!](#) We'll display your message on our social media and the homepage of the FLC website.



Real Estate

October was another record breaking month in a series of outperforming months in the summer and fall of 2020. Collectively they have already surpassed 2019 numbers and continue to show strength going into the winter. There is evidence of urban flight based on all categories but especially the higher end products. What is difficult to assess is how many of these higher priced single family home sales are second home buyers, reiterates or remote workers.

Here is a YTD summary of La Plata Real Estate performance through October 31, 2020.

LA PLATA COUNTY RESIDENTIAL MARKET

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
January	51	53	60	47	54	55	66	69	65	59
February	22	50	59	49	57	51	65	68	56	62
March	54	60	70	70	75	80	77	73	71	91
April	60	51	70	72	90	83	94	86	93	79
May	59	69	102	114	99	98	122	120	111	76
June	72	73	110	91	140	136	123	112	106	107
July	78	86	111	107	125	126	113	121	134	166
August	72	81	131	116	124	103	134	130	120	151
September	60	87	92	91	109	110	97	93	132	188
October	64	93	95	120	80	113	106	106	99	202
November	70	74	55	72	65	97	84	102	86	
December	55	57	82	82	80	77	106	76	90	
Total	717	834	1037	1031	1098	1129	1187	1156	1,163	1,181

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Average Sold Price	\$364,901	\$342,393	\$364,709	\$393,516	\$380,830	\$419,385	\$413,597	\$444,600	\$449,873	\$520,416
Median Sold Price	\$301,849	\$299,450	\$310,000	\$336,987	\$345,000	\$355,000	\$365,000	\$387,500	\$385,000	\$435,000
Average Days on Market	235	193	173	144	139	138	132	127	127	135
Median Days on Market	137	134	114	101	90	92	92	85	85	86



DURANGO AREA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

Detailed Quarterly analysis through October 31 or Q3 compared to 2019 can be [found here](#) courtesy of Durango Area Association of Realtors.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



BID encourages you to help our community in the following ways:

Follow the guidance in the public health order. Do not gather with people outside your household for the time being.

Wear your mask, wash your hands frequently, stay six feet away from others when you are on an essential trip to the grocery store, doctor, etc.

As the Durango Chamber of Commerce's cast of characters Buck, Moola and Penny always say, LOOK LOCAL FIRST! As we near the holiday shopping season, please please please try to support local businesses with your purchases.

Consider getting a take out meal from a local restaurant once a week. BID will post a list soon at DowntownDurango.org/supportlocal of all restaurants offering take out, and will include those that have Thanksgiving meals to go.

Shop BID's Online Store, which opens November 23 to December 15, for local goods and services from your favorite businesses in the heart of our town.

Submit your receipts and get rewarded for shopping local by participating in the Holiday Rewards Program. Spend \$50 get a \$5 gift card. Spend \$100 get a \$25 card. Spend \$300 get a \$100 card back. Limits and restrictions apply, see the Holiday Rewards Program page for details.

Let's all come together to limit the time we are this new Level Red: Severe Risk. We need our economy to be humming along like it always does at the end of the year, and your help is needed for that to happen. Stay strong, stay healthy, shop local.

Tim Walsworth, Executive Director



Since working with and through the assistance of the Southwest Colorado SBDC, did you...

Start your business?

Hire employees?

Retain employees?

Receive funding?

Receive disaster or pandemic funding?

Increase sales?

Win a government contract?

We are requesting your support by reporting any business impact you have received by working with the SBDC. **This information is CRITICAL to the continuation of our funding.** Please help us continue to be able to offer our services by completing the short (3-minute) survey below.

Estimates are fine and all information is aggregated and kept completely confidential. No individual business data is ever shared.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this short [survey!](#)



Chamber of Commerce

BUSINESSES THAT OFFER GIFT CARDS

The Durango Chamber of Commerce wants to help promote your business with a dedicated webpage promoting our members that offer in-house gift cards. To take part in our program, simply email Jennifer at jennifer@durangobusiness.org and begin reaching potential customers.

TUESDAY TALK - COFFEE AT HOME

Stay Home! Grab Your Cup of Coffee! Join the ZOOM Meeting!

Tuesday, December 1, 2020 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

THIS IS A VIRTUAL/ZOOM EVENT [YOU MUST REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT TO RECEIVE THE ZOOM LINK](#)

Tuesday December 1st, 2020, 8:00 am - 9:00 am

Presenter: San Juan Basin Public Health

This event is FREE for all Chamber members, but RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED to receive your zoom log in. Please register by using our convenient on-line registration at www.durangobusiness.org or email rita@durangobusiness.org

Durango Rocks is now accepting nominations. Deadline is December 1, 2020.

[Click on a link below to enter your nomination.](#)

[Citizen of the Year](#)

[Entrepreneur of the Year](#)

[Volunteer of the Year](#)

[Small Business of the Year](#)

[Business of the Year](#)

[Morley Ballantine Award](#)

[Non-Profit of the Year](#)

[Barbara Conrad Leadership Award \(LLP\)](#)

[Young Professionals of Durango \(YPOD\)](#)

SCAPE



SHINE A LIGHT ON YOUR BIG IDEA!

Applications are now open for SCAPE's 2021 Accelerator Program. We're seeking early-stage companies in the Southwest Colorado region looking to scale their big idea. Our primary focus will be ventures wanting to **market and compete outside the local area** while remaining headquartered in SW Colorado.

With our pivot to online programming for the 2020 cohort, we are fully ready to serve this next class virtually. This allows us to better reach companies spanning from Durango to Cortez, Silverton, Pagosa and every where in between. While we hope to meet in-person too, we are able to offer our excellent programming and mentoring while also adhering to safety standards.

Have an idea or know someone looking for support in scaling their idea?
Send them our way!

REGION 9



Learn about Colorado's Rural Jump-Start Program Incentive

The Region 9 Economic Development District of Southwest Colorado is hosting a virtual meeting with staff from the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade to provide information on the Rural Jump-Start Program. This state program is available in four of our five counties and incentivizes relocating or start-up companies offering a non-duplicative business product or service. Dolores,

Montezuma, Archuleta and San Juan Counties are eligible and are participating along with several of their municipalities. (La Plata not eligible). The program offers the following benefits for relocating and non duplicative businesses:

- Relief from state income taxes for the new business
- Relief from the state sales & use tax for the business
- Relief from county and municipal personal property taxes for the business
- Relief from state income taxes for the employee

Please join us on Monday, Nov. 16th from 2:30 to 3:30 pm.

To receive Zoom invitation, contact Region 9 at 970-247-9621 or laura@scan.org.

2) Tiny Home Q & A

Southwest CO – Tiny Homes are growing in popularity due to their affordability, mobility, simplicity, and changing demographic trends. Join Region 9 Economic Development District of Southwest Colorado for a look at lessons learned from Bob Lieb, the developer behind Escalante Village, located in Durango and the region’s first Tiny Home community. Join us Wednesday, December 2nd from 12 to 1:30pm and learn the “good, bad and even the unknowns to Tiny Home development on your property. Lieb was the owner of Durango Threadworks and a La Plata County Commissioner from 2000-2008. To receive registration to this event, please contact Region 9 EDD at laura@scan.org or steph@scan.org to register for this interactive and free session.

3) Region 9 Economic Development District of SW Colorado and the Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade has received a NADO 2020 Impact Award

WASHINGTON, DC – The Region 9 Economic Development District of SW Colorado (Region 9) and the Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade (OEDIT) has been awarded a 2020 Aliceann Wohlbruck Impact Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for the Statewide Colorado Microloan Fund program.

NADO’s Impact Awards program recognizes regional development organizations and their partners for improving the economic and community competitiveness of our nation’s regions and local communities.

This year 79 projects from 19 states were recognized. The Region 9 award recognizes the OEDIT’s partnership with rural Colorado for the pilot loan program that has resulted in an impact of \$1.65 Million being distributed in 30 rural counties over the last 3 years.

“OEDIT established this program to bring additional business capital into rural areas of Colorado, pre COVID, and to-date, we have made 60 micro loans in rural areas statewide to fill finance gaps for our start-up and high character businesses that might not be bankable,” said Laura Lewis Marchino, Executive Director of Region 9. “Region 9 is honored to be administering this program for OEDIT in our rural counties.”

The Colorado Microloan Fund through Region 9 has leveraged and additional \$2.5 million and created and retained 210 jobs. The program also serves urban areas of the State through another nonprofit lender.

“These collaborative projects show the best that regional development organizations have to offer and are a real testament to the value they add to their regions,” said NADO President Kevin Byrd, executive director of the New River Valley Regional Commission, located in Radford, VA.

NADO is a Washington, DC-based association of regional development organizations that promote programs and policies to strengthen local governments, communities, and economies through regional cooperation, program delivery, and comprehensive strategies.

The NADO Impact Awards are in honor of the late Aliceann Wohlbruck, NADO’s first executive director. The awarded projects are highlighted in an interactive “Story Map available online at: <https://www.nado.org/impactawards/>. For more information about this award-winning project, contact Laura Lewis Marchino, Region 9 EDD, laura@scan.org.



ENERGY

LPEA

La Plata Electric Association, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

As COVID-19 continues to spread, scammers are taking advantage of people's heightened economic anxiety. Their latest ploy is posing as representatives from utility companies to trick people out of their cash and personal information by convincing them their utilities will be shut off if they don't pay. LPEA has recently received a number of calls from members reporting these types of suspicious calls, and they happen more frequently during non-business hours like the weekends. The scammer impersonates LPEA and threatens the caller by saying their electricity will be shut off if they don't receive immediate payment in the form of a credit card or bank account information. Please know that LPEA will never ask you for personal financial information over the phone.

If someone calls your home or cell phone demanding you pay your electric bill immediately, gather as much information as you can from that individual, hang-up, and contact the local authorities.

LPEA's COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund is a \$50,000 assistance fund allocated to help LPEA members facing financial crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The fund aims to provide one-time emergency financial assistance, up to \$100 per residential member or \$200 per small commercial account, to persons who are usually self-sufficient but are unable to pay their electric bill due to COVID-19.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must hold an active residential account or sub-account within LPEA's service territory and must carry a past due balance. Applications may be denied due to the following factors:

- Lack of proper documentation
- Hardship not COVID-19 related
- Poor payment history prior to COVID-19
- Lack of available funds

APPROVAL

Applicants will be advised of funding decisions within five (5) business days of when funding decisions are rendered. Payments will be applied directly to the LPEA account, never to the applicant.



NONPROFIT



Contact Information:
Tracy Pope, Marketing & Grants Manager

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tracy@swcommunityfoundation.org

Online Platform Now Accepting Donations to Support Local Charities

The Community Foundation serving Southwest Colorado spearheads a regional effort to increase local participation in Colorado Gives Day, December 8, 2020. Beginning this week, donors may schedule their donations through swcogives.org and support local nonprofits with an online donation.

“We are hearing some predictions that year-end charitable giving is expected to decline this year,” says Briggen Wrinkle, Executive Director of the Community Foundation serving Southwest Colorado. “However, we believe our local donors will step up, dig deep, and help nonprofits finish 2020 on a bright note. We have seen a tremendous amount of generosity in response to the needs presented by the pandemic, and we expect that impressive level of giving to grow in support of Giving Tuesday, Colorado Gives Day and year-end appeals.”

Southwest Colorado Gives is a safe, secure, and easy platform for donors to contribute online to local nonprofits. Last year on Colorado Gives Day, \$40 million was donated statewide, with \$295,283 going to nonprofits in our five-county region. The regional platform, swcogives.org, features more than 85 nonprofits, and this year the local giving goal is to exceed \$300,000.

“Many people are hurting this year, physically, mentally and financially,” says Wrinkle. “Our local nonprofits are working hard to meet the needs of our community. For those of us who have not been impacted financially, we hope to see neighbors helping neighbors, and we invite those who are able, to give where they live.”

“The Community Foundation encourages charitable giving that keeps our dollars local,” adds Wrinkle. “Southwest Colorado Gives Day is an important opportunity for donors in our region to support the nonprofits that are making our communities a better place to live. The site, swcogives.org, offers donors a well-vetted array of nonprofits to choose from to support causes they care about, from animal protection to human services to youth organizations.”

This is the fourth year the Community Foundation has acted as a Regional Champion, seeing nonprofit participation triple across Southwest Colorado and donations to our region double. Locally, First Southwest Bank, LPEA and the Ballantine Family Fund provide sponsorship and grant dollars in support of our regional nonprofits, helping to maximize the success of Southwest Colorado Gives Day.

For more information visit www.swcogives.org or call 970.375.5807.

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