



STRONG AT HEART

Downtown Strategy Report



ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report is the product of a collaborative effort between the Town of Taos, Community Builders, the Citizens Advisory Committee, the Leadership & Implementation Team, and the larger Taos community. This report is to be used by the Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program and other partners as a guiding document for working towards the community's goals for Downtown Taos. Many of the actions identified in this report necessitate further study and collaboration among local partners.

ABOUT COMMUNITY BUILDERS

Community Builders is a non-profit dedicated to helping local leaders create more livable communities in the American West. We provide information, assistance, and training to support the many people and organizations working to build more livable places for everyone.

Community Builders' assistance program provides communities with the tools and resources to spark meaningful on-the-ground progress, while building local capacity and creating success stories that inspire action in other communities.

Information about Community Builders can be found at: communitybuilders.org.

PROJECT FUNDING

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THANK YOU



Strong at Heart is made possible by the hard work of community leaders, project partners, and the thousand-plus Taoseños who participated from across the community. Thank you to the many volunteers involved in organizing and driving engagement efforts, and to those serving on the Citizen's Advisory Committee and Leadership & Implementation Team.

PROJECT PARTNERS:

- Town of Taos
- Community Builders
- LOR Foundation
- Taos County
- Taos Chamber of Commerce
- Taos Community Foundation
- Taos Land Trust
- US Bank
- Centinel Bank
- UNM Taos
- Taos Education & Career Center
- Rio Fernando Neighborhood Association

- Kit Carson Electric Co-op
- Los Cumbres Community Services
- Bridges Project
- Del Corazón Consulting
- Chamisa Trails Consulting
- Taos Alive
- Holy Cross Hospital
- Taos County Crime Stoppers
- Stray Hearts Animal Shelter
- KNCE
- LiveTaos.com
- BeyondTaos.org
- Turquoise Tours

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WHAT IS STRONG AT HEART?

Strong at Heart is a project of the Town of Taos focused on bringing Taoseños together to create a vision and strategy for Downtown Taos. Downtown Taos is the heart of our community. As the civic and economic center of town, it reflects our history and heritage, as well as our future; it is where we all come together.

That is what this project is about: coming together as neighbors to create a shared vision and strategy for the heart of our community.

One goal of the project is to create a Taos Downtown Strategy that provides a community vision for the downtown and the projects and actions to make it happen. This strategy is a product of that work, but not the only one. Strong at Heart was also about changing how we engage our community in discussions about the future. It aimed to model a more inclusive approach to public engagement, and enable more constructive, community-led conversations about very challenging topics facing our community. In support of this goal, the Strong at Heart process employed a wide range of engagement methods and worked to gain input from all different facets of the community.



STRONG AT HEART: THE STORY OF A COMMUNITY

The story of Strong at Heart is a story of people and their connection to a place. We have a rich cultural heritage that dates back centuries, a spectacular location perched on a dramatic high-desert landscape, and friendly, creative (and sometimes outright kooky) residents who give this place a distinct personality.

We Taseños love our community. We cherish its history and how it has shaped us. We love its funkiness. It's a place that's offbeat, unpolished, and imperfect. That is, everything, except the views. Those are close to perfect and provide a daily reminder of our connection to our natural surroundings.

Our community has worked hard to maintain its sense of character and strong connection to the past. But we face significant challenges for the future. The economy has sputtered in the wake of the Great Recession. Blows to the construction industry and the closure of its Questa mine left many locals with few employment options. 22% of our neighbors and 38% of our youth live in poverty. And young people are leaving at an alarming rate, largely due to a lack of opportunities.

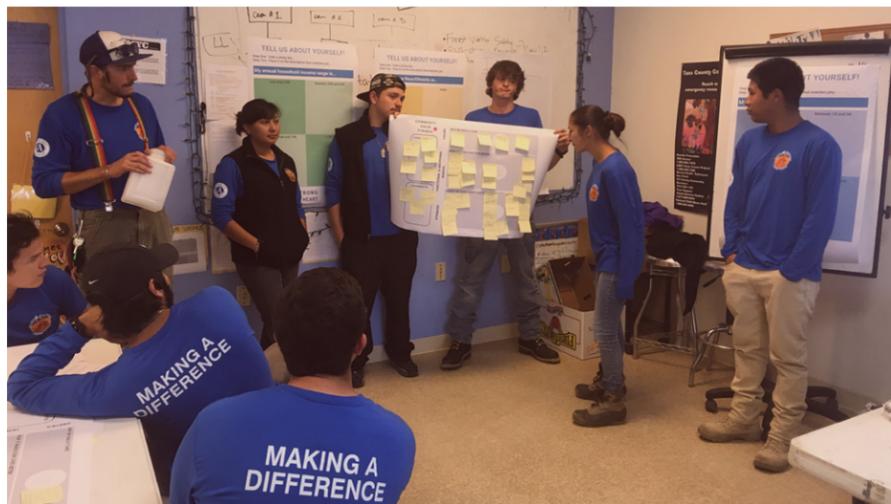
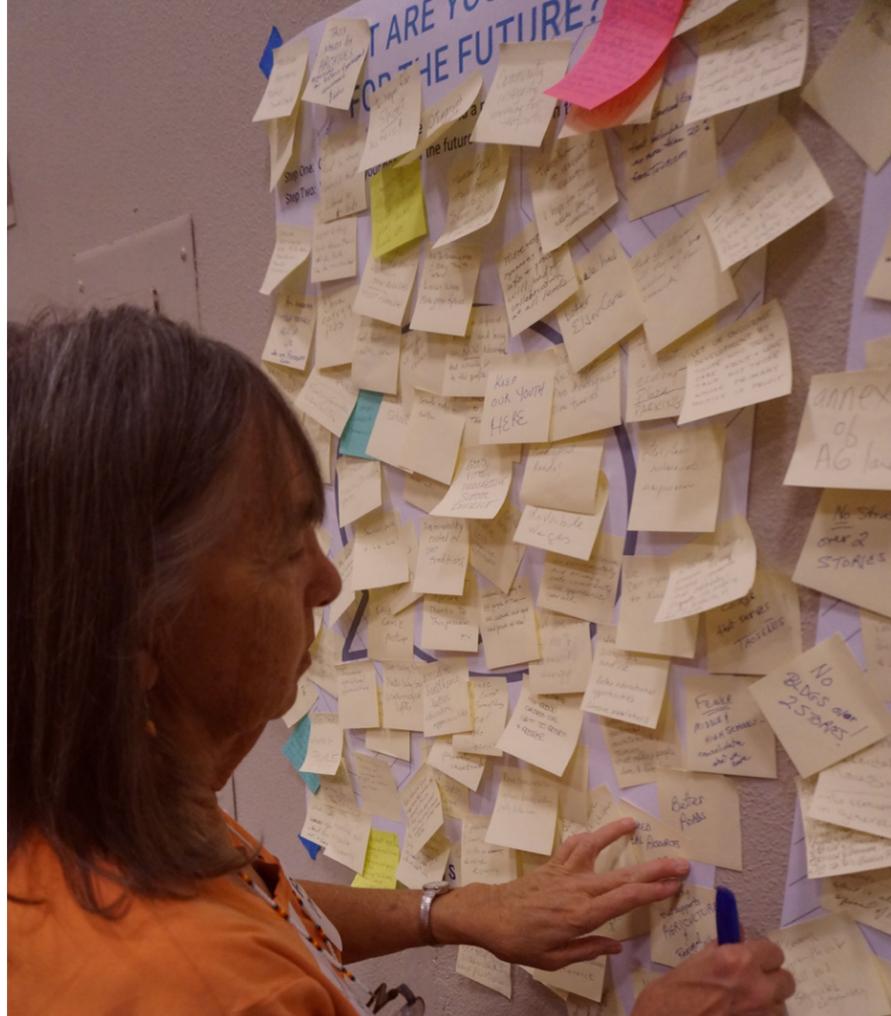
Strong at Heart opened a dialogue about these and other challenges — as well as our many opportunities — and how we can address them in our downtown. It was designed to create an inclusive conversation about our future—focused on our downtown—that generates practical strategies and turns our ideas into actions.

Though we love our community today, most Taoseños understand that Taos is changing and will continue to do so. We want the best for it. We want it to be a real town, not a place that looks and feels like everywhere else. We want Taos to be a livable community, with a healthy economy that offers good jobs and opportunities for people to build a future. We want a great place to raise our children; a place where they can create a life of their own. People want to live somewhere they can feel at home; a place where they can find purpose, belonging, and community.

Unfortunately, painting a picture of what people love about Taos also underscores what many people fear we are losing as our community grapples with growth and change. Like many communities, Taos is struggling to balance the benefits of its amenity economy—an economy driven by experience and quality of life—with its desire to remain a real place where local residents can live and feel they have a future.

Today, many Taoseños are concerned that the way we have been growing is not working for our community—that it’s undermining what we love about Taos, as well as our hopes for the future. Others are more comfortable with growth, but want to ensure that it benefits the community and creates new opportunities for the people who live here. All can agree that progress and prosperity should create opportunities that benefit the whole of the community.

Concern is warranted. Lack of clarity in how we want to grow—both physically and economically—will likely result in the worst versions of the status-quo.



Unfortunately, we have yet to build consensus about how we want to grow or how we can address our economic challenges while protecting what we love about this place. Too often, our discussions about development erupt into polarizing, unproductive debates that divide us rather than unite us. We can do better.

Creating a platform for the community to discuss the future we want—and to focus in on how we make that happen in our downtown—is what Strong at Heart is all about.

For half a century, Taos’ Historic District—the heart of our community—has been at the center of discussions about how we manage growth and change. Through the Strong at Heart process, people from throughout the community—people from different neighborhoods, ages, backgrounds, cultures—helped to shape a vision for the downtown, as well as a set of goals and strategies for making it happen.

The Strong at Heart Downtown Strategy brings all of those ideas together and provides a practical, project-oriented plan for moving the downtown forward. It builds on a history of previous efforts—many of the ideas in this strategy have roots in previous plans. At the same time, it aims to offer a new model for how our community comes together to plan and make decisions about how we grow and develop in the future.

THE STRONG AT HEART PROCESS: Moving Towards More Inclusive Forms of Community Engagement

A goal of Strong at Heart was to model a more effective approach to community engagement and public process. Improving how the community does public engagement was partly a response to a sentiment that some people did not trust the Town, and were furthermore unhappy with how planning and development decisions were being made. Additionally, it was a response to the growing divisiveness of public discourse. In recent years, it has been more and more difficult for our community to have productive and civil discussions about these questions, or to create clear direction that translates ideas into action.

Strong at Heart sought to redefine the ways Taoseños participate in important community discussions by taking the process *out to the community*, instead of asking the community to come to us. This meant trying out new modes of engagement—besides just large public meetings—in an effort to reach a wider and more representative spread of the community. It also meant starting out with higher level discussions about the vision for our community, including our concerns and aspirations for the future. It meant empowering community members to lead engagement efforts and facilitate community discussions.

The Strong at Heart process followed four distinct phases (explained in greater detail on the following pages);

- ✓ **Phase 1:** Where are we now?
- ✓ **Phase 2:** Where do we want to go?
- ✓ **Phase 3:** How do we get there?
- ✓ **Phase 4:** Strategies, Actions and Implementation

Strong at Heart was designed around a commitment to providing a multitude of meaningful opportunities for public participation in local decision making. As part of the public involvement plan, project partners embraced an inclusive and participatory planning approach that applied the following guiding principles, engagement goals and engagement objectives.



Strong at Heart provided a variety ways to engage, including large public meetings and open houses; one-on-one interviews; pop-up events; online questionnaires; stakeholder group meetings; small group discussions; and even a large street party.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Be Authentic: The purpose of this project is to generate grassroots community ideas and opinions about the future of our downtown.

Be Inclusive: Public engagement opportunities are open to all and are designed to reflect the demographics and diversity of the Town's entire population.

Be Transparent: We will provide full transparency about the project's sponsorship, purpose, design, and how decision makers will use the community's input.

Be Committed to Openness & Learning: We do not have a predetermined outcome. Town leadership, as well as community participants, commit to being respectful of the diversity of opinions that exist in the community, listen to each other, and open to and willing to explore all ideas.

Support Informed Participation: Participants will have access to information and expertise that will support their ability to successfully participate.

ENGAGEMENT GOALS

- ✓ Build trust between local government and community members to enable better collaboration.
- ✓ Build bridges that foster understanding and respect between different community stakeholders.
- ✓ Enhance our ability to make collaborative decisions.
- ✓ Broaden stakeholder involvement that will be more representative of the community as a whole.
- ✓ Build the capacity of Town staff to be able to facilitate more effective public engagement long-term, and in future projects.

ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Inform community members about the project—it's purpose, background and direction.
- ✓ Gather input about what community members love and value in our community.
- ✓ Identify and discuss important issues that need to be addressed in order to support a vibrant downtown consistent with the community's values and vision for the future.
- ✓ Provide information about potential solutions and strategies for action.
- ✓ Gather input from the community about community priorities for action.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for the community to shape the downtown vision.

PHASE 1: VALUES AND ASPIRATIONS

Where are we now?

In Phase 1, Taoseños worked together to identify shared values that make Taos special as a community.

Engagement Methods and Participant Count:

- Kick Off Event - 242
- Community Conversations - 99
- Pop-Up Events/Post Cards - 721
- Online Community Values Survey - 115
- On Taos Time focus groups - 94
- Honoring our Past, Creating our Future - 55
- Online Focus Area Feedback Form - 12

OUTCOMES

Phase 1 resulted in a set of shared community values, concerns, and aspirations, which were used to guide community conversations about the downtown.

Phase 1 also generated the following set of community

Priorities for Action:

- ✓ Economy
- ✓ Growth & Development
- ✓ Civic Culture & Inclusivity
- ✓ Housing & Livability
- ✓ Health & Equity
- ✓ Downtown Strategy



PHASE 2: DOWNTOWN GOALS

Where do we want to go?

In Phase 2, Taoseños worked to define preliminary goals for the downtown based on shared community values. Phase 2 marked the start for building a Downtown Strategy, which was identified as a priority for action in Phase 1.

Engagement Methods and Participant Count:

Strategy Session focus groups:

- Youth (Taos Charter School) - 51
- Economic/Business Leaders - 12
- Town Staff and Commissions - 7
- UNM Faculty, Staff and Students - 9
- ESL Students (TECC) - 12
- Non-Profit Groups - 5
- Ag & Trails (Taos Land Trust) - 9

OUTCOMES

Phase 2 resulted in a set of draft community *Goals for the Downtown*, which can be found on page 16 of this document.



PHASE 3: DOWNTOWN STRATEGIES

How do we get there?

In Phase 3, Taoseños worked to vet and refine goals for the downtown. The community then began to develop a set of strategies for achieving those goals, ensuring that downtown becomes the place we want—a place that is consistent with our values and vision.

Engagement Methods and Participant Count:

Downtown Taos Moving Forward focus groups:

- Taos Charter School - 51
- Non-Profit Groups - 11
- Vista Grande High School - 41
- TECC Students - 13
- Downtown Business Leaders - 7
- Placitas/Civic Campus Institutions - 8
- Community Meeting - 48

OUTCOMES

Phase 3 resulted in a list of initial strategies, projects, and ideas for advancing the community's goals for the downtown. These strategies were then further developed and refined in the Downtown Design Workshop during Phase 4.



PHASE 4: DESIGN WORKSHOP

Implementation & Action Planning

In phase 4, Taoseños worked together to develop and refine a set of strategies for advancing the community's goals for the downtown. This largely took place through the Downtown Design Workshop.

The Downtown Design Workshop was a multi-day event that brought the community together to work hand-in-hand with a team of consultants to explore strategies and design concepts for achieving the community's goals for the downtown. The workshop culminated in the Civic Plaza Drive Street Party where an outdoor open house served as an opportunity for Taoseños to review and comment on the ideas for the downtown that emerged over the course of the week.

OUTCOMES

The Downtown Design Workshop resulted in a list of strategies, projects, and ideas that were then used to develop the action plans and recommendations highlighted in this report.



COMMUNITY CONCERNS & ASPIRATIONS:

Building a more livable community.

Taoseños want a more livable community. They want a place that offers opportunity and a future, where people can afford to live. A place that's real. They want a place that's welcoming and safe. They want choices for where they live, how they get around, and things to do. They want to grow in a sustainable way that improves peoples' lives today and creates a brighter and more sustainable future tomorrow.

The idea of creating a more livable Taos is core to the community's values, concerns, and aspirations. Taoseños want their community to be more livable, but at the same time, they don't want to see their community lose the things that truly make it special—its funkiness, its history, its people. Moving forward in a way that expands livability while keeping Taos real is of the utmost importance to the community, and is central to the goals and strategies outlined in this document.

How do we build the economy we want?

Taoseños recognize the need to build a stronger economy. Almost a quarter of our community (and 38% of all Taoseño youth) lives below the poverty line. Income inequality is increasing. Wages have been decreasing for decades, which means working people are having a harder time getting by. At the same time, overall income is going up, reflecting an immigration of new Taoseños that can live off investments and other non-wage incomes.

Our regional dependence on tourism is part of the challenge. While Taoseños acknowledge the value of the tourism economy, they recognize its connection to low wages and seasonally tenuous jobs. For these reasons, much of the community desires a more diversified economy—one that's based on locals, and on our unique sense of place. They desire an economy with more and better jobs, and increased pathways to opportunity for a greater number of Taoseños. At the most basic level, Taoseños want their kids to have a chance at building a future here.



Better processes: Getting beyond public hearings

Public hearings are an important component of civil discourse. However, they are but one step in a larger series of processes and decisions. More important are discussions about community vision, goals, principles and high-level planning and development policies. These provide the foundational policy framework for local development codes. It is in the creation (and later revision) of that higher-level framework that the public can and should have the most meaningful impact in shaping local planning and development policy.

Unfortunately, many local governments do a poor job of engaging community members in those discussions. Many times, the big ideas are already established and only vetted with the community at larger public meetings, which only certain segments of the community can or will attend. Or, planning processes are mostly carried out by small committees and lack broader levels of community engagement.

These are just some of the more typical failings of local planning and development processes. It's not surprising that public hearings often become unruly and uncivil; they're often the de-facto place for community members to voice their opinions about growth and development. It's also not surprising that most people arrive to those discussions with an axe to grind. More often than not, they feel like they're engaging at the last possible moment—that they didn't have much opportunity to engage prior to that.

How can we build a more inclusive community?

We all value Taos as a multicultural community. Yet we can't deny the historic tensions that go back hundreds of years and continue today. Demographic changes are part of the challenge. Hispanic and Native American populations continue to shrink relative to our overall population. Youth often feel marginalized and don't see a future in their own town. And a growing economic divide exists between those who live comfortably in Taos and those who struggle at the margins.

In this light, it is not surprising that our politics can be so divisive. The good news is that people—from across the community's many divides—want to be a more cohesive and united community. Strong at Heart only scratched the surface—more dialogue and work is needed. The idea of creating a thriving downtown for everyone is directly connected to this community desire. We can become that community, but it will take commitment to listening and learning.

How do we strengthen our civic culture?

Taoseños want to build a strong civic culture so that we are able to come together to understand, discuss, and effectively respond to challenges and issues facing our community. We need to be able to disagree on difficult issues with civility and respect, allowing for fair discussion of trade-offs, compromises, and balanced solutions. Building a strong civic culture will allow us to make better decisions and proactively shape our future, rather than being a victim of change.

It is important to demand inclusive engagement, accountability, and transparency from local government. At the same time, as Taoseños, we should recognize that effective public engagement is a two-way street. Yes, local agencies need to commit to effective governance and inclusivity, but citizens must also commit to being productive and constructive participants in local decision-making processes. Too often, only the loudest are heard because many residents are uncomfortable by the divisive nature of public meetings; many people have given up on participating in these discussions altogether.

How do we grow consistent with our values?

How the community grows is of tremendous importance to most Taoseños. Of the concerns voiced by the community, only the need to build a healthier local economy was mentioned more frequently than concerns about planning for growth. Too often, the political discourse is highly divisive and unproductive. Many view the issue through a black and white lens: there are the pro-growthers and the no-growthers.

The reality is more complicated. Yes, some people are opposed to all growth, and others are open to any new development. Most Taoseños are in the middle. We recognize that the community will continue to grow and that new development is important to strengthening our economy and addressing needs like housing and poverty. We want to see it done right. We want it to be located in smart places. And we want it to have a positive impact on the community. In past plans, Taos has a long history of encouraging infill development as an alternative to sprawl, but on the ground, that has been difficult.

This Downtown Strategy offers guidance for encouraging quality development in good locations within the downtown. It's a good starting point, but looking ahead, we need more discussion about how and where we grow. It's not a question of if we will grow, but how. We need to move from discussions of growth versus no growth to discussions about how we encourage the type of development we want in places we want it. The upcoming Comprehensive Plan process provides one venue to build a more cohesive vision in the future. Ideally we can enter that process with open minds and search for positive ways forward.

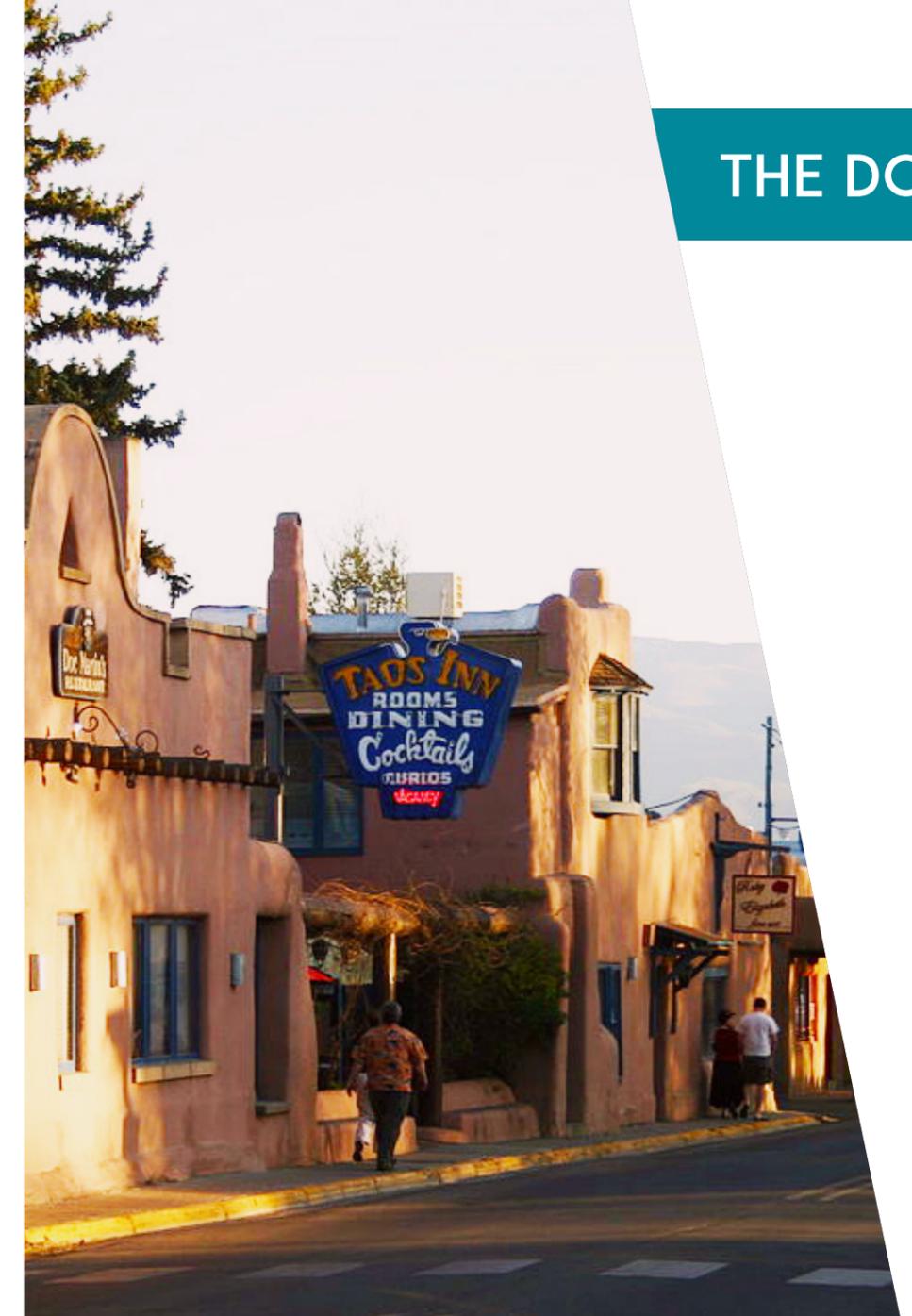


THE DOWNTOWN STRATEGY

After discussing community values, Strong at Heart transitioned the conversation to start asking questions specific to how the community's concerns and aspirations relate to the downtown. This initiated a deeper discussion about the heart of Taos that directly responded to the broader concerns and aspirations voiced in the early phases of the project.

Almost immediately, a clear set of themes emerged. Taoseños recognize that Taos is continuously evolving, and that it's important to shape its growth in a way that both protects what is unique to Taos while expanding opportunities for those who live here. They recognize a need for more housing choices, with more affordable options for locals to live in the downtown. They see a need for streets, sidewalks, and alleys that are safe and easy to walk, bike, and drive. They want the downtown to be a place of social opportunity—where Taoseños of all backgrounds come to gather and celebrate together. And they want it to be a place of economic opportunity—a place where local businesses thrive, and where Taoseños can find grow and succeed together.

These conversations resulted in two key components—a set of community goals for the future of downtown and a list of strategies to advance those goals.



COMMUNITY GOALS FOR THE DOWNTOWN

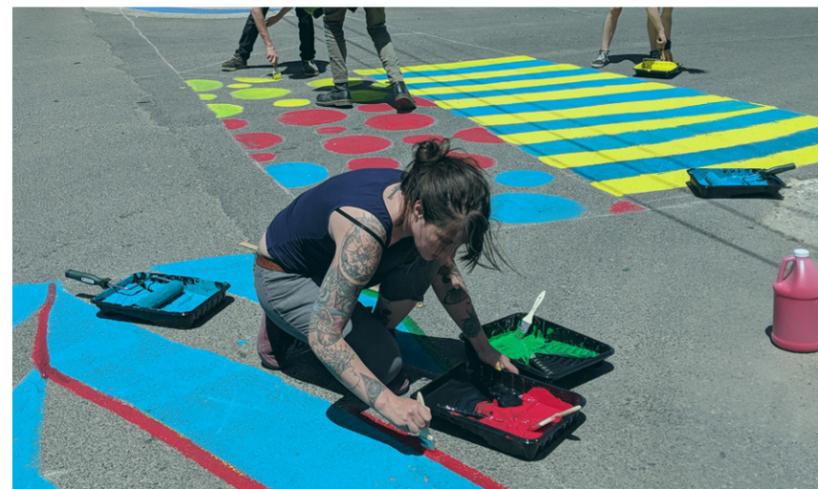
Healthy communities need diversity—a diversity of people and backgrounds, a diversity of economic opportunities, and a diversity of opinions. Debate and disagreement are key components to any healthy community conversation—they help us to build understanding, and show that people truly care about the place they live. However, it's hard for any community to find a clear direction forward without some agreement over a destination.

Goal setting provides an opportunity for people to work together—to build consensus and develop a shared agreement on a path forward. While a community doesn't have to agree on everything, by working together, they can identify a set of shared goals that provide a direction for moving forward.

During phases 2 and 3 of Strong at Heart, the community worked together to develop and refine the following list of goals for the downtown. They were built iteratively from multiple layers of community conversation, vetting, and feedback—and are based on points of consensus regarding the community's concerns and aspirations for the downtown.

These goals are meant to serve several key purposes. First and foremost, they are meant to provide the foundational direction for advancing the community's vision of building a thriving downtown for everyone. They should act as a tool for guiding future decisions—such as determining whether or not a specific project or policy is in line with the community's larger vision. They are also to be used for monitoring future progress—to identify potential successful efforts that should be expanded upon, or unmet goals and gaps that need to be addressed.

These goals are meant to provide a foundation for progress. The strategies and action items presented in this document were created by the community in direct response to these goals. It offers a plan of action for the immediate future, while providing a framework for the development of new strategies moving forward.



DOWNTOWN GOALS:

As Taoseños, we want a thriving downtown for everyone. That means...



A Walkable and Bikeable Downtown

- ✓ Create a downtown that is safe to walk and bike and easy to access.
- ✓ Create a network of streets, alleys and pathways that connect people to places.



Places for People

- ✓ Provide places for Taoseños to socialize and opportunities for the community to come together.
- ✓ Offer fun and unique things for Taoseños to do and see.



A Strong Economy and Thriving Local Businesses

- ✓ Create a place where local businesses and entrepreneurs can thrive.
- ✓ Support a strong and diverse local economy that expands opportunity for the people who live here.



A Real Place Where Locals Want to Be

- ✓ Be an authentic place that reflects our creativity, culture and heritage.



An Affordable Place to Live

- ✓ Provide a variety of housing choices affordable to people who live and work here.

THE STRATEGIES

The following sections are organized around four overarching strategies for creating a thriving downtown for everyone. Each responds to one or more of the Strong at Heart Downtown Goals.

The strategies developed over several months through a variety of community engagement activities. The initial phases of Strong at Heart revealed key community concerns and aspirations—such as improving bike and pedestrian safety—that the downtown strategies would need to respond to. Ideas evolved and gained clarity over subsequent months through larger public events like Downtown Taos Moving Forward as well as numerous smaller community meetings. This included a series of small-scale forums, Strategy Sessions, designed to build and vet initial strategies and engage people who were not as well represented at larger public meetings.

All of this culminated in May 2018 with a multi-day Downtown Design Workshop. Over the course of three days, project partners and consultants worked directly with the community to craft a set of more specific strategies that strike a balance between different views and priorities, and to refine the details and implementation potential for each.

Many ideas for the downtown emerged from the process described above. The strategies included are those with: (1) broad community support, including a clear connection to the community priorities and downtown goals that emerged from the process, and (2) a clear path to implementation, including a lead entity that can move the project forward.

Though none are “easy,” the four strategies are ordered by ease of implementation. Those with the clearest near-term path to implementation are listed first. While all the strategies are important, the Town of Taos, working in collaboration with the Taos Main Street Accelerator Program and other partners, can make significant strides by focusing on implementing the most actionable strategies in the near-term. Enhancing a segment of the alleyway network and making a few of the recommended bike network connections alone would have a major impact on the downtown.



IMPROVE STREET LIFE & WALKABILITY

Great streets are vital for successful downtowns. In addition to providing mobility and access, streets play a key role in shaping the character of a community. Walkable streets that encourage street life are essential for creating a vibrant downtown and strong local economy. This strategy focuses on several priority projects on Civic Plaza Drive, the Historic Plaza, LeDoux, and other key downtown streets that enhance street life and improve walkability in the downtown.



EXPAND & ENHANCE THE DOWNTOWN ALLEY NETWORK

Alleys are an important component of a well-connected downtown transportation system. Downtown Taos has a terrific network of alleys that not only provide important connections and access to local businesses, but are an essential piece of the history and authenticity of the downtown. The potential to expand and enhance the existing alley network is an important opportunity that receives strong community support and supports several downtown goals.



CREATE A SAFE AND CONNECTED DOWNTOWN BIKE NETWORK

Bicycling is an integral part of the vision for strengthening Downtown Taos. Creating a network of interconnected bicycle routes was identified as a top priority by the community. Successfully connecting downtown to the larger community with a safe and convenient bike network will create a public amenity that offers many benefits to downtown businesses and Taos residents.



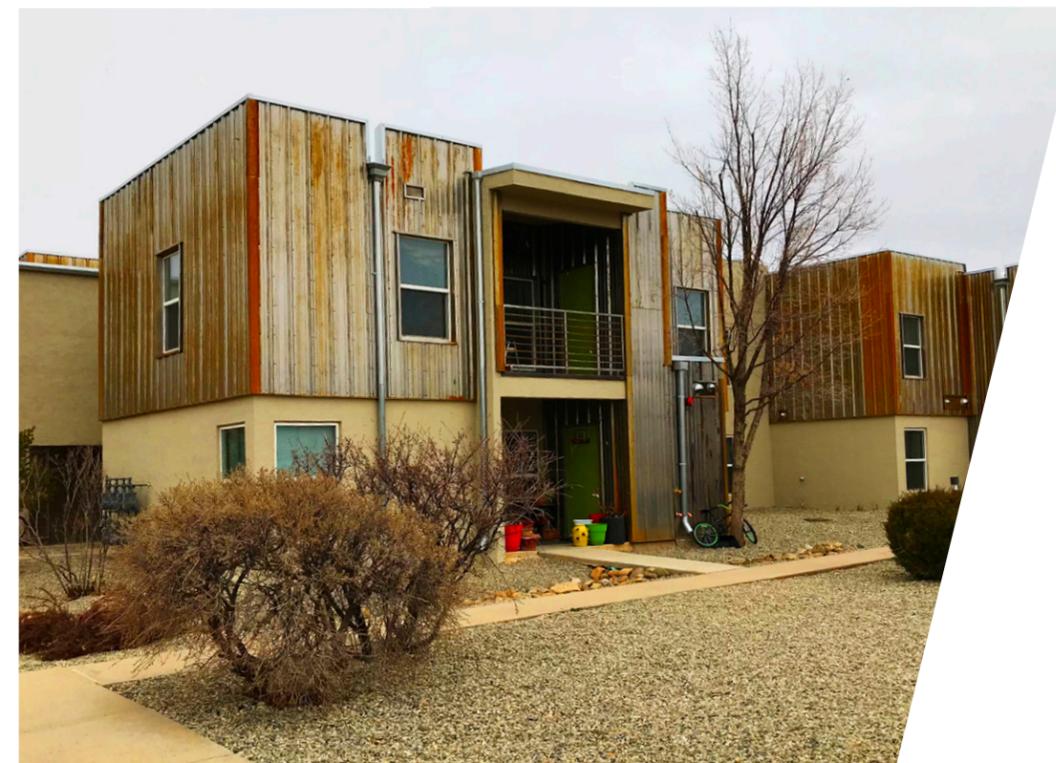
ENABLE QUALITY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

When it comes to future development, the Strong at Heart process revealed a desire to expand housing choices and affordability, create more and better employment opportunities, and expand options for local businesses that meet the everyday needs of Taosños. This strategy provides a policy framework that encourages quality downtown development in smart places, as well as guidance for building the financial and organizational capacity needed to get there.

STRATEGIES IN CONTEXT: A Neighborhood-Based Approach

Downtown Taos is made up of different districts and neighborhoods, each with its own distinct character and feel. This is a good thing—successful downtowns are made up of a diversity of neighborhoods that serve different purposes within the community and provide a degree of variety to everyday life. The Paseo del Sur area does not look or feel much like the Historic Core, nor should it. Each neighborhood serves a different function in the larger fabric of the downtown, and each plays an equally important role in the downtown's success.

As Taos continues to grow and change over time, it is important to allow each neighborhood to develop within the context of its own unique character. Similarly, when exploring or implementing the strategies recommended in this document, it is important to remember that none of the strategies are one-size-fits-all ideas—each should be adapted to fit within the context and character of each neighborhood. The end goal of the downtown strategy is not to make Paseo del Sur or Paseo del Norte look and feel like the Historic Core (or like some other town), but rather to help each neighborhood become more socially vibrant and economically prosperous for all Taoseños, in its own unique way.



Complete Neighborhoods.

Vision 2020 established the idea of “complete neighborhoods” as a goal and organizing concept for guiding growth and development in Taos—a sentiment that was echoed by many Taoseños during the Strong at Heart process. A complete neighborhood is a neighborhood where people have easy access to all of the necessities of daily life—affordable housing choices, job opportunities, schools, grocery stores, community resources, social opportunities, gathering spaces, open space, parks, and transportation. It’s a place where all the necessary amenities of daily life are safe and easy to navigate between for all ages and abilities—whether in car, on foot, or on bike. A neighborhood without access to fresh, healthy food cannot be considered a complete neighborhood—just like a neighborhood without access to schools, jobs, or gathering opportunities for locals cannot be either.

The strategies outlined in this document are geared towards making each neighborhood in Downtown Taos more complete—more livable, safe, and vibrant—with more opportunities for locals to gather, grow, and thrive. Beyond these strategies, the idea of creating more complete, livable, and equitable neighborhoods should be a primary goal for the Town of Taos in all of its actions moving forward.

PLACITAS NEIGHBORHOOD



The Placitas neighborhood is an area of opportunity. Home to major community institutions like Town Hall, Taos Public Library, UNM Taos, and Taos Municipal Schools—as well as civic groups like the Taos Education & Career Center, The Paseo Project, SOMOS, Taos Center for the Arts, and Cultural Energy Radio—the Placitas neighborhood is uniquely geared towards serving the education and civic needs of Taoseños. However, many Taoseños have expressed that the form and feel of the Placitas area leaves much to be desired. More square footage of the Placitas area today is devoted to surface parking and vacant lots than to buildings, parks, or usable public space.

Over time, the Placitas should morph into a complete neighborhood, complete with walkable community amenities that can benefit Taoseños in their everyday social lives—from parks and trails to local businesses and affordable options for downtown housing.

KEY STRATEGIES IN CONTEXT:



Enable Quality Downtown Development

Create public-private partnerships to explore development types that provide affordable housing options and expand employment opportunities for Taoseños on publicly held vacant lots of under-performing surface parking lots.



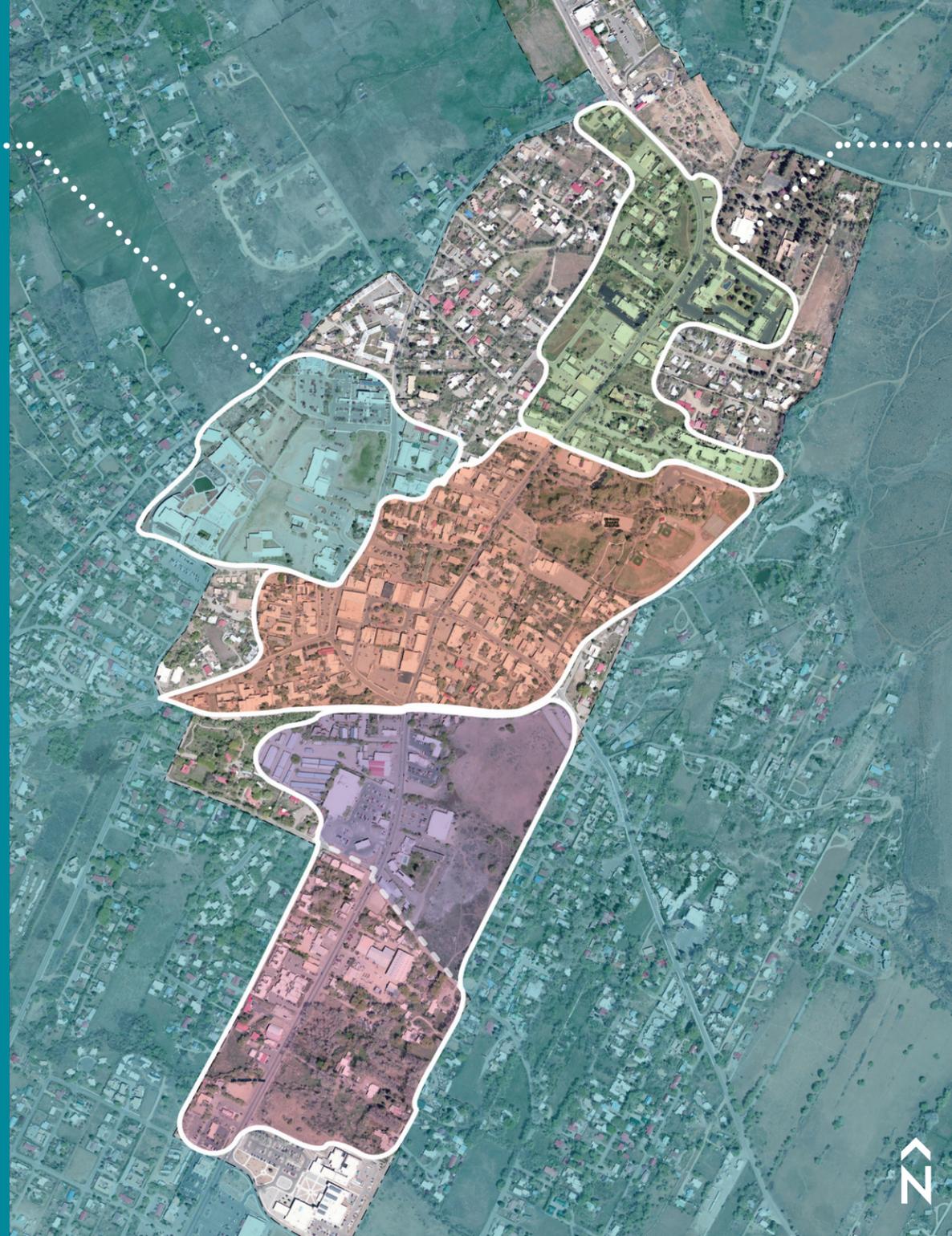
Improve Street Life & Walkability

Pursue key projects like placemaking and programming on Civic Plaza Dr. and spot-improvements to enhance walkability.



Create a Safe and Connected Downtown Bike Network

Incorporate bicycle accommodations into future plans for Civic Plaza Drive in order to make a key connection between Paseo del Pueblo Norte and Camino de la Placita.



PASEO DEL NORTE

The Paseo del Norte neighborhood serves as the northern entrance into Downtown Taos, where the neighborhood character transitions from a more rural context in the north, to an historic, low-density urban character closer to the Historic Core. The area is home to a number of large hotels, and is surrounded by established residential neighborhoods—making up one of the largest collections of housing and lodging within a walkable distance to the Historic Core.

However, despite the large number of residents and visitors residing in the area, the area lacks comfortably walkable or easy connections to the Historic Core and other neighborhood centers. As the Paseo del Norte area slowly grows and changes over time, the character of the neighborhood as a distinct but walkable extension of the Historic Core—with neighborhood scaled businesses and affordable housing options—should be preserved and expanded upon.

KEY STRATEGIES IN CONTEXT:



Enable Quality Downtown Development

Support and promote missing middle housing and allow for development types that expand business and employment opportunities for locals.



Improve Street Life & Walkability

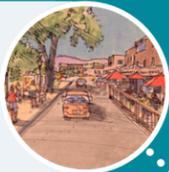
Pursue key projects like spot-improvements to enhance walkability.



Create a Safe and Connected Downtown Bike Network

Ensure that NMDOT highway reconstruction includes adequate bicycle facilities. Explore options for trails in open space and parks connecting to the west of the neighborhood.

HISTORIC CORE



The Historic Core is the social, economic, and historic heart of the downtown. It is a place that is steeped in history, that feels uniquely Taos. Taoseños and visitors alike care deeply about the Historic Core, and want to see its unique history, character, and sense of place preserved. At the same time, many Taoseños feel that the Historic Core is no longer a place for locals—that it does not offer enough businesses, events, or amenities that specifically meet the everyday needs of the community. Furthermore, many local youth in the Strong at Heart process expressed that they don't feel welcomed or invited in the Historic Core.

The Historic Core should be approached not only as a primary economic driver for Taos, but as a center of vibrant community life for locals as well. Focusing on strategies that make the area more welcoming and relevant in everyday life for Taoseños is key for building a thriving downtown for everyone.

KEY STRATEGIES IN CONTEXT:



31 *Improve Street Life & Walkability*

Pursue key projects like creating a park-once district in the Historic Core; using parklets to enhance street life in the Historic Plaza; placemaking and streetscaping on Ledoux St.; and spot-improvements to enhance walkability.



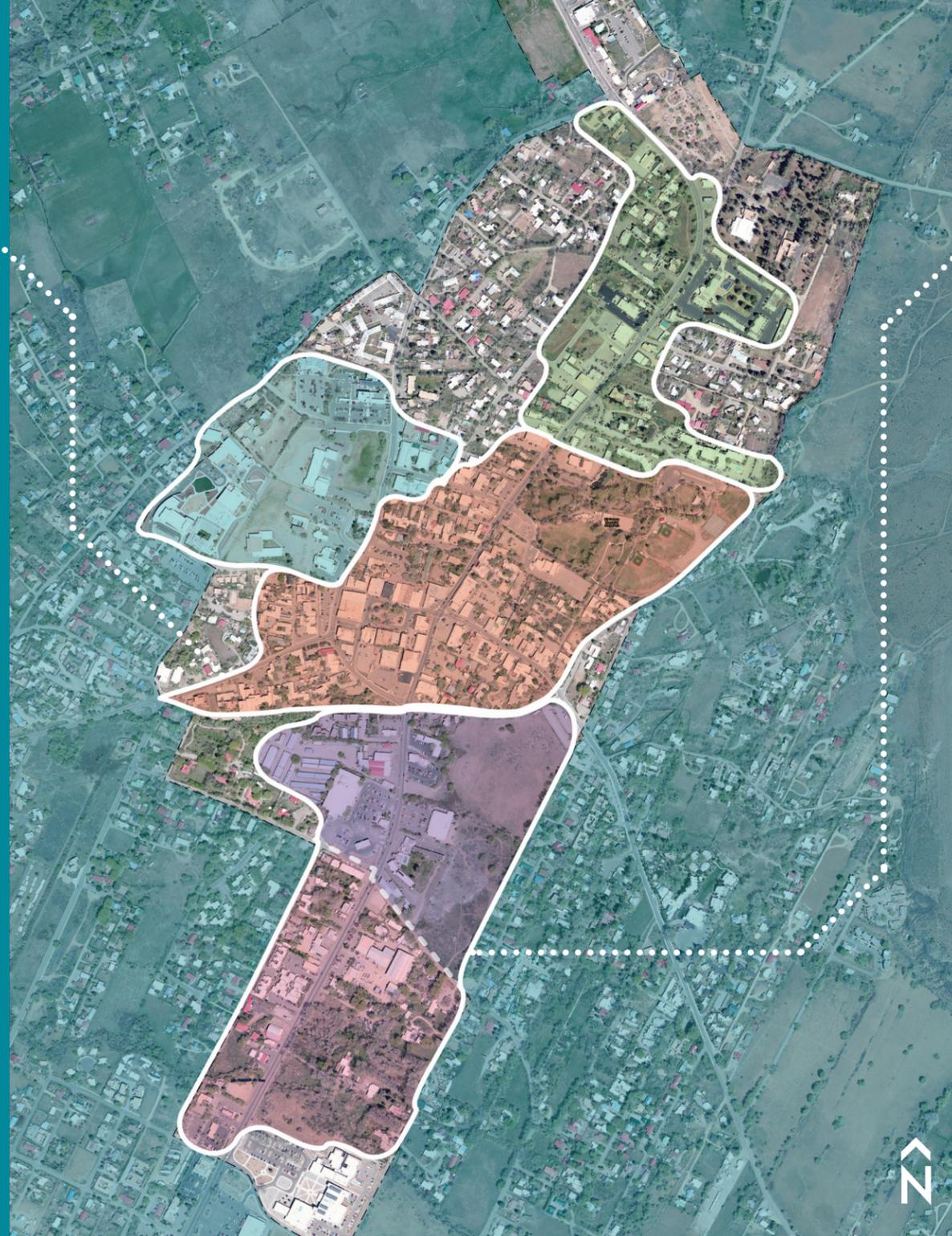
53 *Expand & Enhance the Downtown Alley Network*

Improve connectivity and create unique spaces for people to socialize, wander, and gather in the Historic Core.



59 *Create a Safe and Connected Downtown Bike Network*

Better connect the Historic Core to surrounding neighborhoods by focusing on bicycle and trail connections along Ojitos, Ranchitos, and Camino de la Placita.



PASEO DEL SUR



The Paseo del Sur neighborhood serves as the southern entrance into Downtown Taos. Much of its form and feel is dictated by Paseo del Pueblo Sur—a fast, high-traffic strip lined with highway-oriented buildings wrapped with surface parking. The area is also home to the largest residential neighborhoods in Downtown Taos, that—while not walkable to the Historic Core or other community amenities—house a majority of Taoseños in the downtown. Paseo del Sur is also the most affordable neighborhood in Downtown Taos, which means it offers the most opportunity for Taoseños—opportunity to buy homes, to find more affordable rent, and to start or expand local businesses.

While Paseo del Pueblo Sur is a state highway and will likely always feel like a highway strip, the community has a strong desire to make it the best strip that it can possibly be. New options for affordable housing should be placed within walking distances to areas of opportunity. Existing buildings along the highway can be retrofitted to house new, locally-oriented businesses. Walkability and connectivity can be enhanced by creating new connections and upgrading existing infrastructure as redevelopment occurs.

KEY STRATEGIES IN CONTEXT:



67 *Enable Quality Downtown Development*

Guide future development to increase connectivity, allow for adaptive reuse of existing buildings, and focus on opportunities that create complete neighborhoods.



31 *Improve Street Life & Walkability*

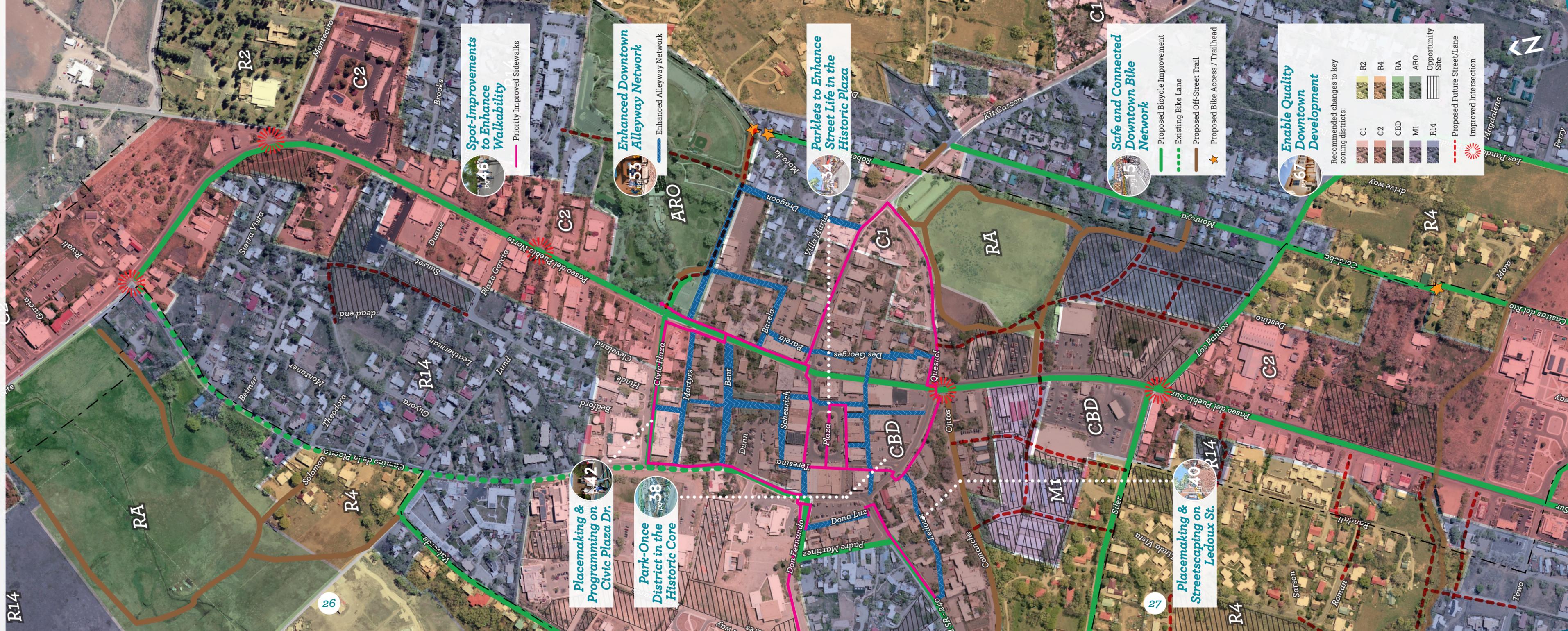
Pursue key projects like spot-improvements to enhance walkability.



59 *Create a Safe and Connected Downtown Bike Network*

Create new bike and trail opportunities along Rio Fernando, as well as new bike lanes or signed routes on Albright, Los Pandos, Cordoba, and Siler.

**THE DOWNTOWN STRATEGY:
STRATEGIES IN CONTEXT**



Spot-Improvements to Enhance to Walkability
 Priority Improved Sidewalks

Enhanced Alleyway Network
 Enhanced Alleyway Network

Parklets to Enhance Street Life in the Historic Plaza

Safe and Connected Downtown Bike Network
 Proposed Bicycle Improvement
 Existing Bike Lane
 Proposed Off-Street Trail
 Proposed Bike Access / Trailhead

Placemaking & Programming on Civic Plaza Dr.
 pg. 42

Park-Once District in the Historic Core
 pg. 38

Placemaking & Streetscaping on Ledoux St.
 pg. 40

Enable Quality Downtown Development
 pg. 67

Recommended changes to key zoning districts:

C1	R2	CBD	M1	ARO	Opportunity Site
C2	R4				
	RA				

Proposed Future Street/Lane
 Improved Intersection

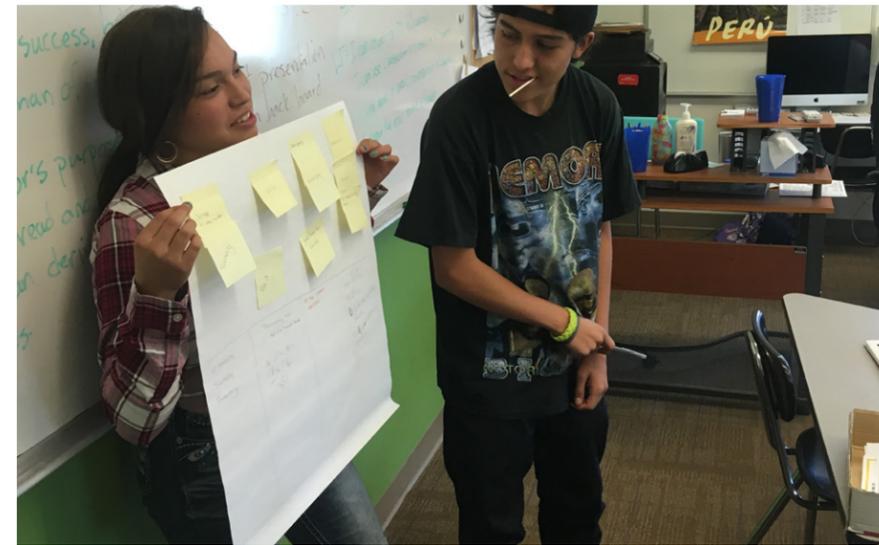
MOVING FORWARD:***A thriving downtown for everyone.***

These five words offer a powerful vision for Downtown Taos. Taoseños do want downtown to thrive. That doesn't mean we don't love downtown today, or honor its history and central place in so many local traditions. It doesn't mean we want Taos to be like somewhere else. It means we want our downtown to be all it is today, and more. We want to see empty storefronts filled with strong locally-owned businesses. We want the Historic Plaza to realize its full potential as the heart of the community. We want it to be a safe place to walk or bike.

Taoseños also want downtown to be a place for everyone. We value our tourism economy and want it to remain strong, but we want downtown to be more than a place for visitors. We want it to be a place for everyone. We want locals to have reasons to come downtown. We want youth to feel safe and welcome when they are there. We want it to be a place where local entrepreneurs see opportunity to begin something new and carve out a future.

Above all, Taoseños want Downtown Taos to be a place where we come together as a community. Not just for big events and not just in the Historic Plaza. We want it to be a place where people can come together—on purpose or by chance—every day in all kinds of places. We can realize all of these things in ways that make the community and downtown better, without changing what we love about them. It's possible, but we need to work together to do it.

The strategies in the following sections offer a set of initial steps towards realizing this vision and the Community Goals for the Downtown. Moving forward will take a serious and sustained dedication of time, resources, and leadership. It will also require a commitment to collaboration and compromise to balance different ideas.

***Take action and build momentum.***

This has been a long process. People are ready for progress. Taking action on one or more “quick wins” will get the ball rolling and build momentum for implementing larger projects. The strategy includes a variety of modest but impactful placemaking projects—including temporary parklets in the Historic Plaza or initial improvements to alleyway segments—that could be implemented quickly and inexpensively.

Take steps to align policies and investments.

Each of the four downtown strategies require some level of capital investment and/or policy reform. This ranges from relatively small placemaking investments to more significant investments related to improving walkability and creating a connected bike network. As a policy matter, relatively modest but meaningful changes to local zoning codes are recommended as part of the Enabling Quality Downtown Development strategy. These types of moves can take time and will require additional steps and analysis beyond what is provided here. The Town should initiate some level of forward-moving action in the near-term in order to start the ball rolling.

Leverage partnerships and build capacity.

Implementation will require proactive effort, a dedication of resources, and the organizational capacity to carry out individual projects. The Town of Taos is responsible for much of the work, but will not be able to implement these strategies alone.

The Taos Main Street Accelerator Program is in an ideal position to play a lead role in driving implementation of the downtown strategy. The Main Street Program provides the structure for organizing, leading, and funding many of the actions outlined in this report, and is also a vehicle for sustaining community ownership and involvement throughout the implementation process.

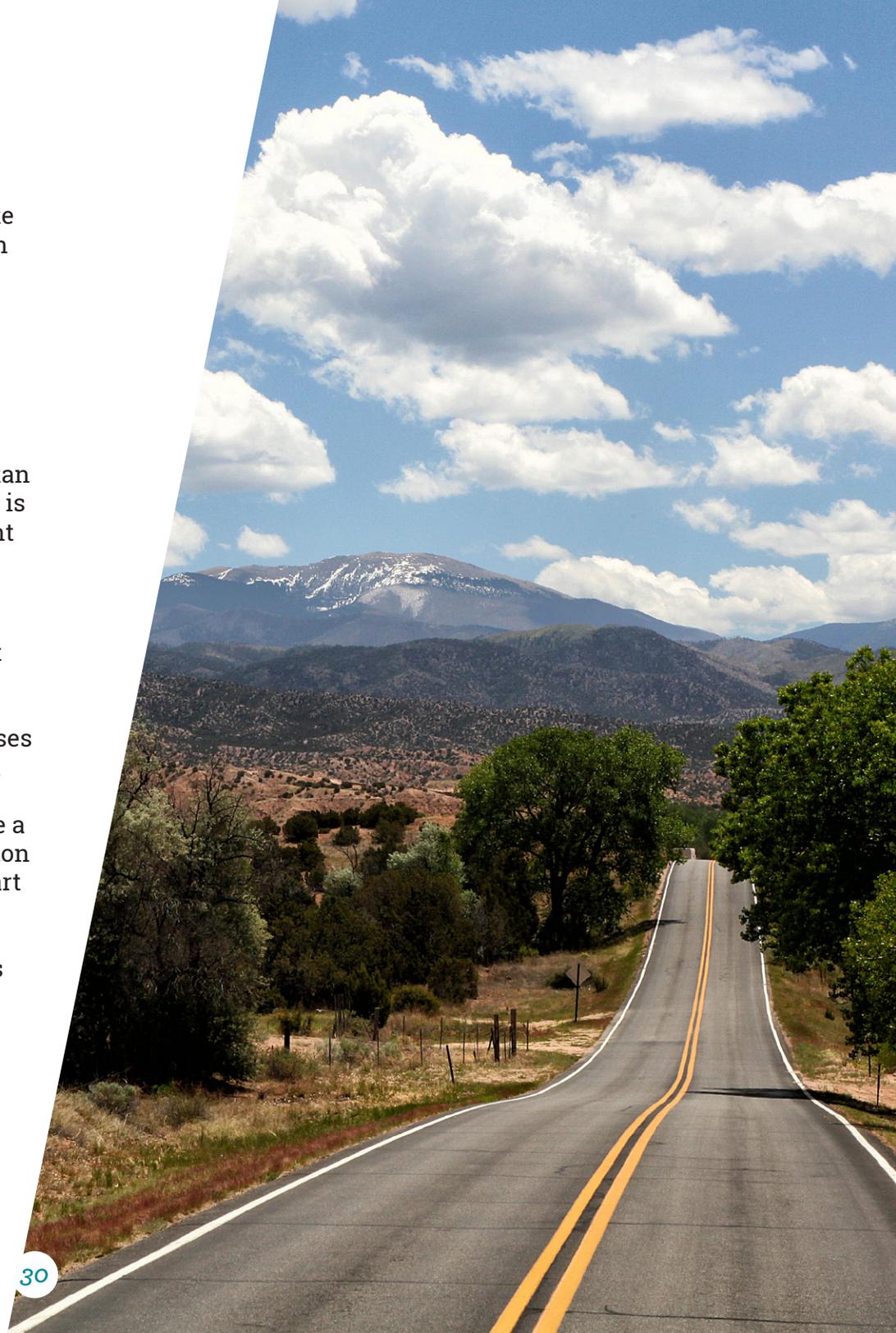
Similarly, several organizations are positioned to take a lead or supporting role in distinct projects. For example, the coalition of bike and trail advocates working to create a connected bike network and is likely in a good position to carry that strategy forward.

Some of the recommendations herein will require the creation of additional capacity that the Town does not have at this point. In particular, taking a more proactive approach to shaping quality development within the downtown will likely require additional institutional or financial capacity. Taking steps to establish a Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency is one possible approach, which is discussed in greater detail in the downtown development strategy.

Connect to broader community needs and priorities.

The initial phases of Strong at Heart revealed significant needs and opportunities that extend beyond the downtown. That input guided the development of the Downtown Strategy. However, because the strategy focuses on the downtown, it does not adequately address all that emerged. As such, a wealth of input is available to build on. For example, the Town of Taos is preparing to initiate a Comprehensive Plan process that will help outline a vision and plan for future growth. The input from Strong at Heart provides a useful building block for that process.

Furthermore, there is a need and opportunity for entities interested in the themes that emerged from Phase I of Strong at Heart (building a livable community, moving towards the economy we want, growing consistent with our values, strengthening civic culture, building a more inclusive community) to take up pieces of ideas and input collected and move them forward.



IMPROVE STREET LIFE & WALKABILITY

Streets are the fundamental building blocks of successful downtowns. In addition to providing mobility and access, streets play a key role in shaping the character of a community. Walkable streets that encourage street life are essential for creating a vibrant downtown and strong local economy.

By focusing on several placemaking and streetscape projects on Civic Plaza Drive, the Historic Plaza, and LeDoux Street—as well as targeted spot improvements in the sidewalk network—the Town of Taos can take key steps toward enhancing street life and improving walkability in the downtown.

PRIORITY PROJECTS



Historic Plaza
Parklets to
Enhance Street Life



Park-Once District
In the Historic Core



LeDoux St.
Placemaking &
Streetscaping



Civic Plaza Dr.
Placemaking &
Programming



Spot-Improvements
To Enhance Walkability

BENEFITS

Street Life. Create streets that are active and lively, with more places for people to socialize, wander and gather.

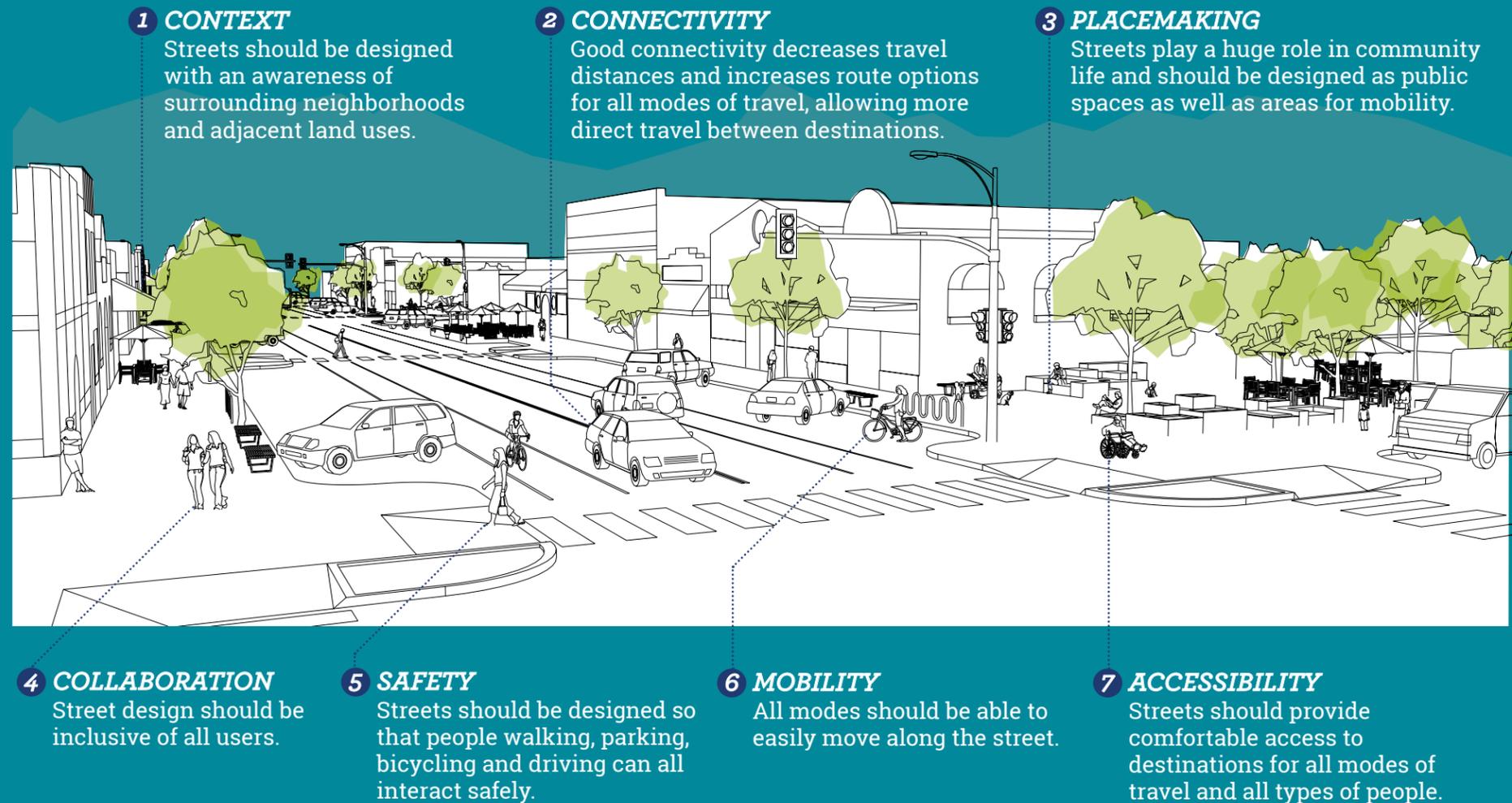
Safety & Accessibility. Make our streets more comfortable, accessible, and safe for Taoseños of all ages and abilities.

Sense of Place. Transform key downtown streets into unique, vibrant, and authentic places.

Local Economy. Create streets that encourage economic activity and support a strong business environment.

KEY INGREDIENTS TO GREAT STREETS

The vitality of our downtowns is dependent on an approach to street design that considers all of the important roles that streets play. Successful street design incorporates these seven core considerations:



Great streets are more than the infrastructure that connects places; *they are places*. In order for a downtown to be socially active and economically vibrant, streets need to do more than just move and park cars. Streets that are social, comfortable, safe and walkable set the stage for a healthy, vibrant and economically prosperous downtown.



Great Streets are Great Places. Streets play a huge role in community life and should be designed as public spaces as well as areas for mobility. Great streets include streetscape furnishings and pedestrian amenities like lighting, signage, benches, planters, and public art to create high-quality walking environments. Small building setbacks with multi-story buildings frame the street corridor and provide interesting facades and additional pedestrian amenities.



Great Streets Support Local Businesses. Streets must perform differently in residential, suburban, rural, and downtown contexts—and successful streets are designed with an awareness of surrounding neighborhoods. In Downtown Taos, the economic and social heart of the community, the streets need to facilitate economic and social activity as successfully as they accommodate traffic. Downtown streets should be designed to accommodate pedestrians and provide access to storefront businesses. Frontage design elements like sidewalk displays, vending, and accessible storefronts should be provided wherever possible. On-street parking supports retail, services and other businesses, but is only economically effective on streets that provide adequate pedestrian and public space.



Great Streets are Safe, Comfortable, and Accessible. Streets should provide safe, comfortable access to destinations for users of all ages and abilities, whether in vehicles, on bikes or on foot. Ultimately, a healthy, vibrant, and economically prosperous downtown needs places for people to walk, gather, shop, and wander on foot.

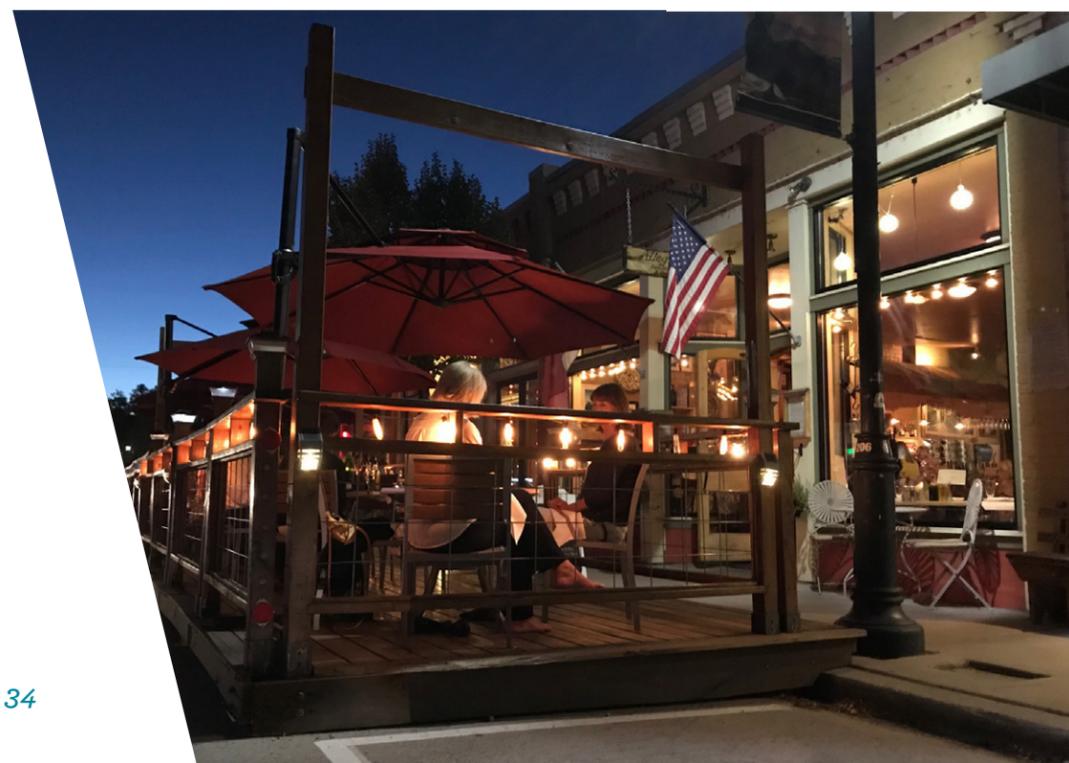


**PRIORITY PROJECT:
USE PARKLETS TO ENHANCE
PUBLIC SPACE AND STREET LIFE
IN THE TAOS PLAZA**

Strong at Heart revealed a clear desire to make Taos Plaza feel more vibrant and welcoming, yet there are different ideas about just how to do that. Turning the Plaza into a pedestrian mall—closing the area off to cars—has been discussed for years, but it's both challenging and contentious. While Taoseños broadly support the idea of improving pedestrian access and vibrancy and creating more street life, closing off the Plaza to cars is controversial.

A parklet is a sidewalk extension that offers additional space and amenities for people using the street. Strong at Heart identified parklets as a compromise solution that would improve the pedestrian environment while keeping the Taos Plaza open to vehicles. Parklets are commonly used for on-street dining or to provide small-scale public spaces to create street life and sense of place.

Parklets are affordable and easy to construct and install. They are also temporary, meaning they can be removed during winter when on-street dining isn't an option. As such, they offer a relatively low-risk, high-reward way to experiment with expanded sidewalks without significant investment. If they don't work, they can be removed. If they do, they can be kept or eventually replaced with a more permanent sidewalk expansion.



PROJECT BENEFITS

- **Street Life.** Parklets are a popular placemaking strategy because they expand sidewalk space and bring more people out into the public realm. This is the case even when the parklet is owned and managed by an adjacent business – a restaurant for example – because they bring more people and activity out onto the street.
- **Local Business.** Parklets are often built in partnership with local businesses that benefit either directly – such as by allowing on-street dining – or indirectly by expanding activity and street life.
- **Sense of Place.** Parklets bring more people out into the public realm, which enhances vitality, authenticity and sense of place.

MEETING DOWNTOWN GOALS

- ✓ A walkable and bikeable downtown.
- ✓ Places for people.
- ✓ A healthy economy with thriving local businesses.
- ✓ A real place where locals want to be.

Photos: Upper left, a parklet in downtown Salida, Colorado allows for outdoor dining and a cost-effective expansion of existing local businesses. Upper right, an artist's rendering of what a parklet could look like in Taos Plaza. Lower left, dining parklets in Carbondale, Colorado have quickly become a local favorite. Lower right, try it out! This temporary, experimental parklet was made with volunteer power for the Strong at Heart Civic Plaza Drive Street Party.

THE STRATEGY

What type of activity? As parklets have grown in popularity, the range of uses and activities they support has expanded rapidly. From outdoor seating and dining, to bike corrals, street games and puzzles, art installations, display space, and even active recreation, parklets can be tailored for a variety of social uses. What activities make most sense depends on the pedestrian environment in the surrounding area. Areas that already have an active street life and pedestrian presence are able to employ the space for activities and amenities for those pedestrians to enjoy. Areas that are trying to create a higher level of street life and pedestrian activity should use the space for activities that will bring people out into the street, such as outdoor dining.

Finding Parklet Partners. Communities typically install parklets in partnership with local businesses, business districts or community associations (such as a Main Street program) that can take the lead in installing and managing them. The make-up of those partnerships depends on how the parklet will be used. Parklets that are to be used for on-street dining or other private uses are installed and managed by the business that plans to use them. Parklets that are designed to provide public spaces or amenities, such as bench seating or art installations, are often built and managed by community associations.

Using a parklet for on-street dining is the most surefire way to ensure the space is actively used and therefore brings street life and economic vitality to the area it is installed. This is likely the best use for an initial parklet installation in the Taos Plaza, so the ideal partner would be a café or restaurant that is interested in on-street seating.



Finding the Right Location. Parklets can occupy a variety of spaces, including on-street or surface (off-street) parking, medians, traffic triangles or converted travel lanes. Most often they extend from sidewalks into streets, occupying on-street parking or a repurposed travel lane. This would be the case in Taos Plaza.

If the parklet is going to be used and managed by a specific business – a restaurant or café for example – it should be directly adjacent to that establishment. If it is going to be used for more general public amenity, it should be located in an area that will benefit the greatest number of businesses.

Addressing Parking Concerns. In Taos Plaza, a parklet would most likely extend the sidewalk over existing on-street parking spaces. Each parklet would take up two to four existing parking spaces depending on how large it is. This loss of on-street parking is typically the biggest challenge as adjacent businesses may question whether the added vitality will outweigh the loss of parking. Fortunately, because the structure is temporary, if it does not have the desired results, it can be removed. Similarly, it can be taken down during winter (when on-street dining is not feasible) and rebuilt in the spring when its warm enough for people to enjoy outdoor dining.

Addressing Regulatory Concerns. It's very likely that there are policy barriers that need to be addressed. Since the Town of Taos is likely to be a partner to the project, municipal staff should examine potential barriers and solutions.



PRIORITY PROJECT: CREATE A PARK-ONCE DISTRICT IN THE HISTORIC CORE

Downtowns need the right amount of parking, in the right areas, to thrive. Too much parking can eat up valuable public space and create generic, empty feeling environments—environments that discourage the type of pedestrian activity needed for vibrant street life and thriving downtown businesses. Insufficient parking can create traffic congestion and negatively impact access to businesses.

By pursuing projects like a parking study and a shared parking garage by the Historic Plaza, the Town of Taos can work towards turning the Historic Core into a “park once” district with the right balance of parking.

PROJECT BENEFITS

- **Economic Vitality.** Increase business by creating easier pedestrian access and creating more life in the street.
- **Quality of Life.** Enhance the experience of visiting downtown by creating a “park once” district.
- **Traffic Containment.** Decrease traffic congestion by minimizing the number of cars cruising for parking.
- **Cost Effectiveness.** Implement a strategic parking management program that prioritizes return on investment.
- **Sense of Place.** Enhance the quality of place by minimizing an unnecessary surface parking lots.

MEETING DOWNTOWN GOALS

- ✓ A walkable and bikeable downtown.
- ✓ Places for people.
- ✓ A healthy economy with thriving local businesses.
- ✓ A real place where locals want to be.



Images: *above*, a rough inventory shows the high amounts of parking already available in the Historic Core. Concentrating parking in areas of high demand could free up space for more community-forward uses. *Below*, a rendering of a parking garage near the Historic Plaza shows how a parking facility could be stylized to fit the historic context, and even wrapped with small businesses frontage to create more street life and social activity.



STREETS AND PARKING IN THE HISTORIC CORE

Although parking lots do not fit with the historic feel or context of the Historic Core, the area is home to an incredible amount of surface parking. The Taos Plaza is centered on a central Plaza bounded by four one-way street segments: North Plaza, Camino de Santa Fe, South Plaza, and East Plaza.

The three one-way street segments that make up the Plaza support more than 70 diagonal parking spaces. Though those spaces are clearly the most convenient, several areas directly adjacent to the Plaza offer additional parking. This includes on-street parking on surrounding streets—which is ideal in downtown environments—as well as a significant amount of off-street parking in surface lots scattered around the Plaza. While sufficient parking is necessary for an economically healthy downtown, significant amounts of off-street surface parking can have a negative impact on sense of place, walkability, neighborhood character, and even on local businesses.

Like other downtown and main street environments, on-street parking plays an important role in the function and viability of Taos Plaza. At the same time, improving the vitality and pedestrian experience is critical. People are happy to park and walk to places that are active and interesting pedestrian environments.

THE STRATEGY

Before exploring options for creating new parking, the Town should conduct a comprehensive parking study to better understand what areas are in high or low demand for parking. Areas with higher demand should be prioritized for connection to the garage via the improved alleyway network. Areas with less demand should be prioritized for transitioning former parking into more active and social uses, such as parklets in the Plaza. A parking study may also be used to explore specific opportunities for shared parking—a cooperative agreement between property owners and municipalities to allow public or semi-public access to private lots during specific hours of the day.

For some time now, The Town of Taos has been interested in locating a parking garage near Taos Plaza in the Historic Core. While it is highly suggested to conduct a comprehensive parking study to understand need and demand *before* undergoing a potentially expensive project like building a public parking garage, a strategically located garage would certainly have a positive impact on creating a “park-once” district in the core. The Historic Plaza and adjacent area is clearly the most visited area of the Historic Core and experiences the highest parking demand. Concentrating parking in this area would allow for surface parking in areas of less demand to gradually transition into uses that are more in line with historic character and community values.

KEY GUIDANCE

- ✓ Conduct a Parking Audit during the next busy period in Downtown. Elements of a Parking Audit include:
 - Accurate inventory of existing parking spaces, categorized by ownership (public, private) and location (on-street, off-street);
 - Peak season parking counts (all day Thursday, Friday, Saturday);
 - Assessment of parking duration, turnover and utilization; and,
 - Assessment of commuter needs and enforcement measures.
- ✓ Work with business and property owners to explore options for pursuing a shared parking strategy.
- ✓ Pursue strategies that increase and enhance walkability in the Historic Core in tandem with parking strategies.
- ✓ Explore feasibility for constructing a public parking garage near the Historic Plaza.



PRIORITY PROJECT: LEDOUX STREET PLACEMAKING & STREETScape ENHANCEMENTS

Ledoux is another street where there is interest in improvements. Ledoux is a short street segment that is home to a number of galleries and residences, as well as the Harwood Museum of Art. The west end of Ledoux intersects with Ranchitos Rd while the east end intersects with Camino de la Placita at the southeast corner of the Taos Plaza, where it connects directly to Camino de Santa Fe (the one-way segment on the west side of the Plaza).

Ledoux is a narrow street with small gravel sidewalk segments along most of its short length. The street's narrow dimensions and intimate relation to adjacent buildings serve to tame traffic and frame a street that is human-scaled. Combined, these features create an inherently strong sense of place. However, its narrow and inconsistent sidewalks impede walkability.

Strategically, the main opportunity for Ledoux is to make the street safer and easier to walk while leveraging the street's sense of place.

PROJECT BENEFITS

- **Street Life.** Create a shared street that encourages people to walk, wander, and mingle.
- **Sense of Place.** Enhance quality of place and experience of visiting Ledoux Street for locals and visitors alike.

MEETING DOWNTOWN GOALS

- ✓ A walkable and bikeable downtown.
- ✓ Places for people.
- ✓ A healthy economy with thriving local businesses.
- ✓ A real place where locals want to be.



FESTIVAL STREET

A festival street is a street that balances the needs of street life and pedestrians with the needs of slow through-traffic for automobiles in a shared setting. They are especially appropriate for areas that have a large draw for pedestrian activity and street life, but that are also impractical for closing off access to cars. They are particularly successful on narrow, winding streets where traffic already moves slowly.

Festival streets often use streetscaping and placemaking treatments like planters, landscaping, pedestrian-oriented lighting, and alternative paving materials like cobble, pavers, or colored pavement in order to create an atmosphere where cars and pedestrians can safely share the space. They also often incorporate sloped curbs or curb-less construction, where pedestrians and cars are expected to use the entire roadway (see *Option 2* on the next page). Because curb-less streets are reminiscent of historic, pre-automobile streets, they can often help to boost the historic feel of the street as well.

Festival streets are often also equipped to be easily closed to car traffic for events. This can be accomplished through strategically placed removable bollards or planters that can easily close the street for short durations of time.



Images: *above left*, the historic alleyways of Downtown Taos were built as what we'd today consider a shared or festival street. By taking cues from existing historic streets, Ledoux could transform into a socially vibrant place built upon the historic roots of Taos. *Above*, a rendering shows what Ledoux Street could look like after being activated with streetscaping elements like landscaping, high-quality sidewalks, signage, and pedestrian-oriented lighting. *Below*, a rendering shows what Ledoux Street could look like as a *shared street* with historic style cobble paving spanning the width of the entire street.



THE STRATEGY

Option 1. The idea that emerged from the Strong at Heart design workshop involves expanding the sidewalks on Ledoux to make it easier to walk and create space for installing pedestrian-scale lighting.

The challenge with this approach is that the street's narrow dimensions—which generally work in its favor—limit how much the sidewalks can be expanded. Furthermore, there are likely sections of the street where there is not sufficient space to expand or add sidewalks at all. As such, this approach represents a fairly significant investment for a relatively modest amount of change.

Option 2. Another concept is to convert Ledoux into a *shared street*. A shared street is designed to minimize the segregation between different modes of travel (cars, pedestrians, bikes), such that each of those modes gains equal access to the entire right of way as opposed to allocating different areas of the right of way to each. Shared streets, also known as curb-less streets, are gaining in popularity, but they are hardly a new idea. They used to be the norm before streets were designed around cars and they can still be found in many historic areas where the streets pre-date cars.

Option 3. Finally, there is also interest in a near-term approach that would keep the street as is, but use removable bollards to close the street off to regular vehicle traffic. Because they are removable, bollards would make it possible to emphasize pedestrian access while maintaining vehicle connections at certain times or for certain vehicles or needs.

One benefit to this approach is that it is by far the most affordable option and it can be done quickly and easily. The challenge with this approach is that vehicle access is beneficial to the character and function of the street.



PRIORITY PROJECT:
CIVIC PLAZA DRIVE
PLACEMAKING & PROGRAMMING

Home to a number of key community organizations, Civic Plaza Drive is uniquely positioned to become an active and vibrant downtown street for Taosños. There is great interest and desire among project partners and key organizations located on Civic Plaza Drive to transform the street into a community campus where Taosños can come to access educational and entrepreneurial opportunities, as well as a festival street that can easily accommodate community events, gatherings, and celebrations.

PROJECT BENEFITS

- **Public Space.** Create more places for people to socialize, wander and gather.
- **Opportunities for Youth.** Expand and enhance educational, vocational, and civic opportunities for youth.
- **Local Economy.** Provide a flexible space that can be used by Taosños to sell goods and start small, local businesses.
- **Opportunities to Come Together.** Create a place that brings the community together and offers unique opportunities for Taosños.
- **Sense of Place.** Create a unique and authentic place, where the function of providing opportunities for Taosños informs the street's unique form.

MEETING DOWNTOWN GOALS

- ✓ A walkable and bikeable downtown.
- ✓ Places for people.
- ✓ A strong economy and thriving local businesses.
- ✓ A real place where locals want to be.



THE STRATEGY

Civic Plaza Drive is home to a number of non-profit, civic, and educational institutions that care deeply about enhancing the street and providing opportunities for Taoseños. Representatives from several of these organizations—including the University of New Mexico, Taos Education & Career Center, The Paseo Project, SOMOS, Taos Center for the Arts—gathered during the Strong at Heart Downtown Design Workshop in May 2018 to discuss ways to work together to make Civic Plaza Drive more vibrant, social, and welcoming for Taoseños. The group developed the following key steps for implementation:

1.) Form a group of stewards. Gather representatives from the University of New Mexico, Taos Education & Career Center, The Paseo Project, SOMOS, Taos Center for the Arts, Cultural Energy Radio, Taos Municipal Schools, Taos Public Library, and other community groups to meet on a regular bases and lead the transformation of Civic Plaza Drive.

2.) Craft a vision and ethos. A community vision and set of guiding principles should be developed by the group in order to guide physical transformation and community programming of the street, as well as the leadership of the project. The group agreed that these guiding principles should not only include enhancing street life and walkability, but be based on an ethos of showcasing education and providing opportunities for Taoseños through the design and programming of the street.

3.) Activate the street through community programming. Civic Plaza Drive is a uniquely local hotspot for art, creativity, education, and opportunity in Taos. Showcasing these unique attributes through festivals, public art, performance, or other events immediately creates vibrancy and street life that is authentic to the people and organizations already working there. Programming like art market nights or regular hours for street vending and food carts could enhance street life while simultaneously providing opportunities to sell goods or start / expand small business. Event programming also helps leaders learn what physical transformations could occur later to better facilitate events and programming, such as vendor stalls, food cart parking areas, or electrical outlets for booths.



Try it out! Students and teachers from the Taos Education & Career Center put their artistic skills to work creating experimental crosswalks, bike lanes, food-cart stalls, and expanded sidewalks for the Civic Plaza Drive Street Party during the Downtown Design Workshop.



4.) Experiment with temporary improvements. Physically transforming a street can be expensive and time consuming. Experimenting with low-cost and temporary streetscape improvements such as creative crosswalks, seating, parklets, art, banners, or string lighting can allow a street to be immediately transformed through volunteer power. Low-cost projects can also allow the community to experiment with and change improvements as a way to develop long-term or permanent design solutions for the street.

5.) Physically transform the street. Over the long term, Civic Plaza Drive should physically transform though permanent or long-term improvements that, based on temporary or experimental improvements, facilitate community programming and showcase the street's educational opportunities. Such improvements could include treatments like unique paving material, gradual or sloped curbs, public art, electrical outlets for pop-ups and vendor booths, quick ways to close down the street to vehicular traffic, or artistic installations that highlight the opportunities provided by organizations on the street.

Making it happen. While the Town of Taos is responsible for approving or allowing community programming and temporary streetscape improvement on Civic Plaza Drive (by changing ordinances to allow for regularly scheduled mobile vendors, for example), project leaders from civic organizations on the street are ultimately responsible for building momentum, organizing events and experimental treatments, and working with the Town of Taos to drive long-term implementation. Regular and structured communication between these two parties—as well as collaboration with other public implementation and funding vehicles like Taos Main Street Accelerator—is key for driving progress.

Long-term streetscape treatments, such as the transformations pictured in the sketches to the left, can help increase sense of place and facilitate opportunities for the community to gather. Permanent solutions should be informed by community programming and experimental improvements.



PRIORITY PROJECT: SPOT-IMPROVEMENTS FOR WALKABILITY

One of the largest barriers to walkability in Taos is the significant number of gaps and obstructions in the sidewalk system that make walking difficult for many. By making a variety of site-specific spot improvements to sidewalks and street crossings, the quality of the walking environment in Downtown Taos can be greatly increased.

PROJECT BENEFITS

- **Safety.** Increase safety for people walking along and across streets.
- **Accessibility.** Create a downtown environment that can be enjoyed by all, regardless of age or ability.
- **Connections.** Improve connectivity and pedestrian access between various destinations within downtown.
- **Thriving Businesses.** Make it easy for people on foot to patronize shops and restaurants.
- **Public Space.** Activate sidewalks and create vibrant street life.

MEETING DOWNTOWN GOALS

- ✓ A walkable and bikeable downtown.
- ✓ Places for people.
- ✓ A healthy economy with thriving local businesses.
- ✓ A real place where locals want to be.



Images: Obstructed sidewalks along Paseo del Pueblo Norte create safety hazards for pedestrians. While historic, narrow streets greatly contribute to a strong pedestrian environment, narrow or obstructed sidewalks do not.



WALKABILITY AUDIT

As part of the Strong at Heart design workshop held in May 2018, a walkability audit workshop was led by the Taos Land Trust, the UNM Prevention Research Center, and the New Mexico Department of Health to examine walking issues within the downtown core. More than 30 volunteers examined six sites that are either common walking routes, or have high numbers of crashes and close-calls involving pedestrians and/or bicyclists with motorists.

Walking audit participants identified three small changes that can have big, immediate impact for Downtown Taos. These minimal-cost strategies include:

- ✓ **Pavement Markings.** Re-paint all crosswalks in the downtown core and by schools.
- ✓ **Maintenance.** Trim any brush that encroaches on roads and sidewalks.
- ✓ **Signing.** Put up flashing crosswalk signs near schools to alert drivers of crossings.

A complete report of existing conditions and recommendations of the walking audit is being prepared by the sponsoring partners, and should be used to prioritize spot improvements.

KEY GUIDANCE

Improvements to the pedestrian environment will need to be made over time, utilizing a variety of funding opportunities. Strategic steps to achieve the long-term vision to maintain Downtown Taos as a thriving pedestrian place include:

- ✓ **Start simple.** Prioritize implementation of identified low-cost improvements.
- ✓ **Prioritize safety.** Work to secure funding for larger spot-improvement projects that address critical safety concerns.
- ✓ **Follow guidance for best practices.** Follow established guidance (ADAAG, PROWAG, NMDOT, MUTCD) for sidewalk design, accessibility accommodation, and intersection design.
- ✓ **Review existing plans and proposals.** Routinely review town street improvements, NMDOT transportation projects, and private development applications to ensure pedestrian and ADA needs are being met.
- ✓ **Enforce design standards.** Enforce design standards in Downtown Taos that exceed minimum requirements and meet community objectives for creation of high quality and authentic pedestrian spaces.



**ACTION PLAN:
SPOT-IMPROVEMENTS FOR WALKABILITY**

The following tables outline specific actions to be taken within the near-term.

<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
Widen sidewalks and enhance pedestrian crossings on Paseo del Pueblo Norte as part of the NM 68/US 64 resurfacing project.	NMDOT	2019
Re-paint all crosswalks in the downtown core and by schools.	Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program	2019
Trim shrubbery that is encroaching on sidewalks and roads.	Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program, private property owners, Sidewalk Angels volunteers	ongoing
Put up flashing crosswalk signs near the schools to alert drivers of crossings. Explore Safe Routes to School resources.	Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program	2020
Routinely review/coordinate/integrate pedestrian spot improvements with the construction of other projects (street repaving, utility work, building retrofits, infill development, etc.)	Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program, private developers	ongoing
Establish an ongoing fund to construct small safety enhancements for pedestrians within the public right-of-way (construction of curb ramps, removal of obstacles in pedestrians' paths, sidewalk repair, etc.), prioritizing projects highlighted in the Walkability Audit report.	Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program	2019
Develop an ADA Transition Plan that identifies barriers limiting access to persons with disabilities, prioritizes ADA needs, and sets forth steps necessary to complete modifications to downtown streets and sidewalks.	Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program	
Create a "Sidewalk Angels" program to help fill the gap between the Town's limited budget and the need for safe, accessible places to walk. Model after City of Santa Fe program.	Taos Main Street Accelerator Program	

SPOT-IMPROVEMENT GUIDANCE:

The following recommendations were generated during the walkability audit of the Strong at Heart Design Workshop, and should be used by the Town of Taos and Taos Main Street Accelerator Program to guide targeted spot-improvements in the near term. These recommendations can also be found in the Taos Walkability Audit Report, currently being generated by the Taos Land Trust.

<i>Street Name</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
<i>Quesnel</i>	Replace bike lane on Quesnel with sidewalk.
<i>Quesnel</i>	Move Quesnel on-street parking to same side as bike lane/sidewalk to create buffer between pedestrians and motorists.
<i>Quesnel</i>	Paint/repaint crosswalks at Quesnel and Paseo.
<i>Quesnel</i>	Bring sidewalks at Quesnel and Paseo into compliance with ADA.
<i>Quesnel</i>	Increase visibility of crosswalk on Kit Carson with high visibility markings, illumination, better signage, advance stop bars (a widened gap between automobile stop line and pedestrian crossing), signals, or other enhancements.
<i>Town Hall Dr. / Enos Garcia Elementary School</i>	Paint or re-paint all crosswalks around the school.
<i>Town Hall Dr. / Enos Garcia Elementary School</i>	Install or repair flashing crosswalk signs near school to alert drivers of crossings.
<i>Ranchitos Rd.</i>	Install sidewalk on one side of Ranchitos Road.
<i>Ranchitos Rd.</i>	Trim bushes and vegetation along both sides of Ranchitos Rd. to improve walkability along shoulders.
<i>La Posta Rd.</i>	Install speed radar sign to help control speeding.
<i>Siler Rd./ Los Pandos Rd.</i>	Put up a speed limit sign on Siler Rd.
<i>Siler Rd./ Los Pandos Rd.</i>	Repave Siler Rd. and if possible, remove some of the storm drains.
<i>Siler Rd./ Los Pandos Rd.</i>	Re-time crosswalk signal at Paseo del Pueblo and Los Pandos intersection to increase crossing time and accommodate those with mobility challenges.
<i>Siler Rd./ Los Pandos Rd.</i>	Signage on Los Pandos to warn of upcoming blind curve and to share the road with bicyclists.

CRASHES, CLOSE CALLS & COMMON ROUTES

This map was developed by community members at the Downtown Taos: Moving Forward meetings. The yellow dots represent locations where people have almost been in a crash (i.e., close-call) and the red dots represent where people have been in a crash. The purple lines identify common routes traveled on bike and the green lines identify common routes traveled on foot.

As shown, there is a high concentration of close-calls and crashes around the intersection of Camino de la Placita & Don Fernando and the intersection of Paseo del Pueblo Sur & Albright.

Close-calls are not usually reflected in crash data collected by Towns/Cities or Departments of Transportations (DOTs) so it was important to collect this data to better understand why the community might perceive certain intersections as unsafe despite what the official crash data indicates.

The information on this map should be taken into account when addressing future roadway, bicycle, or infrastructure improvements to increase safety.



KEY RESOURCES

The following state and national guidelines are recommended to be followed for implementation of design details related to pedestrian spot-improvements:

- **PROWAG**
Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines, 2011 proposed guidelines. <https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/streets-sidewalks/public-rights-of-way/background/access-advisory-committee-final-report/part-ii-executive-summary-of-recommended-standards>
- **ADAAG**
Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines, 2010 adopted standards. <https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/buildings-and-sites/about-the-ada-standards/ada-standards/chapter-4-accessible-routes>
- **AASHTO**
The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, Guide for the Planning, Design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities, 2004, 1st Edition. <https://store.transportation.org/Item/CollectionDetail?ID=131>
- **MUTCD**
The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, 2009. https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2009r1r2/pdf_index.htm
- **NMDOT**
New Mexico Department of Transportation Design Manual, Chapter 1200: Pedestrian Facilities, 2016. http://dot.state.nm.us/content/dam/nmdot/Infrastructure/DesignManual/1200_PedestrianFacilities.pdf



A photograph of three people riding bicycles on a cobblestone alleyway in front of a building with a sign that says "EXPLORE PLAY". The building has a sign that says "EXPLORE PLAY" in colorful letters. The scene is bright and sunny, with a clear blue sky and some trees in the background. The cobblestone path is made of reddish-brown stones. The people are a woman in a blue shirt and glasses, a woman in a grey jacket and sunglasses, and a young girl in a brown jacket. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera.

EXPAND AND ENHANCE THE DOWNTOWN ALLEY NETWORK

Alleys are an important component of a well-connected downtown transportation system. Downtown Taos has a terrific network of alleys that not only provide important pedestrian connections and access to local businesses, but are an essential piece of the history and authenticity of the downtown. The potential to expand and enhance the existing alley network is an important opportunity. It receives strong community support, offers many benefits and supports several downtown goals. Additionally, because there are several alley segments—each with their own potential—the alley strategy can be phased into smaller-scale projects and completed as resources allow.

BENEFITS

Public Space. Create more places for people to socialize, wander and gather.

Pedestrian Connections. Improve connectivity and pedestrian access in the downtown.

Local Business. Support local businesses by expanding access and creating opportunities for use of outdoor space (e.g. dining or display space within the alley).

Sense of Place. Sustain our authenticity, historic character and sense of place.

MEETING DOWNTOWN GOALS

- ✓ A walkable and bikeable downtown.
- ✓ Places for people.
- ✓ A healthy economy with thriving local businesses.
- ✓ A real place where locals want to be.

THE STRATEGY

Currently, the alleyways to the North of the Taos Plaza—Scheurich Lane, Teresina Lane and John Dunn Way—are the most complete and well-designed within the downtown. This particular network supports a vibrant cluster of local shops and restaurants, essentially creating a small pedestrian mall as well as a useful connection from the Taos Plaza north to Bent Street. These segments work because they have been significantly improved with paving, signage and other enhancements.

Beyond these, several other alleys are less used and have not been improved. For the most part, all of these offer some level of opportunity, but they vary in terms of needs, existing conditions and the types of opportunities they present. Additionally, we recommend a phased approach that prioritizes improvements for key segments based on the specific needs and opportunities of those segments before moving on to others. This will also allow Town, Main Street, local businesses and other partners to pilot improvements in one or two alleys before moving on to others. Consistent coordination and collaboration with adjacent property and business owners throughout the process will be critical to success.

KEY STEPS

- ✓ Reach out to property and business owners to let them know about interest in enhancing the alley network and encourage participation in relevant action steps.
- ✓ Conduct a simple assessment of the opportunities and challenges of all alley segments. This should outline existing conditions, obvious needs, and specific considerations related to the design or function of the alleyway.
- ✓ Discuss results with partners and adjacent property / business owners.
- ✓ Based on the assessment and discussions, identify the highest priority alleys.
- ✓ Conduct a more detailed analysis of the specific needs and opportunities of priority segments.
- ✓ Complete a design strategy and implementation plan for each.
- ✓ Allocate resources and initiate an initial phase of improvements based on the steps above.



LEGEND

-  IMPROVED ALLEY NETWORK
NOTE: Some "alleys" would be pedestrian only, some would be pedestrian and bike only, and some would be "shared streets" with auto access and parking as well as pedestrian travel. Further study needed to identify particular section and design.
-  SIDEWALKS TO COMPLETE NETWORK
NOTE: These sidewalks provide important connections to complete the alley network and connect people to community assets and parking to support a "park once" downtown strategy.
-  PUBLIC PARKING
NOTE: To support a "park once" downtown strategy, multiple downtown parking lots (and proposed structure) should be scattered throughout downtown. Signage to clearly direct users to parking is extremely important.
-  COMMUNITY ASSETS
NOTE: These indicate large parks, plazas and open space. Smaller plazas and parks are not noted.

ACTION PLAN

The following table outlines specific actions to be taken within the near-term.

Action Item	Lead	Timeline
Identify and engage business / property owners.	Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program	Winter 2019
Work with Main Street to develop a simple tool to assess different segments within the alley network.	Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program	Winter 2019
Identify priorities, including an alley segment to serve as a first project.	Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program	Spring 2019
Create a design / activation strategy for that segment in coordination with Main St., as well as adjacent / nearby properties.	Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program	Spring 2019
Complete enhancements.	Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program	2019

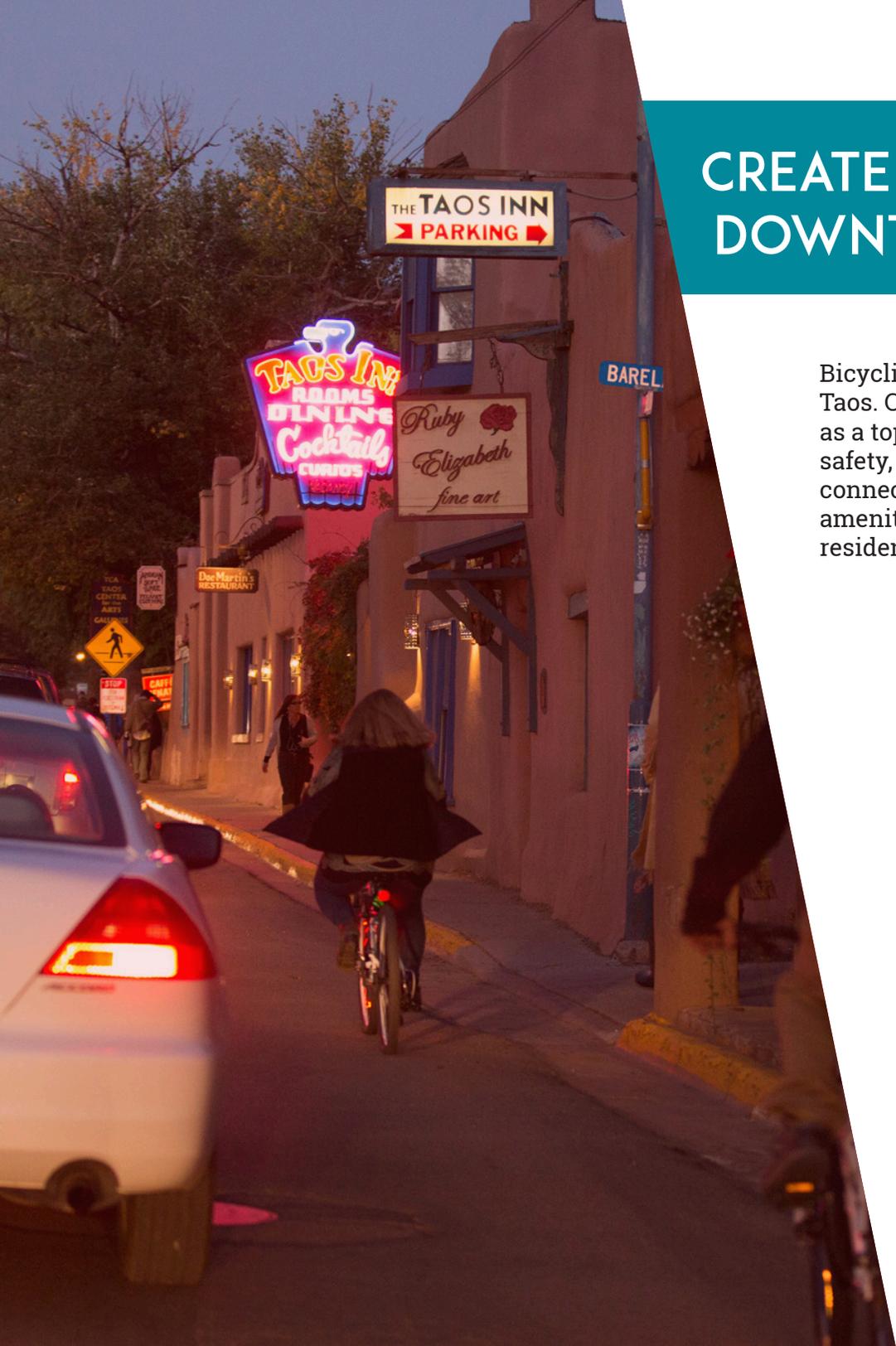


Renderings demonstrate what alleyway enhancements might look like on Barela Lane (*top*), Des Georges Place (*middle*), and LaFonda Alley (*bottom*).

KEY RESOURCES

- ***Why Alleys Deserve More Attention***, Joann Greco, Atlantic Cities, 2013.
<http://m.theatlanticcities.com/design/2012/02/why-alleys-deserve-yourattention/1249/>
- ***Alley Network Project: Activate Your Alley***
<http://allianceforpioneersquare.org/what-we-do/public-realm/alley-activation/activate-your-alley/>
- ***Activating Austin's Downtown Alleys as Public Spaces***, 2013.
www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=198575
- ***New Life for Downtown Alleys: Creating an Open Space Network in Downtown Austin, Texas***, Sara M. Hammerschmidt, 2009.
<https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/22213/Hammerschmidt-2009.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>
- ***Seattle Integrated Alley Handbook Activating Alleys for a Lively City***, Mary Fialko and Jennifer Hampton, 2001.
https://nacto.org/docs/usdg/activating_alleys_for_a_lively_city_fialko.pdf
- ***City of Fort Collins Downtown Alley Enhancement Project and Alleys Master Plan***, 2008.
<http://www.downtownfortcollins.org/alleys.html>





CREATE A SAFE AND CONNECTED DOWNTOWN BIKE NETWORK

Bicycling is an integral part of the vision for strengthening Downtown Taos. Creating a network of interconnected bicycle routes was identified as a top priority by the community. Critical needs to be addressed include safety, ease of access, and connectivity between facilities. Successfully connecting downtown to the larger community will create a public amenity that offers many benefits to downtown businesses and Taos residents.

BENEFITS

Bicycle Connections. Improve connectivity and bicycle access into and through the downtown.

Travel Alternatives. Make bicycling a safe and convenient way to travel in Taos. Encourage short trips to be made on bike instead of by car. Reduce parking demand downtown.

Healthy Community. Increase options for active living, reduce environmental impacts of driving, and enhance community access to open spaces along trail corridors.

Sense of Place. Allow Taoseños to access the Historic Core without a car and enjoy their community at a more intimate scale and pace.

MEETING DOWNTOWN GOALS

- ✓ A walkable and bikeable downtown.
- ✓ Places for people.
- ✓ A real place where locals want to be.

THE STRATEGY

Creating a functional bicycle network that links Downtown Taos to the larger community will require a strategic approach to eliminate system gaps and prioritize specific improvements. Currently, bicycle lanes are found along Camino de la Placita, Salazar Road, Paseo del Pueblo Sur, and Paseo del Canon in the outlying areas of Taos. Bike lanes are typically striped on wide, busy streets with heavier traffic volumes moving at higher speeds—conditions where separating bicycles from motor vehicle traffic creates a safer travel environment.

However, there currently are no bike lanes in the core of town, where narrow streets and organic development patterns define Taos' unique sense of place. Striped bicycle lanes will be added to Paseo del Pueblo Norte as part of the upcoming NMDOT resurfacing of NM 68/US 64. Other streets in the proposed bike network will retain their local feel and be designated as bicycle routes—an appropriate accommodation on narrow streets with low traffic volumes, where bicycles and motor vehicles travel at similar speeds and can safely share a lane.

The recommended downtown bicycle network, composed primarily of bike lanes and bike routes, is depicted graphically on page “<” on page 63. As outlined in the **“Action Plan” on page 62**, it is important to note that specific attention to implementation details will be needed to successfully complete the network. Intersection design, seamless connections between corridors, small segments of trail construction, and enhanced identification of all bicycle facilities will make the proposed network function as a system.



KEY GUIDANCE

- ✓ **Start simple.** Focus on street corridors where bicycles may be accommodated by new paint and safety improvements. Much of the Taos bicycle network can be achieved cost-effectively by lane restriping, signage additions, and small spot improvements.
- ✓ **Follow guidance for best practices.** Follow established guidance (AASHTO, MUTCD, NACTO, NMDOT) for facility design, signing and pavement markings.
- ✓ **Leverage projects.** Review existing plans, proposals, and upcoming projects (Town street improvements, NMDOT transportation projects, private development proposals) to take advantage of roadway projects that overlap with the recommended downtown bicycle network. Adjust as necessary to allow for implementation of the bicycle network, and strive for consistent design.
- ✓ **Prioritize safety.** Don't build substandard facilities or stop bicycle facilities at random points. Strive for connectivity. Incorporate bicyclists' needs into intersection designs.
- ✓ **Think beyond the street system.** Begin to pursue identified trail projects within Town limits. Strive for seamless connectivity between on-street facilities and off-street trails.
- ✓ **Remember the parking.** Add bicycle parking throughout downtown to make it easier to visit downtown businesses and events on bike.
- ✓ **Recognize that bicycles are different from pedestrians.** Plan for both modes. Separate where necessary (provide alternatives to riding on sidewalks); combine on new multi-use facilities (construct trails wide enough to accommodate both user groups).
- ✓ **Try it out!** Temporary installations of bike infrastructure can be a cost-effective way to test out different types of facilities, measure success, and gauge community reaction.

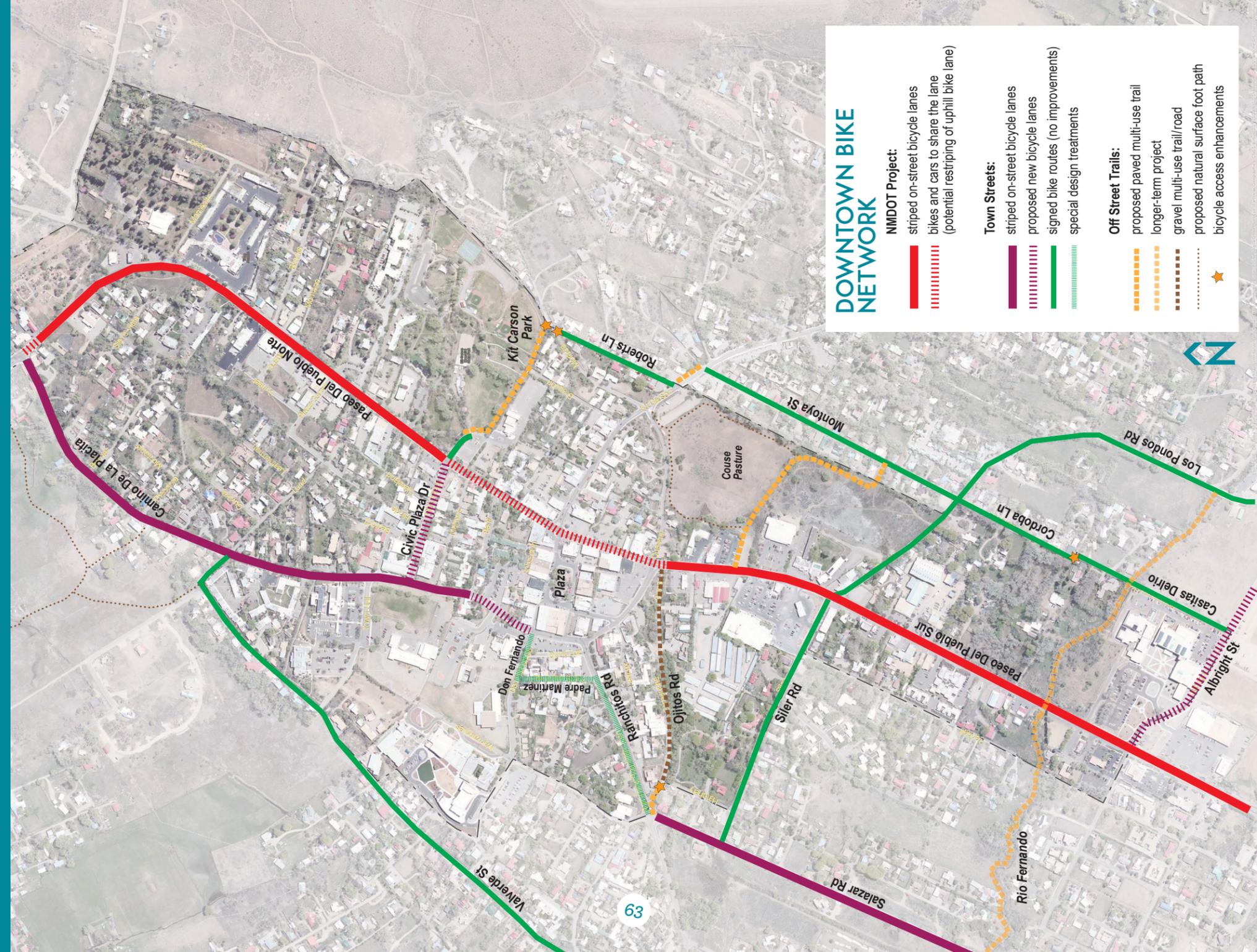
Left: Renderings demonstrate what bike lanes might look like Paseo del Pueblo Norte after NMDOT's upcoming resurfacing project.

Right: A temporary bike lane signage at the Civic Plaza Drive Street Party demonstrates bike facility improvements that can be made with paint alone.

ACTION PLAN

The following table outlines specific actions to be taken within the near-term.

Action Item	Lead	Timeline
Provide on-street bicycle lanes as part of the NM 68/US 64 resurfacing project along Paseo del Pueblo Norte/Paseo del Pueblo Sur.	NMDOT	2019
Request NMDOT make minor restriping changes to include an uphill bicycle lane, northbound on Cantu Hill.	Town of Taos, NMDOT	2018
Retrofit targeted Town street segments to provide bicycle accommodation, wayfinding and complete key missing gaps. Begin in the central area with re-striping and signing projects on Ranchitos Road, Padre Martinez Lane, Don Fernando Street, Camino de la Placita, and Civic Plaza Drive.	Town of Taos	2019-2020
Program funding for construction of safety enhancements to complete gaps in the system along the Casitas del Rio/Cordoba Lane/ Montoya Street/Roberts Lane corridor as a local street north/south alternative to traveling on Paseo del Pueblo Sur.	Town of Taos	2019-2020
Provide secure bicycle parking (designs where users can lock bike frame to rack). Disperse parking racks throughout downtown; locate conveniently to businesses; select locations that do not interfere with pedestrian travel. Encourage local artists to design unique, artistic bicycle racks for Taos.	Town of Taos, local businesses	2019-2020
Coordinate open space planning with opportunities for new trail development along Mitchell Field, Couse Pasture, Kit Carson Park and the Rio Fernando.	Town of Taos, Taos Land Trust, private property owners	ongoing
Continue progress and look for outside funding opportunities to move forward Taos projects included in the regional Enchanted Circle Trails Plan.	Taos Land Trust, Enchanted Circle Trails Association	ongoing



LONG-TERM GUIDANCE MATRIX

The following table provides long-term guidance for the development of the Downtown Bike Network.

Street Name	Facility Type	Recommendations
Camino de la Placita	On-street bicycle lanes (existing)	Quick Wins: Add bike and arrow pavement stencil after each intersection; Continue striping of 5' minimum on-street bike lanes from Bent Street to Don Fernando. Mid- to Long-Term Projects: Long-term, widen Camino de la Placita south of Don Fernando to Paseo del Pueblo Sur to provide continuous sidewalks and on-street bike lanes. Key Safety Notes: Eliminate right turn lanes into parking lot and onto Don Fernando St; Dash bike lane striping to indicate merge area in advance of Loretto/parking lot entrance.
Don Fernando Street	Special design treatment	Quick Wins: Restripe lane configuration at intersection to add pocket bike lanes. Key Safety Notes: Locate bike lanes in proper roadway position to minimize conflicts with turning vehicular traffic.
Padre Martinez Lane	Special design treatment	Quick Wins: Sign one-way alley as two-way bike traffic permitted.
Ranchitos Road	Special design treatment	Quick Wins: Restripe to provide a 5' minimum bike lane in uphill direction and shared lane for downhill travel, to make connection between Padre Martinez Lane and Salazar Road. Key Safety Notes: Dash bike lane striping to indicate merge area in advance of Padre Martinez.
Salazar Road	"On-street bicycle lanes (existing)"	Quick Wins: Add bike and arrow pavement stencil after each intersection; Use 6" white stripe for more defined separation of bike lane from traffic lane.
Paseo del Pueblo Norte/ Paseo del Pueblo Sur	On-street bicycle lanes	Quick Wins: NMDOT will be providing bicycle lanes throughout upcoming project, with the exception of the narrow cross-section between Civic Plaza Drive and Quesnel/Camino de la Placita; Consider providing a 5' minimum bike lane in uphill direction and shared lane for downhill travel through this segment.
Ojitos Road	Gravel multi-use trail/road	Quick Wins: Provide bike/ped-only access and a short segment of paved trail between Ojitos Road/Hatchery Road and Ranchitos Road/Salazar Road.

LONG-TERM GUIDANCE MATRIX

Street Name	Facility Type	Recommendations
Civic Plaza Drive	Bicycle lanes and traffic calming	Quick Wins: Stripe on-street bicycle lanes with pavement stencils and signing to create a highly visible east/west connection through the downtown core. Mid- to Long-Term Projects: Long-term, potentially add traffic calming measures to create a shared street, keeping through bicycle travel.
Roberts Ln./ Montoya St./ Cordoba Ln./ Casitas del Rio	Bike route with spot improvements	Mid- to Long-Term Projects: Formalize linkage between Roberts Lane and Kit Carson Park trail, and linkage between Cordoba Lane and Casitas del Rio; Provide 1 block of widened sidewalk/sidepath linkage on north side of Kit Carson Street; Add signage; Repave Cordoba Lane segment for smoother riding surface. Key Safety Notes: Stripe crosswalks on all intersecting streets; Consider use of green crossing markings for greater bicycle route visibility.
Siler Rd./Los Pundos Rd./ Gusdorf Rd.	Bike route	Quick Wins: Add directional signage to link with outlying Enchanted Circle bike routes.
Albright Street	On-street bicycle lanes	Quick Wins: Add striped on-street bicycle lanes with pavement stencils and signing to link Paseo del Pueblo Sur to Gusdorf Road/Taos High School.
Valverde Street	Bike route	Quick Wins: Add directional signage to link with outlying Enchanted Circle bike routes.
Mitchell Field trails	Natural surface footpath system	Mid- to Long-Term Projects: Explore opportunities for trails with Not Forgotten Outreach.
Kit Carson Park Trail	Paved multi-use trail	Mid- to Long-Term Projects: Upgrade existing park trail along southern edge of park to 10' minimum bicycle standards; Improve access to provide seamless transitions from widened trail segment to Roberts/Morada Lane and Civic Plaza Drive.
Rio Fernando Trail	Proposed paved multi-use trail	Mid- to Long-Term Projects: Explore opportunities to complete an off-street trail from Fred Baca Park to Los Pundos Road, potentially extending to Taos High School.
Couse Pasture Trail	Natural surface footpath system	Mid- to Long-Term Projects: Explore opportunities for trails along edges of Couse Pasture.

KEY RESOURCES

The following state and national design guidance publications are recommended to be followed during design and implementation of the downtown bicycle network:

- **AASHTO**
The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, 2012, 4th Edition.
https://nacto.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/AASHTO_Bicycle-Facilities-Guide_2012-toc.pdf
- **NACTO**
The National Association of City Transportation Officials, *Urban Bikeway Design Guide*, 2014, 2nd Edition.
<https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/>
- **MUTCD**
The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, 2009.
https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2009r1r2/pdf_index.htm
- **IMBA**
The International Mountain Biking Association, *Trail Solutions: IMBA's Guide to Building Sweet Singletrack*, 2004.
<https://www.imba.com/resource/trail-solutions>
- **APBP**
The Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals, *Essentials of Bike Parking: Selecting and Installing Bike Parking that Works*, 2015.
<https://www.apbp.org/page/Publications>
- **NMDOT**
New Mexico Department of Transportation Design Manual, Chapter 1200: *Bicycle Facilities*, 2016.
http://www.dot.state.nm.us/content/dam/nmdot/Infrastructure/DesignManual/1210_Bicycle_Facilities.pdf





ENABLE QUALITY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

Creating a clear, community-based vision for how Downtown Taos can develop over time was a central goal of Strong at Heart. Each of the previous strategies serve that vision, with a focus on placemaking and infrastructure investments to support the type of downtown the community hopes to see.

This strategy is about how the downtown develops over time. When it comes to future development, the Strong at Heart process revealed a desire to expand housing choices and affordability, increase and improve employment opportunities, and expand options for local businesses that meet the everyday needs of Taosños. Though there is support for these types of development, a mix of market and policy constraints make it largely infeasible. To address these realities, this strategy recommends:

- 1) Creating a policy framework that encourages quality downtown development in smart places;
- 2) Creating a Municipal Redevelopment Area to provide the financial and organizational capacity needed to encourage good projects in good places.

BENEFITS

Quality development. Encourage more efficient, sustainable and walkable patterns of development.

Downtown vitality. Support the authenticity and economic vitality of down by enabling downtown housing and local business opportunities.

Complete neighborhoods. Encourage investment and development that create complete neighborhoods with expanded housing and transportation choices—as well as employment opportunities—for Taosños.

THE TYPE OF GROWTH WE WANT

Though there are some people who are opposed to any future growth, the Strong at Heart process revealed that most of the community is not overtly opposed to any and all development. Most people recognize that Taos will continue to grow and change; it's not a question of if, but how. In that regard, the desires of the community are quite clear: Taoseños want quality development. They want it to be in good locations. They want it to fit the look and feel of the town. They want it to benefit the community.

Taoseños understand that status quo development generates sprawl, to which most people are opposed. On the other hand, there is support for infill development that expands housing choices and affordability, provides economic opportunity for locals by creating more and better employment options, and increases local shopping options.

People also care about *where* development occurs. There is longstanding support for infill and redevelopment in Taos, both as an economic strategy and an environmentally sustainable alternative to sprawl. Support for infill is reflected in local plans, including Vision 2020. Nonetheless, most infill projects within or near downtown are likely to be met with opposition by parts of the community; particularly those who live closest to a proposed project or those who are opposed to growth in general.

The form and character of development matter as well. Pushback against projects that are perceived as too dense is common. Unfortunately, these tend to focus the conversation on the wrong issues. Rather than focusing on density, a fairly arbitrary way to regulate development, we recommend focusing on the form, scale and design of development. These are the qualities that determine the look and feel of a building, its relationship to surrounding buildings and the public realm, and its fit within a neighborhood.



People care deeply about the type of growth and development that occurs in Taos. Protecting the historic nature of the core is as important to Taoseños as preventing sprawl from consuming the pristine nature surrounding town. Encouraging future development to occur in strategic locations can help to protect both.



Addressing Short-Term Rentals

Short-term rentals are a challenging and contentious issue in Taos, with many pros and cons. They allow homeowners to increase their income and offset housing costs, but they also consume a growing portion of the housing stock and drive up prices. They contribute to an increase in the tourism economy, but they also displace locals and detract from the character of neighborhoods. And at the end of the day, while an increase in long-term rental options is certainly needed in Taos, the lucrative nature of the short-term market will ensure that the pressure will likely always be there.

Some issues with short-term rentals are clear. It's clear that Taos needs more long-term rentals and affordable housing options. It's also clear that too many short-term rental units in one neighborhood can detract from the neighborhood's authenticity and character. What's trickier, however, is how to proceed with regulating them.

The Town of Taos has already made some progress working on short-term rentals, including a recent audit and implementation of a licensing and fee program. This conversation is vital for creating a thriving downtown for everyone, and it will be important to continue that work moving forward.

EXPANDING HOUSING CHOICES AND AFFORDABILITY

In Taos, interest in housing extends well beyond the goal of creating a more vibrant downtown. The need for housing choices that locals can afford emerged frequently through the Strong at Heart process. Downtowns are ideal places for housing types that create a "comfortable density." These housing types—ranging from accessory units and triplexes to townhomes and two-story mixed use—expand affordability by diversifying housing choices to meet a wider range of local needs and income levels.

Housing in the Downtown

Housing is essential to healthy and successful downtowns. Downtown residents create activity, street life and sense of place, all of which are good for downtown businesses. Additionally, more residents means more "eyes on the street"—a crucial element for making downtown safer and more welcoming for residents and visitors alike.

Demand for downtown living has increased significantly in communities throughout the nation. The growing market for downtown housing relates to growing demand for walkable neighborhoods that offer convenient access to daily needs and a strong sense of place. These market trends align well with the infill housing and mixed-use development people would like to see more of in Downtown Taos.

A Downtown for Us

Downtown housing also supports the goal of creating a downtown that has greater draw to locals. Having more Taoseños living downtown is one of the best ways to create a downtown that feels more locally-oriented, not only by having more residents there, but also by shifting the retail market. If a greater number of residents lived downtown, the retail market would begin to respond with more locally-oriented businesses.

Downtown Taos, including the Historic Core as well as surrounding neighborhoods, is an ideal place to expand housing choices while creating a more vibrant, locally-oriented downtown.

ENABLE AND ENCOURAGE MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

Opposition to denser housing presents a challenge in downtowns, where attached, multifamily and mixed-use housing is key to creating a vibrant and walkable downtown. It's a challenge for affordability as well: denser housing types add more units to the market, putting downward pressure on pricing, and offer smaller units that are more affordable by virtue of their modest size.

Missing Middle describes a variety of housing types that create a gentle density, expanding housing supply and diversity while fitting comfortably within a traditional, single family neighborhood. In fact, many Missing Middle projects involve splitting up existing single family homes in multiple units, which adds to the housing supply while maintaining existing building form. As shown in the graphic on the right, Missing Middle includes a wide range of housing types, including accessory dwelling units, duplexes, bungalow courts, townhouses, and courtyard apartments, and two-to-three story mixed-use buildings.

Though Missing Middle housing units typically range from studios to three-bedrooms, they are smaller than conventional single-family housing. Smaller unit sizes make Missing Middle more affordable by design, adding diversity in price point. Missing Middle housing can be made from wood-frame construction because they are low-rise, meaning construction costs are lower than larger buildings, avoiding costs such as concrete podiums or elevators. Additionally, many Missing Middle projects are rehabs or splits of existing structures, which typically reduces building costs. And because multiple units share a lot, land costs for each unit are lower as well.



Missing Middle housing's smaller-scale and relatively simple construction make them easier to finance and build, putting these projects within the reach of a larger pool of developers, including local builders and investors. All of this means a larger number of "mom and pop" local developers can contribute to the supply of affordable housing through a larger number of small-scale projects throughout the community.

While Missing Middle provides an ideal focus for housing in Downtown Taos, steps are needed to make it possible. These include:

- ✓ ensuring multifamily / attached housing is an allowed use (use by right) in areas where Missing Middle is desired;
- ✓ addressing code barriers, including standards that limit lot coverage, setbacks, and specific density restrictions (see "Recommendations for Changes to Key Zoning District" section on pg 80 for details);
- ✓ reducing or eliminating off-street parking requirements of small-scale downtown infill projects;
- ✓ incentivize affordability by tiering fees to encourage infill and smaller lot and unit sizes;
- ✓ consider offering fee waivers or other incentives for applying deed restrictions to Missing Middle units;
- ✓ reducing fees and prohibitions on Accessory Units in appropriate zones and neighborhoods.

Images: Top graphic, an entire range Missing Middle housing types can be designed to fit into traditional single-family neighborhoods. Image courtesy of Opticos Design. Bottom images, Missing Middle housing types already exist in Taos. Making it easier to expand these housing types can greatly expand affordability in Taos without changing existing neighborhood character.

WHY IT'S HARD TO GET THE DEVELOPMENT YOU WANT IN THE PLACES YOU WANT IT

In general, development that results in walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods is more difficult to build than conventional, auto-oriented subdivisions and commercial strips. This is especially true in the case of infill and redevelopment, especially when compared to the “blank slate” offered by greenfield development. From site constraints to neighborhood opposition, infill and redevelopment bring complexities and costs that often make projects difficult to pencil out, and that’s before accounting for the barriers to the types of development (mixed-use, increased densities) that fit in downtowns and other “core” redevelopment areas.

Creating Resources and Capacity to Support Redevelopment

A variety of tools are available to help communities enable the revitalization of areas that have struggled to attract the types of investment the community is looking for. Financial tools, such as tax increment financing, create revenue needed for a community to engage in redevelopment. Those funds can be particularly important for engaging in partnerships with private sector developers on projects that meet certain community needs or goals. Getting good projects to happen often requires organizational capacity—people power—as well. The following tools should be used or explored for creating the capacity needed to get good development in the right places.



These images were used in a building-type preference exercise during the Downtown Taos Moving Forward meetings. Getting the types of development that the community wants will take a proactive dedication of organizational and monetary resources.



Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a public financing tool that is commonly used by a municipality or other public agency to encourage redevelopment and revitalization of certain areas. TIF creates funding that can be used to incent or subsidize new investment by diverting future property tax revenue from a defined area – typically called a district – to be used for public expenditures in that area with the goal of spurring new investment. It is based on the idea that these public sector investments will catalyze private investment that raises property values and those increased values will result in higher property tax revenue. It is that future increase in revenue that TIF is built around. This allows local agencies to create a revenue stream for community improvements without raising taxes.

Establish Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas

The NM Metropolitan Redevelopment Code is a State Statute that empowers municipalities to rehabilitate and redevelop downtown areas that are deteriorated, blighted or underutilized in order to stimulate economic development and community well-being by establishing it as a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA). An MRA is an area that exhibits existing economic and physical conditions such as:

- high unemployment/low income levels
- low business activity
- vacant/underutilized properties
- deteriorating buildings
- unsafe conditions
- zoning conformance issues

To initiate the process, the Town of Taos would approve a Designation Report that formally designates the Area as appropriate for a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan. The Plan can identify specific redevelopment projects that, when implemented, will address issues identified in the Designation Report and stimulate economic activity. This includes a wide range of activities, including land and building acquisition, preparing sites for redevelopment, reforming zoning regulations, or planning for specific projects – housing, transportation improvements or community facilities.

Establishing a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area and Plan provides tools and resources that facilitate quality redevelopment of an area in ways that are in line with the community’s wishes. Most importantly, it creates the potential to establish financing tools – including Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and bonding capacity – that can be used to shape the way the area redevelops and positions the community to engage in public/private partnerships to complete key projects.

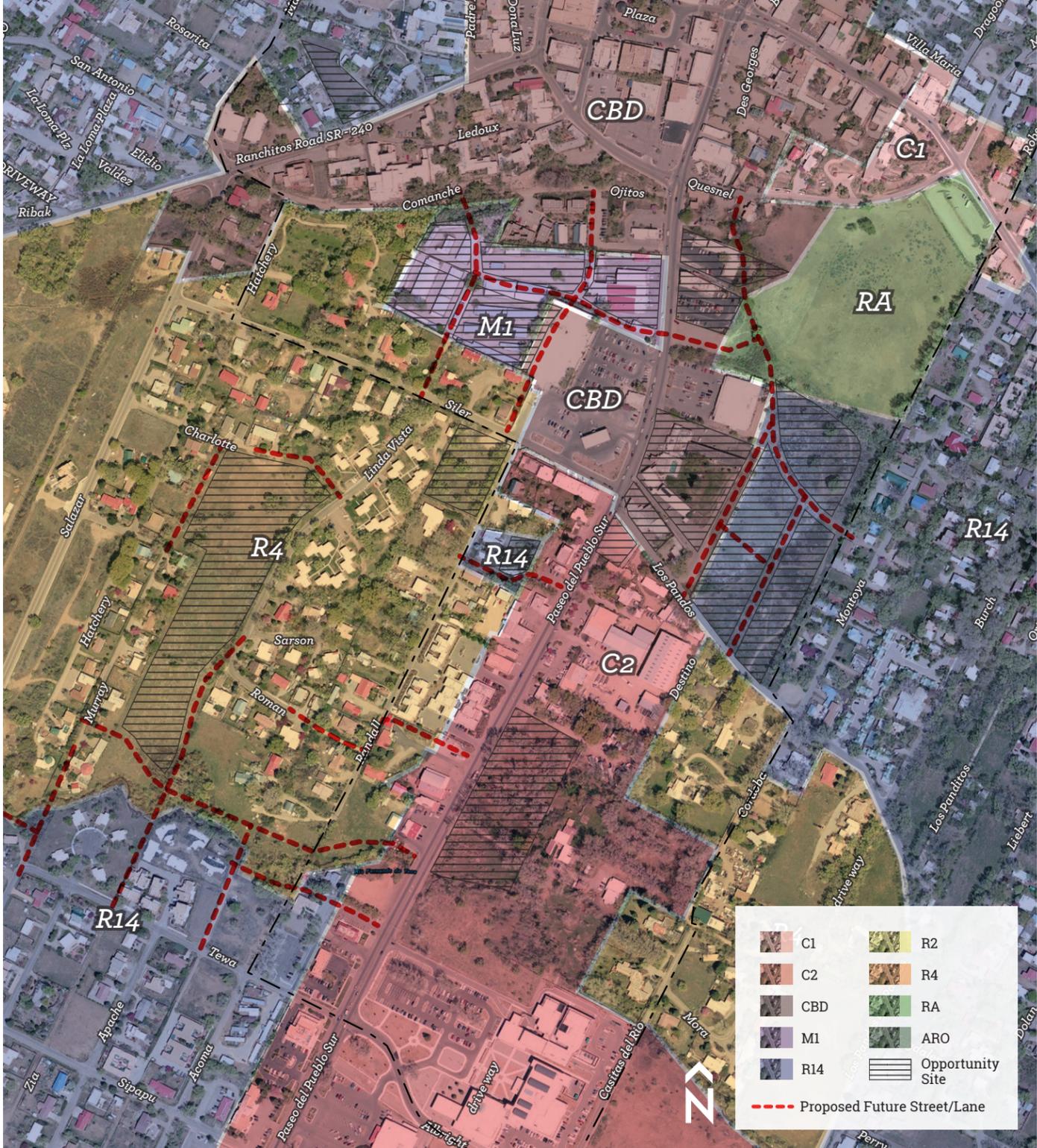
ENABLE REVITALIZATION ALONG PASEO DEL PUEBLO SUR

For some time, the community has envisioned this area, especially the area from Cantu Hill to Siler and Los Pandos, as transitioning into a walkable mixed-use neighborhood that better connects to the downtown core. There is also interest in seeing revitalization of some properties along the long block section from Siler and Los Pandos to Tewa and Albright.

While these concepts would be good for the downtown and local economy, they are highly unlikely without proactively working to improve street connectivity and address barriers in local policies that restrict the feasibility of the types of development envisioned for the area.

Currently, the Paseo del Pueblo Sur is characterized by highway strip-commercial development. Most buildings are detached, set back from the street, and wrapped by surface parking on the front or sides. Outside of the highway, the Paseo del Pueblo Sur area is home to some of the more established and affordable residential neighborhoods in Downtown Taos, though most of these neighborhoods are not well-connected to the highway or the Historic Core.

The upcoming New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) highway reconstruction will have a transformative effect on this area, but it will not result in the type of development the community has envisioned on its own. To be leveraged correctly, the NMDOT investments need to be coupled with policy reforms and corresponding investment in street connections that provide the armature for walkable, mixed-use development.



Look for opportunities to break up long blocks and create new connections.

A well-connected street network is critical to a walkable, mixed-use environment, providing connections and accessibility as well as the armature for quality development. Paseo del Sur's long blocks limit connectivity and development potential, essentially "walling-in" properties along the corridor.

The best way to address this is to create new street connections that help break-up the long blocks. For example, a new connection between Paseo del Pueblo Sur and Randall Ln would improve connectivity and access, while also enabling infill along newly created street frontages. There are few opportunities for this, particularly on the west side of the corridor, due to established neighborhoods and homes. A similar approach is to create internal streets or alleyways within the current block structure, likely as part of a specific development proposal. We also recommend assessing connectivity standards for new development, which can be tailored to ensure that connectivity is designed into new projects. Recommended future connections can be seen as dashed red lines in the map to the left.

Revise zoning to allow desired development types.

Provisions within existing zoning, a mix of CBD, M1, and C2 and some R14, encourage suburban style development, making it difficult to achieve development that will allow the area to incrementally transition into a walkable, mixed-use neighborhood. Furthermore, while there is interest in enabling residential development in this area, it is prohibited in M1, requires a conditional use permit in C2, and is limited by density and dimensional standards within CBD. Though R14 is intended to allow attached downtown housing, the combination standards related to density, setbacks and parking make it difficult to build anything beyond townhomes, duplexes or single family residences.

In the near-term, we recommend making adjustments to existing code provisions to allow walkable, mixed-use development. Longer term, a more significant overhaul of the code, in coordination with a broader Comprehensive Plan update, can provide a clear policy framework to guide future growth and investment.

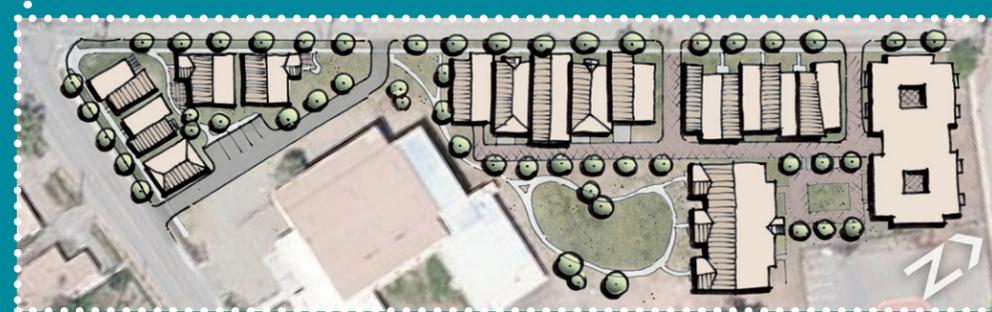
Strategically Position Key Sites

There are several key moves that could be made in the long-term in order to position the upper areas of Paseo del Sur to transition into a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use neighborhood. For example, should Smiths decide to relocate from their current location, the Town could use incentives or structure a partnership to help move the store to the east side of Paseo del Pueblo Sur—ensuring that this major community asset remains in the downtown. This move should also be met with strategic infrastructure investments in the areas immediately adjacent to the grocer, priming the area for a more walkable and mixed-use growth pattern.

ENABLE COMMUNITY ORIENTED INVESTMENT IN THE PLACITAS AREA

West of the Historic Core is an area consisting primarily of large civic institutions, including Taos Town Hall, the Enos Garcia Elementary School, Taos Municipal Schools Administration, Taos Public Library, and Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church. These institutions are critical to the community and create an important base of employment that supports the vitality of the downtown. However, on the whole, this area is underdeveloped, resulting in a development pattern more characteristic of an auto-oriented suburban complex than a walkable downtown. At best, this represents a missed opportunity to expand the vitality of downtown and address community needs. At worst, these current conditions are a detriment, limiting walkability and vibrancy, and misallocating valuable land that the could be used for infill as the community grows.

Fortunately, the area has relatively few barriers to infill compared to other parts of downtown: there are large parcels with street frontage, and most of the land is owned by public or civic institutions that are interested in the well-being of the community.



This image offers a conceptual example of what is possible by reallocating some of the areas that are currently dedicated to surface parking (or not being used at all) to a community need like Missing Middle housing.

Turning parking into places.

Currently, most of this area is dedicated to surface parking, which is largely responsible for defining its character and development pattern. Though there may be select times throughout the year when parking demand is high, this amount of surface parking is more than is needed for current uses. By crafting agreements that allow for coordinated and shared use of existing parking, a tremendous amount of space can be freed up for infill housing or other uses.

Strategically, the newly created Manzanaras St. creates an ideal street for downtown housing within a short walk of the Historic Core.

Strategic Direction

At least two key strategies are needed to realize the potential for downtown housing or social-impact projects in this area. One is a parking management strategy focused on creating shared parking arrangements among existing property owners. This step will free up areas for strategic infill projects.

Addressing zoning barriers is a second step. Currently, the area is zoned as C1, which is intended to allow “neighborhood commercial,” but results in suburban style development. Residential development requires a conditional use permit, which makes small-scale “Missing Middle” infill projects very unlikely. More significantly, the parking requirements for C1 (which are the same as those for C2) are remarkably high.

At the most basic level, following the general zoning recommendations provided in this chapter for the C2 zone is a good first step. A bigger step would be for the institutional property owners who occupy this area to come together to discuss a plan for how they can jointly leverage their assets to create a more complete neighborhood that can compliment and support the downtown, without impairing their own success. Then, the underlying zoning can be amended to enable that vision.

Action Steps

- ✓ Convene property owners to explore potential for a coordinated parking strategy.
- ✓ Explore interest in civic-minded development projects that support the missions of constituencies or institutional property owners as well as Strong at Heart goals (e.g. affordable teacher housing).
- ✓ Analyze areas that are best suited for strategic infill.

An opportunity for downtown housing & social impact.

This area, because of its proximity to the Plaza and Historic Core, is important to the long-term success of the downtown. Though the existing uses are important, this area can and should do more to compliment the downtown. It is particularly well suited for expanding downtown housing.

Adding to this potential, the property owners in this area—the Town, Schools, Catholic Church, Library—are public or quasi-public entities that exist to serve the community. Since they have the community’s best interest in mind, these entities are in an ideal position to help drive investment that aims to address specific community needs and have a positive social impact. This might include teacher housing, live-work units designed to offer housing and employment opportunities to parishioners or simply an affordable housing project for low-income residents. The community-oriented landowners in this area are in a unique position to partner with developers on projects that address these or other community needs.

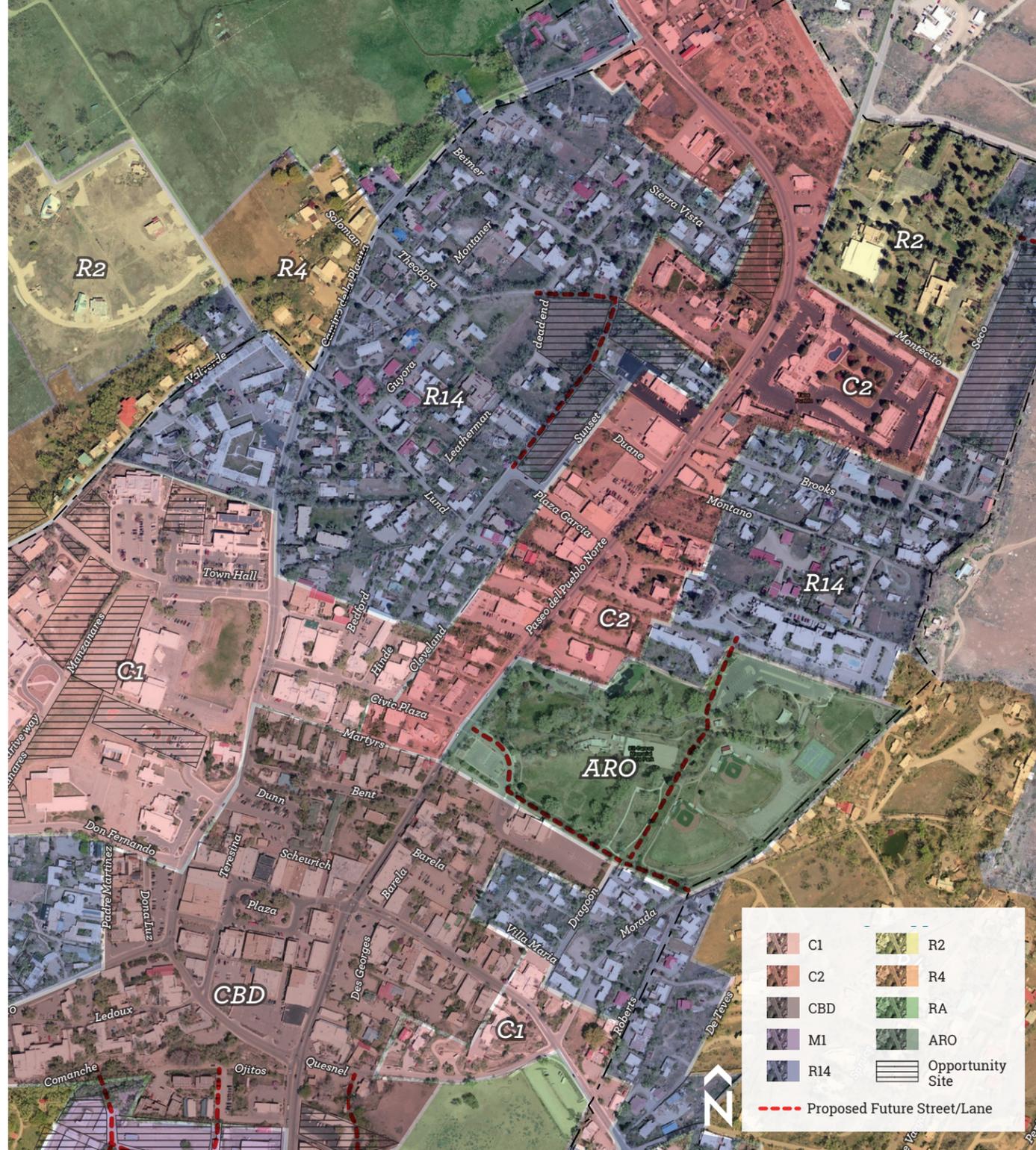
EXPAND HOUSING CHOICES & AFFORDABILITY IN THE HISTORIC CORE

The Historic Core is what many people think of when they think of Downtown Taos. It has a tightly knit street pattern with a mix of narrow streets and meandering alleys that help frame historic buildings and create the areas unique public realm. It consists of one to two story buildings, mostly attached and fronting the street edge. Though primarily retail, the core contains a mix of uses. However, it has very few vertical mixed use buildings (residential over retail). There is a significant supply of surface parking, including some on-street parking as well as various off-street parking lots.

While more built out than other neighborhoods in the downtown, there are some areas within the core that are well poised for infill or redevelopment. With an abundance of downtown retail and a lack of downtown residential, housing—either on its own or as part of a vertical mixed-use project—is a good fit for the few sites that remain.

The Historic Core is currently zoned CBD. While this is the most permissive zoning district in the downtown, constraints on building height and density create significant impediments to downtown development. While 29 units per acre seems like very high density, it would allow only 2 units on a typical 4,500 square foot lot. Increasing both density allowances and the height limit by 9' would make a significant difference in expanding downtown housing and affordability.

Some of the most important sites within the downtown Historic Core are publicly owned. These properties present critical opportunities for public-private partnerships (P3) on projects that advance specific community goals but would not otherwise be feasible. However, it is important for the Town—or another public entity—to determine what level of risk they are willing to take before entering into a P3 on a particular site or project.



ENABLE INFILL IN PASEO DEL NORTE

The Paseo del Norte Neighborhood includes a mix of strip commercial along the highway 64 corridor entering into downtown, with a mix of adjacent residential, lodging and office uses. The Paseo del Norte neighborhood likely contains the greatest variety of uses in the area. The existing zoning is C-2 (General Commercial) along the highway corridor and R-14 (Multifamily Residential) and R-4 (Single Family) in the adjacent neighborhoods. Though a wide range of uses but the standards are low density and suburban, resulting in single-use, single-story, auto-oriented building styles. Zoning should be amended if a mixed-use environment or additional residential development are desired. As discussed for other neighborhoods, a near-term solution is to make small but important revisions to the code. Longer-term, a more significant rework, based on an updated Comprehensive Plan, should be completed.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGES TO KEY ZONING DISTRICTS

There are provisions within existing zoning that are clearly intended to make it possible to build walkable, mixed-use development. However, the code also contains small but important barriers that get in the way, effectively undoing the broader intent of the standards for different zone districts.

For example, while bringing more housing downtown is a goal—both to expand affordability and also boost vitality—multifamily residential (downtown housing) is effectively infeasible in all existing districts within the downtown area. In some cases, residential is not actually permitted (M1) or is conditional (C1, C2) and in others, the unintended consequences of other provisions—such as parking or height requirements—make projects infeasible.

The findings and recommendations outlined in the following pages provide guidance for code changes that would allow for development that is more in line with the community's values and vision. While not everyone in the community will agree with some of the finer details recommended in this section—such as increasing height allowances in some areas—these recommendations are designed to result in the types of development that were identified as appropriate or beneficial by the community.

It is also important to note the recommended code changes in this section are meant to act as guiding recommendations—not proposals. While the Town should consider these recommendations in the future—either through a code audit or comprehensive planning process—any formal adoption of this Downtown Strategy by the Town should not be misconstrued as an approval of these specific code changes.

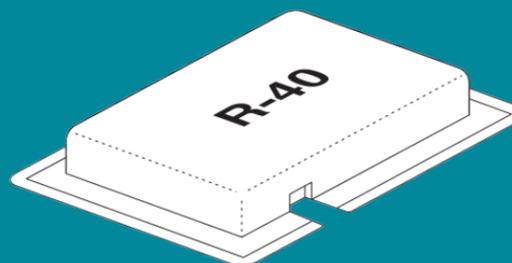
CHANGING HOW WE REGULATE DEVELOPMENT: FROM USES AND DENSITY TO FORM AND CHARACTER.

From the Form-Based Codes Institute:

“A form-based code is a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code. A form-based code is a regulation, not a mere guideline, adopted into city, town, or county law. A form-based code offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning regulation. Form-based codes address the relationship between building facades and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and types of streets and blocks. The regulations and standards in form-based codes are presented in both words and clearly drawn diagrams and other visuals. They are keyed to a regulating plan that designates the appropriate form and scale (and therefore, character) of development, rather than only distinctions in land-use types.

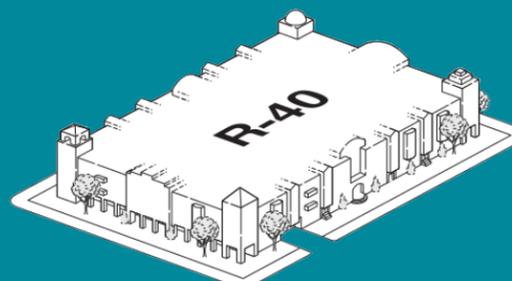
This approach contrasts with conventional zoning's focus on the micromanagement and segregation of land uses, and the control of development intensity through abstract and uncoordinated parameters (e.g., FAR, dwellings per acre, setbacks, parking ratios, traffic LOS), to the neglect of an integrated built form. Not to be confused with design guidelines or general statements of policy, form-based codes are regulatory, not advisory. They are drafted to implement a community plan. They try to achieve a community vision based on time-tested forms of urbanism. Ultimately, a form-based code is a tool; the quality of development outcomes depends on the quality and objectives of the community plan that a code implements.”

Source: Form-Based Codes Institute



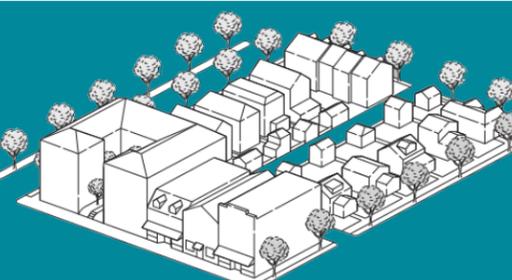
Conventional Zoning

Density use, FAR (floor area ratio), setbacks, parking requirements, maximum building heights specified



Zoning Design Guidelines

Conventional zoning requirements, plus frequency of openings and surface articulation specified



Form-Based Codes

Street and building types (or mix of types), build-to lines, number of floors, and percentage of built site frontage specified

Source: Form-Based Codes Institute

GENERAL FINDINGS:

Low Density Increases Housing Costs

Low density limits result in either an appropriately scaled building with large, expensive housing units or an absurdly small building with small, less expensive units. This trade-off results in two very different looking buildings, but the result is the same: more expensive housing. Either the units are larger and, thus, cost more to buy or rent. Or the units are small and somewhat less expensive, but because the total land cost must still be spread across only a handful of units, units cost more than they otherwise would. While this phenomenon is evident in all zones analyzed, it is especially extreme in the R-14 zone district, as discussed on page 84.

Consider Context-Sensitive Parking Standards

The commercial parking standards are very high. Restaurant parking standards are 1 space per 100 square feet, which is only appropriate if you are building a fast food restaurant, but not if you are building a downtown restaurant or even a neighborhood corner café. Once parking is accounted for on the site, there is hardly any room for a building. For walkable areas of the city, a drastic reduction in off-street parking standards is recommended. Given that many streets are narrow, some off-street parking is warranted. However, the current parking standards are suitable for a suburban area and not appropriate for the walkable areas of the city.

Large Setbacks Impact Building Form and Affordability

Setbacks in the R-14 and M zones are large and push buildings far from the street, which makes neighborhoods less walkable. In addition, large setbacks reduce the amount of lot area that can be used for building, which reduces the feasibility of development.

Allow Cost-Effective 3-story Buildings

In the CBD, C-2 and M zones, we recommend increasing the allowable height to accommodate a 3-story building. Three-story buildings can be built with wood framing and are a very cost-effective type of construction. A mixed-use building with retail on the ground floor will require extra ground-floor height. As such, we recommend a 36-foot height allowance in these commercial and mixed-use districts to accommodate the flat-roof style buildings common in Taos. Roofline elements common to the local architecture may need to be allowed to extend past the 36 feet.

CBD - CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT ZONE

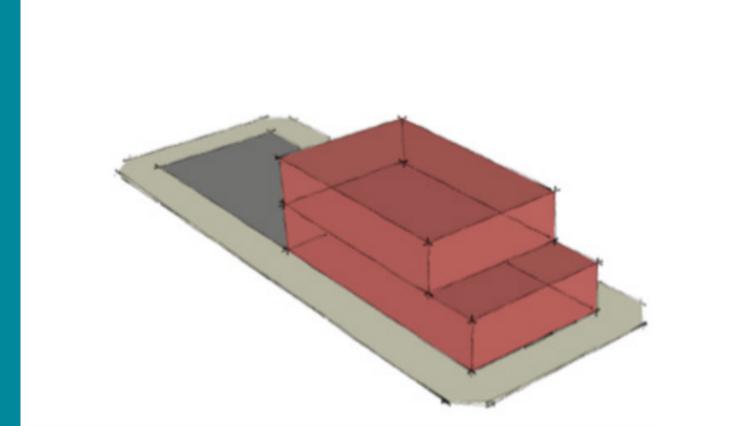
It is especially important that buildings in the Central Business District Zone (largely a similar area to the Historic Core neighborhood) fit within the context of the neighborhood—traditional downtown, multistory, mixed-used, joined buildings that cover 100% of the lot. While the CBD Zone is the most permissive in the city, very low residential density allowances and a 27-foot height restriction make this type of traditional building completely infeasible to build.

For this zone, we recommend eliminating the residential density limit and instead focus on regulating building form rather than use. In addition, we recommend allowing 9 extra feet in height to accommodate a cost-effective 3-story building form.

CBD ZONING STANDARDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Max Density (DU/Acre)	29 units per acre. This may be increased by up to 70% (49 du/acre) with a commensurate public open space dedication. <i>Recommendation:</i> 60 DU / Acre
Lot Coverage	100% building lot coverage allowed
Max Height	27 feet - PC may approve up to 40 feet <i>Recommendation:</i> 36' + Roofline elements
Min Lot Size	1500 sq ft
Min Lot Width	20 feet
Parking Ratios	None required
Front Setback	0 feet, except for single family residential & duplex
Rear Setback	0 feet, except for single family residential & duplex
Side Setbacks	0 feet, except for single family residential & duplex
Uses	Permitted Uses: Broad range of commercial; restaurants, retail, offices, hotel/lodging. Residential allowed by right. Prohibited Uses: Industrial uses, including small scale manufacturing, are prohibited. <i>Recommendation:</i> Allow light manufacturing and creative live-work uses to allow the CBD to function as more of a “maker district” that provides more opportunities to Taoseños.

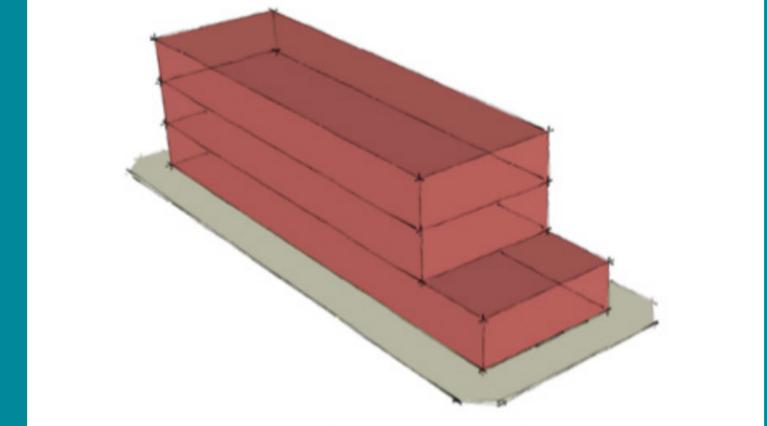
What you could build in the CBD Zone today:



Lot Size	4,500 sf
Stories	2
Building Size	4,229 sf
Building Lot Coverage	52%
Parking Lot Coverage	0%
Residential Density	2 units (29 DU/A)
Required Monthly Rent per Unit	\$1,344

If a developer wanted to build a traditional style mixed-use building on a 4,500 sf lot in the CBD, the current density limit would cap them at building only two residential units. If the developer wanted to build on the entire lot, those units would be 1,150 sf (renting for \$2,149 a month in order to pencil). If the developer wanted to create smaller, more affordable units in line with the housing market in Taos, they would be forced to make the entire building smaller in order to keep the two units small. Shrinking the building down to fit on 52% of the lot, for example, the developer could create two 600 sf units that could rent for \$1,344 a month. This unfortunately results in a building that does not fit within the historic context of the CBD, and is still considered unaffordable.

What you could build in the CBD Zone under recommended standards:



Lot Size	4,500 sf
Stories	3
Building Size	12,150 sf
Building Lot Coverage	100%
Parking Lot Coverage	0%
Residential Density	6 units (60 DU/A)
Required Monthly Rent per Unit	\$1,086

By increasing density limits and the allowed building height (by only nine feet), a developer could build a more traditional building that fits within the neighborhood context of the Historic Core *and* allows for affordability. The increased height allowance would allow for a third story to be added to the building, and increased density limit would allow for up to 6 units. This would enable a much more feasible project with more affordable units—\$1,086 for a 600 sf unit, 19% more affordable than the building allowed under current standards.

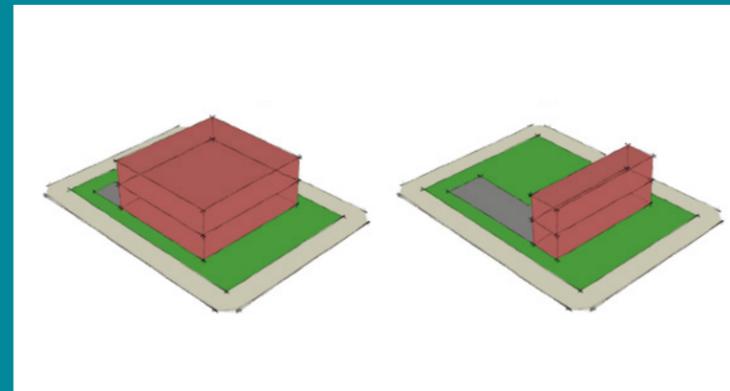
R-14 - MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL ZONE

The R-14 Zone is a multifamily zone and is intended to allow a wide range of housing types, including apartments and townhomes. However, current R-14 zoning standards make it nearly impossible to build affordable multi-family housing that fits into existing neighborhoods. If the desire is for this zone to truly be a multi-unit zone that can accommodate the construction of a small-scale apartment building or even a 4-unit house, several changes are required. We recommend increasing (or eliminating) the residential density limits, reducing the front setback to no more than 10 feet, and reducing side setbacks to 5 feet (minimum for 1-hour fire rated walls).

R-14 ZONING STANDARDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Max Density (DU/Acre)	14 units per acre. This may be exceeded for dedicated affordable housing through a Special Use permit. Recommendation: 50 DU / Acre
Lot Coverage	50% building lot coverage maximum
Max Height	27 feet
Min Lot Size	7000 sq ft
Min Lot Width	50 feet
Parking Ratios	Residential: 2 spaces per unit; except 2 bedroom apt: 1.5 sp/unit; and 1 bedroom or studio apt: 1.1 sp/unit. Commercial; office: 1 space/300 sq ft; Hotel: 1 space per room; restaurant: 1 sp/100 sq ft; retail: 1 sp/250 sq ft. Recommendation: 1 per unit on average
Front Setback	20 feet - Recommendation: 10 feet
Rear Setback	10 feet - Recommendation: 0 feet
Side Setbacks	7 feet - Recommendation: 5 feet
Uses	Permitted Uses: Mutli-family residential; townhouses, triplexes, condos, and apartments. Also allows single-family residential, duplex, retail, and offices. Conditional Uses: restaurant, and some retail categories. Prohibited Uses: Industrial Uses. Auto dominant and other commercial uses that aren't compatible with residential character.

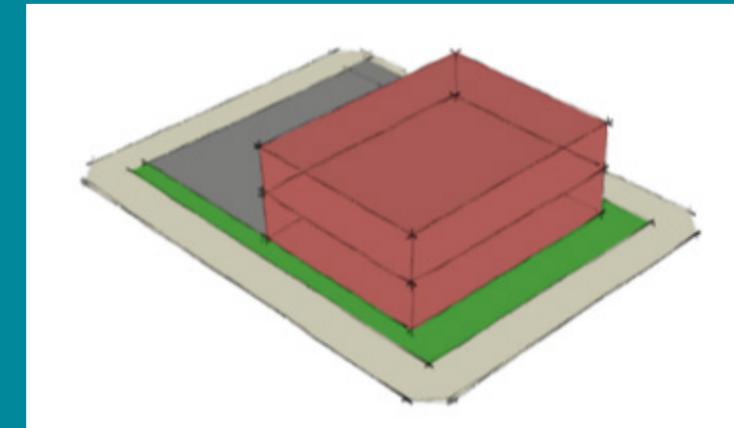
What you could build in the R-14 Zone today:



	Bldg A	Bldg B
Lot Size	7,000 sf	7,000 sf
Stories	2	2
Building Size	5,860 sf	1,588 sf
Building Lot Coverage	42%	11%
Parking Lot Coverage	14%	14%
Landscaping Coverage	44%	75%
Residential Density	2 units (14 DU/A)	2 units (14 DU/A)
Required Monthly Rent per Unit	\$3,719/mo	\$1,308/mo

Current R-14 zoning standards make it nearly impossible to build affordable multi-family housing that fits into existing neighborhoods. In particular, existing standards promote developers to build either large, luxury residential units (Building A, above), or smaller buildings that take up only a small portion of the lot, but are still unaffordable (Building B, above). By limiting the density to 14 units per acre, the building could only accommodate 2 units. This means the units are either extremely large and expensive (Building A), or the entire building would need to be shrunk down to a suburban form in order to create two smaller, more affordable units.

What you could build in the R-14 Zone under recommended standards:



Lot Size	7,000 sf
Stories	2
Building Size	5,500 sf
Building Lot Coverage	40%
Parking Lot Coverage	45%
Landscaping Coverage	15%
Residential Density	8 units (49 DU/A)
Required Monthly Rent per Unit	\$1,032/mo

By raising R-14 density limits to 50 units per acre, a developer would be allowed to build an 8-unit building on a 7,000 sf lot. This would allow for rents that are much more attainable for Taoseños—\$1,032 a month on average (21% cheaper than in building B, or 72% cheaper than building A). This would also allow for a higher impact in increasing the housing supply in the downtown, which supports affordability across the market. Decreased setbacks and parking requirements would also allow for the building to take up more of the lot, which both allows the project to more easily pencil out, and can also lend to providing more units at a more affordable rate.

C2 - GENERAL COMMERCIAL ZONE

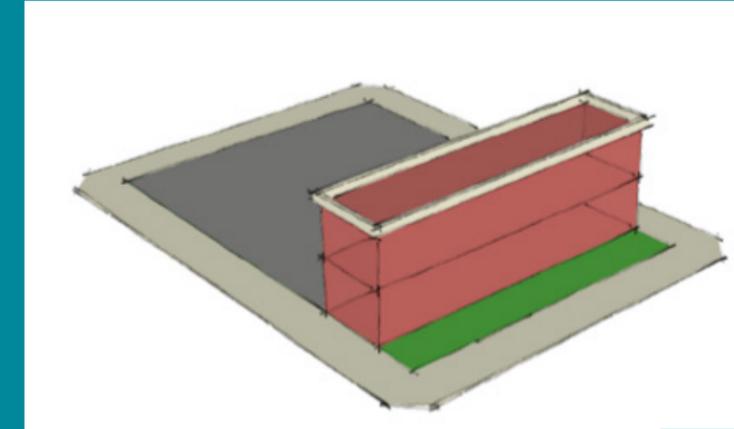
The C-2 zone covers the majority of the neighborhoods on or near Paseo del Pueblo. During the Downtown Taos, Moving Forward meetings, Taoseños strongly identified with mixed-use and small-scale apartment buildings as appropriate building types for these areas (see pages 153 through 158 in the appendix). However, these building types are virtually impossible to build in the C-2 zone due to density allowances, building heights, parking requirements, and setbacks.

While the C-2 zone allows a wide range of uses, the standards are suburban and low density, resulting in single-use, single-story, auto-oriented building styles that are inconsistent with community preference. In order to achieve the more mixed-use, walkable building forms desired by the community, it's recommended to increase residential density allowances and building heights, reducing parking standards, and eliminating front setbacks.

C-2 ZONING STANDARDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Max Density (DU/Acre)	14 units per acre (but Conditional Use Permit and PUD required) <i>Recommendation:</i> 50 DU / Acre
Lot Coverage	60% building lot coverage maximum <i>Recommendation:</i> 36' + Roofline elements
Max Height	27 feet - PC may approve up to 40 feet
Min Lot Size	7000 sq ft
Min Lot Width	70 feet
Parking Ratios	Commercial; office: 1 space/300 sq ft; Hotel: 1 space per room; restaurant: 1 sp/100 sq ft; retail: 1 sp/250 sq ft. Residential: 2 spaces per unit; except 2 bedroom apt: 1.5 sp/unit; and 1 bedroom or studio apt: 1.1 sp/unit.
Front Setback	10 ft
Rear Setback	0 ft
Side Setbacks	0 ft
Uses	Permitted Uses: Broad range of commercial - restaurants, retail, prof office, hotel/lodging. Conditional Uses: Residential is a conditional use and requires a PUD. Prohibited Uses: Industrial <i>Recommendation:</i> Allowing light manufacturing and creative live-work uses could allow the CBD to function as more of a "maker district" that provides more opportunities to Taoseños.

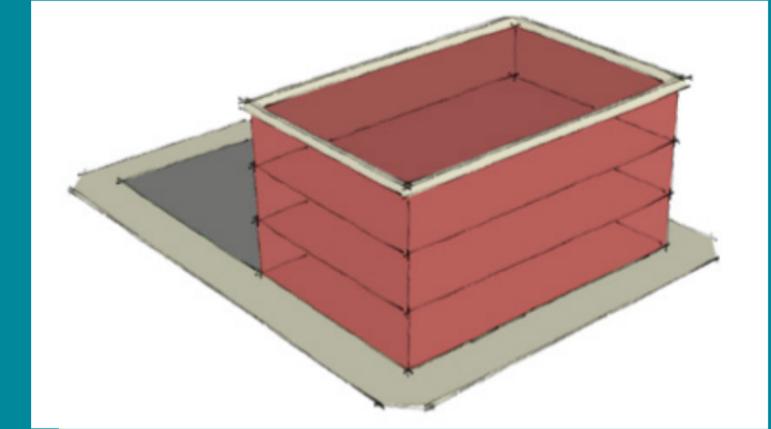
What you could build in the C-2 Zone today:



Lot Size	7,000 sf
Stories	2
Building Size	2,241 sf
Building Lot Coverage	16%
Parking Lot Coverage	74%
Landscaping Coverage	10%
Residential Density	1 unit (10 DU/A)
Required Monthly Rent per Unit	\$1,476/mo

If a developer wanted to build a mixed-use building with apartments above a restaurant on a 7,000 sf lot in the C-2, this building is likely what they would be able to make work under current zoning standards. High parking standards would make parking take up 74% of the lot. This would result in a very small building surrounded by a lot of surface parking, which would feel like a suburban style of development, not a downtown. These parking requirements are a significant barrier to the community's desire for complete, walkable neighborhoods within and surrounding the downtown. The density limits would also only allow for one residential unit in the building, which would require high rents (\$1,476/mo) in order to pencil.

What you could build in the C-2 Zone under recommended standards:



Lot Size	7,000 sf
Stories	3
Building Size	9,100 sf
Building Lot Coverage	43%
Parking Lot Coverage	57%
Landscaping Coverage	0%
Residential Density	8 units (54 DU/A)
Required Monthly Rent per Unit	\$1,050/mo

By reducing parking and setback standards, the developer could decrease the size of the parking lot by 17% and increase the footprint of the building by 27%. This results in a building that is much less suburban by appearance, and more in line with the community preference. Increasing height and density limits additionally allows for up to eight units to be built, providing more housing and at a lower price point of \$1,050 per month.

C1 - NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL ZONE

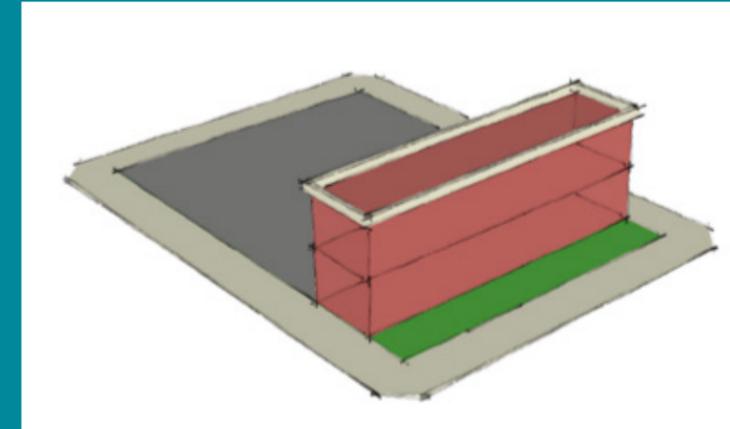
Similar to the C-2 Zone, the C-1 Zone allows a wide range of uses but is intended to be more neighborhood-scaled. However, the zone has the exact same suburban zoning standards as C-2. Buildings constructed using the existing standards are unlikely to fit the character and context of existing neighborhoods. If the goal is to have a commercial and small-scale mixed-use zone that can fit nicely within existing neighborhoods, we recommend increasing residential density allowances, drastically reducing parking requirements and eliminating the front setback.

One of the main expanses of the C-1 zone is located within the center of the Placitas neighborhood, an area where 3-story development would be contextually appropriate and greatly advance community goals. As such, a height allowance of 36 feet plus roofline elements is recommended for the C-1 zone in the Placitas area. This could be accomplished either through creating a special zone district or overlay in the Placitas area, or by rezoning the area to CBD (under recommended CBD standards).

C-1 ZONING STANDARDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Max Density (DU/Acre)	14 units per acre. This may be exceeded for dedicated affordable housing through a Special Use permit. Recommendation: 45
Lot Coverage	50% building lot coverage maximum
Max Height	27 feet
Min Lot Size	7000 sq ft
Min Lot Width	70 feet
Parking Ratios	Office: 1 space/300 sq ft; Hotel: 1 space per room; Restaurant: 1 sp/100 sq ft; Retail: 1 sp/250 sq ft. Residential: see R-14 Recommendation: 1/1000 sq ft, 0.8 per unit on average
Front Setback	10 feet - Recommendation: 0 feet
Rear Setback	0 feet
Side Setbacks	0 feet
Uses	Permitted Uses: Broad range of commercial - restaurants, retail, prof office Conditional Uses: Residential and hotel/lodging Prohibited Uses: Industrial Recommendation: Allow residential by right. Allow for more flexibility in allowing light industrial or "maker" uses that provide opportunity, either as a permitted or conditional use.

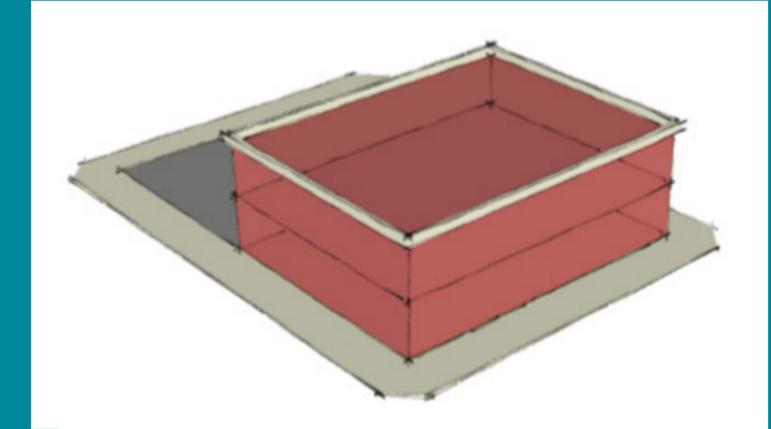
What you could build in the C-1 Zone today:



Lot Size	7,000 sf
Stories	2
Building Size	2,241 sf
Building Lot Coverage	16%
Parking Lot Coverage	74%
Landscaping Coverage	10%
Residential Density	1 unit (10 DU/A)
Required Monthly Rent per Unit	\$1,518/mo

If a developer wanted to build a mixed-use style building on a 7,000 sf lot in the C-1 zone, this building is likely what they would be able to make work under current zoning standards. Similar to the C-2 zone, suburban-style parking standards would require an exceptionally large parking lot (74% of the lot), which after setbacks, leaves only 16% of the lot for a building. The very low residential density requirements also limit the developer to only one unit in the building, which would require a higher rent of \$1,518 a month in order to pencil. While the developer could apply for a higher density allowance in exchange for dedicated affordable housing under a special use permit, the currently weak housing market in Taos would make this a very risky and highly unlikely move.

What you could build in the C-1 Zone under recommended standards:

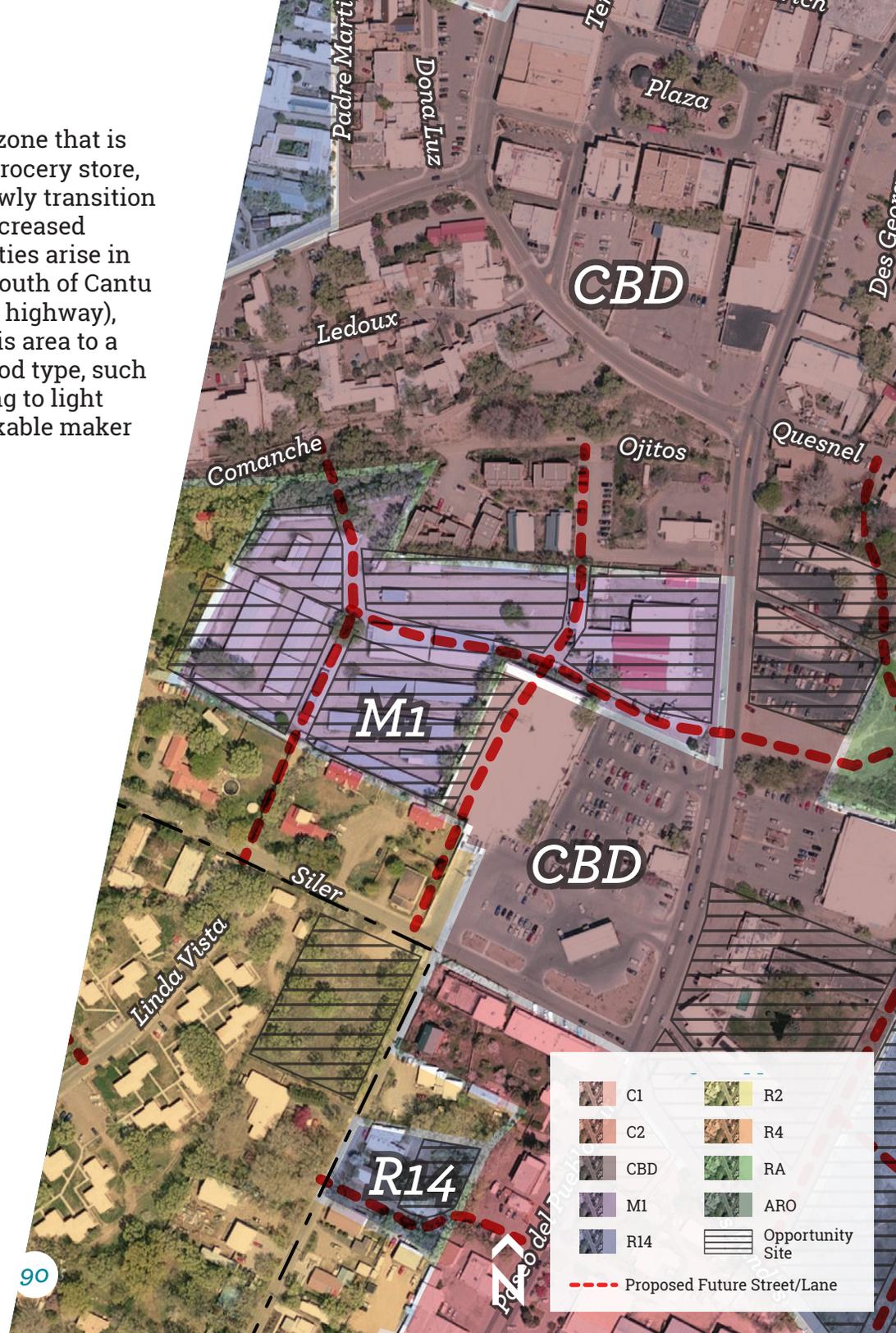


Lot Size	7,000 sf
Stories	2
Building Size	7,481 sf
Building Lot Coverage	53%
Parking Lot Coverage	47%
Landscaping Coverage	0%
Residential Density	7 units (44 DU/A)
Required Monthly Rent per Unit	\$1,100/mo

Similar to the C-2 zone, reducing parking and setback standards would allow the developer to decrease the size of the parking lot by 27% and increase the footprint of the building by 37%. This results in a building that is much less suburban in appearance, and more appropriate for the existing neighborhood context. Increasing height and density limits additionally allows for up to eight units to be built, providing more housing and at a lower price point of \$1,100 per month. In this way, making C-2 zoning more efficient across the board allows for more affordable housing units to be created without forcing the developer to take the unlikely and risky step of applying for a special use permit.

M-1 - LIGHT MANUFACTURING ZONE

While the M-1 zone is an industrial, office and flex-space zone that is currently home to a self-storage facility and the Smith's grocery store, the community has expressed a desire for this area to slowly transition into a more complete and walkable neighborhood with increased opportunities for housing and employment. As opportunities arise in the northern sections of the Paseo del Sur neighbor just south of Cantu Hill (for example, if the Smiths should relocate across the highway), it is recommended to explore rezoning the M-1 zone in this area to a zone that more closely resembles the desired neighborhood type, such as CBD. Allowing for great flexibility in uses—from housing to light manufacturing—would allow this area to become the walkable maker or flex district the community desires.





APPENDIX

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PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN (PIP)

Strong at Heart | Building a thriving downtown for everyone

Project Purpose

Our Challenges

We Taoseños love our town. We have a rich cultural heritage that dates back centuries, a spectacular location perched on a dramatic high-desert landscape, and friendly, creative (and sometimes outright kooky) residents who give this place a distinct personality.

Our community has worked hard to maintain a strong connection to our past. But we also face significant challenges for the future. The economy has sputtered in the wake of the Great Recession. Blows to the construction industry and the closure of the Questa mine left a lot of locals with few employment options. About 21% of our neighbors are living at or below the poverty line, and our young people are leaving at an alarming rate, largely due to a lack of opportunities.

Most Taoseños have concerns about the impacts of growth on Taos' tradition and small-town feel. Unfortunately, we have yet to build consensus about what steps we can take to address our economic challenges while paying reverence to our history. Too often, our discussions about development erupt into polarizing, unproductive debates that divide us rather than unite us.

We can, and should, do better.

For half a century, Taos' Historic District, the heart of our community, has been at the epicenter of this dilemma: How can we manage development in a way that protects our historic character, supports local businesses and grows the local economy, and contributes to the quality of life of those who live here? We have tried to address these questions in the past with varying degrees of success. We think now is a great time to revisit this conversation, in a productive and inclusive community discussion and with the clear intention of turning our ideas into actions.

The Project

The Town Council has directed the Planning, Community and Economic Development Department to work on a highly participatory and community-driven strategy for the downtown. The Mayor and Council are committed to improving how the Town interacts with its residents. The Town has partnered with Community Builders, a nonprofit organization, to provide the Town with additional expertise in public engagement and community development. The purpose of this community dialogue is to provide an opportunity for Taoseños to come together to think strategically about how we can build a thriving downtown for everyone. This is an exciting opportunity to both do things better than we have in the past, and create an action-oriented vision for the downtown. The outcome of this community dialogue will be the Taos Downtown Strategy which will:

- Identify what Taoseños love about their community and why that matters.
- Develop a shared vision for our downtown and the role we want the downtown to play in our prosperity and quality of life.
- Identify solutions for ongoing community challenges of pedestrian and cyclist safety, declining downtown economic vitality, transportation and parking congestion, and protection of the historic district's character.
- Define what type of development is appropriate for downtown, where that development should happen, and how it should occur in a way that is consistent with our community's values.

Ultimately, this project is about taking action. The result of the project will be a document that summarizes:

- Taoseños shared community values.
- Guiding principles, goals, and recommended strategies for the downtown.
- An implementation action plan.

Following the completion of the Downtown Strategy, the Town of Taos will work to incorporate the results into a formal plan or policy that can be used by decision makers to make development and capital investment decisions in the downtown that are consistent with the community's values and vision.

Public Engagement Approach

We are committed to providing robust opportunities for public participation in local decision making. For this project, the Town is embracing an inclusive and participatory planning approach that will apply the following guiding principles:

- **Be Authentic:** The purpose of this project is to generate grassroots community ideas and opinions about the future of Taos's downtown.
- **Be Inclusive:** Public engagement opportunities are open to all and are designed to reflect the demographics and diversity of the Town's entire population.
- **Be Transparent:** We will provide full transparency about the project's sponsorship, purpose, design, and how decision makers will use the community's input.

- **Be Committed to Openness & Learning:** We do not have a predetermined outcome. Town leadership, as well as community participants, commit to being respectful of the diversity of opinions that exist in the community, listen to each other, and open to and willing to explore all ideas.
- **Support Informed Participation:** Participants will have access to information and/or expertise that will support their ability to successfully participate.

Engagement Goals

- Build trust between local government and community members to enable better collaboration.
- Build trust and bridges that foster understanding and respect between different community stakeholders.
- Enhance our ability to make collaborative decisions.
- Broaden stakeholder involvement that will be more representative of the community as a whole.
- Build the capacity of Town staff to be able to facilitate more effective public engagement long-term, and in future projects.

Engagement Objectives

The purpose of our public outreach opportunities are to:

- Inform community members about the project—it's purpose, background and direction.
- Gather input about what community members love and value in our community.
- Identify and discuss important issues that need to be addressed in order to support a vibrant downtown consistent with the community's values and vision for the future.
- Provide information about potential solutions and strategies for action.
- Gather input from the community about community priorities for action.
- Provide opportunities for the community to shape the downtown vision.

Engagement Strategies

To following types of engagement methods will be used to get Town residents involved that utilize creative and informal activities in addition to more traditional engagement events.

- **Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups** to understand the values, issues, concerns, and approaches from targeted stakeholders groups.
- **Storytelling Events** to gather personal stories from community members in order to understand the values, interest, concerns, and hopes of the community for the future.
- **Creative Submissions** that will include opportunities for the community to submit photos, stories, and videos via social media, cellphone and online platforms.
- **Community Forums**, both on-line and in person, that will promote dialogue and discussion intended to promote community member interaction and shared learning and decision making.
- **Community Questionnaires** to solicit community opinion on community values and the quality of the recommendations and priorities for action.
- **Learning Forums** to learn about community development best practices and provide for informed decision making.

- **Feedback Forms and Pop-Ups** to solicit written input in the form of postcards, stickers, chalkboards, and more from residents in specific locations around Town.
- **Community Presentations** led by the project leadership team to share learning and project progress.
- **Mobile Workshops**, including bikeshops and walkshops, to gain an understanding of the strengths, opportunities, and challenges of enhancing the downtown pedestrian and bicycle safety and walkability.
- **Tactical Urbanism Streetscape Events** to demonstrate some of the potential Paseo Del Sur corridor enhancements to the public and inform strategy development.
- **Design Charrettes** led by design and planning specialists to develop a shared vision for what residents want the downtown to be like 20 years from now.

Public Engagement Summary



OVERVIEW: PHASE 1 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The goal of first phase of Strong At Heart was to identify shared community values, issues and concerns, and hopes for the future. Between June and September, Phase 1 asked all participants the same questions:

- *What do you love about Taos and why does that matter to you?*
- *What are your concerns for the future?*
- *What are your hopes for the future?*

The project used a wide variety of public engagement activities with three goals in mind:

1. Make providing input easy and fun to reach people who typically do not participate in meetings by going to where the community congregates at events and cafes.
2. Use community meetings and interviews to elicit more depth and understanding of what we were hearing.
3. Make an extra effort to reach out to stakeholder groups who are the least likely to participate in community meetings including youth, immigrants, young families, legacy Hispanic families, and the Taos Pueblo through small group discussions and interviews.

The first phase of Strong At Heart did an excellent job reaching out to the community and not expecting the community to come to the project. As a result, a little over 1,300 participants from all backgrounds, neighborhoods, ages, incomes, and stakeholders groups provided their input to Strong At Heart. A complete summary of the engagement process and activities as well as a demographic breakdown of participation is provided in *Appendix C: Public Participation Summary*.

WHAT WE LOVE ABOUT TAOS

Why Identify Values?

So what do we mean by shared community values and why do we care about them? They are what people care most about in their community - the customs, characteristics and places that create a town's unique sense of place. It defines who you are as a community and by identifying them, provides a mechanism for acting in a way consistent to those beliefs. The end result is one in which individuals, organizations, and local government can work coherently to maintain what makes a community special and to develop in a way that is more consistent with the community values.

Values provide a useful lens through which to view and consider actions that may have a significant impact on the community. Planning, whether for infrastructure, community development, land use, conservation, etc. tends to be very focused on the physical realm. However, communities are complex ecosystems and there are a variety of other factors that also require attention. Values based planning attempts to address the less tangible aspects of a community's social fabric – such as culture, social norms, and trust - that are responsible for sense of community, social cohesiveness, collaboration, and

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much more. Once understood, a community can be more deliberate about how the physical planning decisions are interconnected with the less tangible social elements that are equally important.

There are less than ten overarching universal values that are consistent across the world's cultures. There is no "right" mix of values in a community. Each community develops a unique identity as a result of its history and context. The emphasis on certain values defines a community's desired or existing "community culture". All cultures are driven by a both *self-actualization values*, the desire for us to thrive individually and as a family –our physical, emotional, and financial well-being; as well as by more *community-oriented values* that support a cohesive society - a stable social order supported through respect for tradition, social cohesion, and stewardship of our human, spiritual and natural resources.

Research has revealed that community conflict originates not by different values, but differing priorities placed on individual values. By understanding these natural tensions, a community can have a much deeper dialogue about what is at stake in local decisions, the impact of decisions on different values, and what the tradeoffs might be made.

Our Draft Community Values

In early September, all the public input related to the question, "What do you love about Taos and why?" was compiled into the *Public Input Summary: Community Values*. This summary was reviewed in mid-September by the Community Advisory Committee (CAC). Excerpts of community comments from this report can be found in *Appendix A: Public Comments What We Love*. The CAC synthesized the community's input into eight draft community value statements, presented below, for public review and refinement. Strong At Heart is collecting feedback on these values at the October 30th public meeting and online at www.downtowntaos.com until the end of November. Community members are encouraged to provide feedback on whether these values accurately represent what Taoseños love about Taos and how they can be improved.

1. It's Home

We value Taos as a small town where we know each other, enjoy the slower pace that gives us more time to enjoy our great quality of life, and where we prioritize our uniqueness as essential to our community identity.

2. A Caring Community

We treasure being a friendly community where diversity of all ages, backgrounds, and interests is respected fostering a sense of belonging and caring for one another.

3. Commitment to Stewardship

Taos is inseparable from the land, water, and air that is the source of our sustenance and spiritual and mental wellbeing.

4. The Taos Pueblo

We value the indigenous people as stewards on how to be one with our natural environment.

5. A Place for Children & Families

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We value our children and families that connect us to one another, teach us the importance of being caring, and roots us in place across generations.

6. A Creative Community

We value our creative culture which contributes to our economy, fosters innovation, and offers a variety of arts and cultural activities that contributes to a fun and interesting life.

7. Libertad

We value being a community rooted in centuries of evolving traditions that welcomes individual expression.

8. Recreation & the Outdoors

We value the spiritual, mental and physical wellbeing we get from immediate and easy access to plentiful recreation and outdoor activities.

WHAT ARE OUR CONCERNS?

Comments about community concerns were collected via surveys and community meetings. The results were organized by overarching themes and the frequency of comment. Nearly 600 comments were analyzed. Excerpts of community comments about concerns and hopes for the future can be found in *Appendix B: Community Comments Our Concerns & Hopes for the Future*. The key community concerns were about the livability and affordability of Taos, the tensions in the community's civic culture, lack of safe and poor quality of transportation networks, and a lack of a positive future for young people.

Primary Theme	Sub-Theme	Frequency of Comment
The Economy	<i>Job Opportunities & Living Wage</i>	37
	<i>Downtown Historic District and Plaza</i>	15
	<i>Diversification from Tourism</i>	7
	<i>Lack of Support for Arts</i>	7
	<i>Workforce Development</i>	6
Balanced Growth	<i>Protect Sense of Place</i>	19
	<i>Sustainable Environment/Water</i>	11
	<i>Need for Vision</i>	9
	<i>Dark Skies</i>	7
Local Governance	<i>Trust, Transparency & Leadership</i>	48
	Community Cohesion	45
Transportation	<i>Cultural Divide</i>	21
	<i>Civility</i>	8
	<i>Inequity</i>	5
	<i>Bike/Pedestrian</i>	22
	<i>Traffic</i>	12
	<i>Streets</i>	5

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	<i>Transit</i>	3
	<i>Parking</i>	2
Youth	<i>Opportunity, Education & Activities</i>	37
	Community Health & Support	29
	<i>Substance Abuse</i>	16
	<i>Supportive programs for low income, homeless</i>	9
Affordable Housing		25
Community Appearance		21
Public Safety	<i>Principally concern for crime or safe driving</i>	10
Undefined comments	<i>One off comments or unclear meaning</i>	15

Taos Needs to Be A More Livable Community

The two most frequently mentioned concerns related to a livable Taos, economic development and balanced growth, are interrelated. Taoseños acknowledge the need for tourism as a part of the economy. However, comments strongly indicate a desire to shift the industry base away from a dependence on tourism in order to create more economic stability and address challenges of wide-spread poverty, affordability, and protection of Taos' uniqueness and sense of place. The frustration directed at local government is directly related to a feeling that while local leaders are generally well intentioned trying to create jobs, they should be more selective when it comes to the type and form of new development. Recent development proposals were perceived negatively because they were viewed as only bringing in more low paying jobs with non-local corporate business enterprise at the expense of the community's character and better opportunities. The expressed dissatisfaction with recent proposals however does not mean there is a unanimous anti-growth sentiment. There is a very strong desire to see economic opportunity in Taos, but an equally strong desire to ensure it does so in a way that enhances quality of life, creates pathways out of poverty, and complements Taos' unique character. This desire to see positive improvement was summarized well in this response: "Leave Taos as a better place, not a different place."

Our Civic Culture and Social Cohesion are Fragmented

The results also indicated that there is an overall concern with civic leadership and the connectedness of the community. It is no secret that community members are very concerned or frustrated with government decision making processes. The primary concerns expressed were a perception of a lack of transparency and a lack of effective public engagement opportunities that result in distrust, regardless of any good intentions.

Importantly, it is not just local government. There were nearly an equal number of comments concerned with how Taoseños interact with each other in the public sphere. When it comes to decision making, Taoseños are concerned that there is a general lack of civility and respect between each other when it comes to public dialogue around challenging community issues, that more people's voices need to be represented beyond simply the loudest advocates, and the community needs to be able to come together to collaboratively solve problems. Comments indicated that the separation by ethnicity between community groups negatively impacts Taos's sense of community and prevents Taos from

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being able to live up to the multiculturalism so valued by the community. There is a strong desire to find ways to bring the community together socially as well as politically.

We Want Youth To Thrive

Taos is valued for being a supportive place where youth have connections to heritage, family, and community. Youth participants identified many factors that make Taos a great place to grow up including the natural beauty, access to fun activities and sports, family, and having friends. Youth had an uncountable number of ideas of how to make Taos a better place for youth to grow up. Suggestions overwhelming were more things to do such as afterschool programming like coding clubs; businesses like water parks, arcades, and putt putt; to more youth friendly clothing stores found in malls and youth friendly places for youth to hang out such as a donut shop or a smoothie shop; and to more accessible sports and recreation like cheaper ski passes and more trails. Other key concerns expressed by the community were about how well Taos prepares youth for a successful future through educational opportunities, exposure to negative health factors such as drugs and violence, and lack of job opportunities. Additionally, the lack of affordable childcare opportunities for families who work. Motivation for economic diversification are particularly driven by concerns over keeping Taos a place where young people and young families can succeed.

Getting Around Town Is Dangerous and Slow

Transportation – all forms – also ranked high in concerns. The most frequent concern was being able to walk and bike safely around Taos. Youth hoped for more bike and walking paths to get around. This concern was followed by concerns about increasing traffic congestion and the need for alternative routes and ideas such as one ways to improve traffic flow. The quality of the street condition, availability of free parking downtown, and speeding were also mentioned.

Not Everyone is Living a Healthy Lifestyle

There is concern that the scale of substance abuse in Taos is growing as a problem and negatively effecting people’s lives and causing an increase in crime. This concern over the presence of substance abuse was expressed as a need for the community to offer more support to help people in need through treatment options and programming. Of all the demographic groups, youth were the most sensitive to the presence and negative impacts of substance abuse, violence, and homelessness.

Taos Should Have More Pride in its Appearance

The appearance of community decline was mentioned frequently in the economy and community development themes – vacant buildings and infrastructure like streets and sidewalks. The comments in this theme echoed those comments, but focused more around a lack of community pride and desire for the community to clean up trash, manage weeds, invest in public infrastructure, and create attractive entry points or gateways into town.

WHAT ARE OUR HOPES FOR THE FUTURE?

Comments on hopes for the future were collected via surveys, post cards, targeted stakeholder focus groups, and community meetings. About 1,200 individual comments were received. Results of hopes, organized by themes and frequency of comment, are presented below. The key themes were in line with

the expressed concerns. Hopes for the future included a more diverse and healthier economy that provides higher paying jobs, community growth that enhances quality of life and protects the uniqueness of Taos, safer and more efficient transportation networks, and stronger social cohesion within the community.

Primary Theme	Sub-Theme	Frequency of Comment
A Vibrant Economy		195
	<i>Comments on types of desired businesses</i>	56
	<i>Job opportunities & a living wage</i>	50
	<i>Diversify the economy</i>	26
	<i>Support tourism</i>	17
	<i>Support entrepreneurs/business</i>	6
	<i>Recreation & green economy</i>	5
Better Community Development		126
	<i>Enhance/Improve Downtown</i>	28
	<i>More recreation & parks amenities</i>	24
	<i>Clean up Taos</i>	18
	<i>A vision for growth & planning</i>	17
	<i>Redevelop areas that are declining</i>	9
	<i>Preserve and enhance historic character & buildings</i>	5
	<i>Desire for type of development</i>	4
	<i>Maintain infrastructure</i>	4
	<i>Make investments to support prosperity</i>	4
	<i>Codes more supportive of desired development</i>	4
Protect Community Character		106
	<i>Keep Taos, Taos – balance growth with character preservation</i>	50
	<i>Grow Taos</i>	16
	<i>Keep Taos as is</i>	14
	<i>Promote local, not corporate</i>	6
	<i>Keep a small town</i>	5
	<i>Not become Santa Fe</i>	2
Enhance Transportation		112
	<i>Bike/Pedestrian Enhancements</i>	48
	<i>Improve Roads</i>	41
	<i>Develop Airport</i>	5
	<i>Provide Transit</i>	3
	<i>Reduce Traffic</i>	2
Support Youth		96
	<i>More activities for youth</i>	60
	<i>A better future</i>	32
Build Stronger Social Cohesion		76
Promote Community Health		46
	<i>Address substance abuse</i>	21

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	<i>More health care</i>	14
	<i>Address poverty</i>	3
Expand Community Programs		36
	<i>More to do</i>	26
	<i>More kid & family activities</i>	13
Commitment to Sustainability		36
A More Effective Government		32
More Affordable Living/Housing		21
A More Caring Community		20
Protect Culture & Heritage		20
Provide a Safe Community		17
Conserve Open Lands		9

The most frequently mentioned hopes – *A Vibrant Economy, Better Community Development, and Protect Community Character* – are consistent with how Taoseños expressed a desire for a stronger economy that provides opportunity, but does so in a way that creates a better community for locals to live and does not do so at the expense of what is unique and loved in Taos.

A Vibrant & Diverse Economy

Hopes expressed for a better economy confirm Taoseños would like a strong more diverse economy. While most of the comments were general support for a stronger economy that can support a higher quality of life, the most frequent specific comments were about types of businesses desired, better paying jobs, and diversification away from tourism dependence. The types of businesses desired were not always specifically identified and expressed generally such as “more shopping” or “more restaurants” or “more places for locals to shop”. Youth were more often to be specific about types of businesses they would like to see that had entertainment value, for example water parks, laser tag, Forever 21, etc. While there is a very strong anti-big box/corporate chain sentiment in Taos – expressed principally because they are perceived as a threat to community character and that they provide little benefit other than more low paying wages – there are some in the community who desire national chain businesses such as Lowes/Home Depot, restaurants, and youth oriented businesses that community members currently drive to Espanola or Santa Fe to frequent.

The remainder of the comments were directed at how the economy should grow in a way that respects the uniqueness of Taos and that targets different industries with higher paying jobs. Recruitment of industries compatible with Taos’s values, redevelopment of existing properties in decline, supporting the tourism sector while diversifying the economic base, and investing in Taos’s infrastructure to support economic development were frequently repeated ideas.

Better Community Development

Downtown

Rehabilitating and enhancing the appearance of town was a consistently expressed theme. In the downtown the most frequent comment was with regards to beautification of the plaza and making it more welcoming to locals. Ideas for beautification that were mentioned did not include a major

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overhaul, but instead addressed simpler design improvements including visually appealing lighting, green scaping, and places to sit – all of which would make it more welcoming. Continuing events on the plaza was also desired, but there was a desire to see these types of events diversify to be more family friendly and targeting other demographic groups. Suggestions for major infrastructure improvements included making downtown more pedestrian friendly, providing some free parking for locals, and hopes for better management of traffic congestion. These suggestions were complemented by the desire for businesses in the downtown district that are locally oriented and existing businesses being welcoming to locals.

All of Taos

Additional parks and recreational enhancements included not only capitalizing on the opportunity of a recreation based economy, but adding sports fields, cleaning up and adding to local parks, creating linked trails, and promoting more sports for youth that will benefit quality of life for locals.

Cleaning up Taos, whether through weed management, code enforcement or trash pickup was another often-repeated theme and consistent with concerns expressed. The dilapidated buildings combined with weeds and trash give an appearance of decline. Investments in infrastructure was important for appearance as well as supporting future economic development.

Finally, a coordinated plan and vision for the future supported by a thoughtful development code and development process, particularly one that contribute to redevelopment and to protecting historic character and unique development patterns.

Protect Community Character

Comments in this category are all about whether or not growth should happen and how it ought to occur. About half of all the comments about community character reflected the desire to see economic and community development occur in a balanced way that “Keeps Taos, Taos” while the number of comments that were either “grow Taos” or “don’t grow Taos” were nearly evenly split. The type and character of development is incredibly important to Taoseños. Resolving conflict over economic development and community development needs to more clearly define what a balanced approach looks like. It seems no one wants to become Santa Fe, but they don’t want to be struggling like Espanola, Mora or Questa either.

Enhance Transportation Options

Mobility enhancements are desired to improve safety and the ease of getting around. Safety for walker and bikers is desired along with improvements to roads. The ability to walk and ride bikes safely around town was especially important to youth.

Support Youth

There is a significant desire to ensure Taos is place where youth have more opportunities. Concern over lack of positive things to do as well as not enough professional opportunity for them when they graduate. While most suggestions were general – more programs, more activities, more places for youth, better jobs – youth had a lot of very specific ideas for the types of entertainment activities they would like to see in town.

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Build Stronger Social Cohesion

Across all ages and ethnicity, there is a desire for a more unified and respectful community. While there were not many concrete ideas expressed, this was a heartfelt wish for Taos. In many cases, being able to work together was viewed as the only way to address concerns about the future.

Promote Community Health

As a health focused community, there is a desire for Taos to do more to address social challenges like substance abuse and homelessness as well as expanding existing health care systems to cover mental health and aging in place.

More Effective Government

As expressed in concerns, the hopes for a better government were principally having a government that “listens” and is transparent. While there were a few specific comments about wanting changes in the administrative staff or officials, the overwhelming majority of comments were much more procedural in nature about what changes community members would like to see to build more trust, develop better working relationships, and create more transparent decision making.

Expand Community Programs, Commitment to Sustainability, More Affordable Living & Housing, Protect Culture & Heritage, Promote a Safer Community, Conserve Open Land, and a Caring Community

These were expressed generally and overlap with other topics or each other. More community programming, for example, overlaps with the desire for more youth activities as well as more community wide activities that bring people together. Protecting open lands overlaps with agriculture and economic development. Community safety overlaps with reducing substance abuse and transportation. Affordability overlaps with economic development and community development. And finally, sustainability – protecting of the region’s natural resources – overlaps with diversification of the economy and community development. A more caring community overlapped with stronger social cohesion, but was expressed more as loving and caring for each other, not just respect.

WHAT DID THE YOUTH SAY?

It was common to hear from adults in Taos that they are concerned about the future for young people and lack of opportunities. To help understand the youth perspective, a number of targeted activities were directed at young people under 18 years old and well as high school and recent graduates. Our youth participation rates were exceptional with more youth participating than a percentage of the total population.

These activities included:

- Collecting post cards at pop up events at places youth frequent including Ziggy’s, Raptors & Reptiles, and Taos Alive
- Youth completed 75 Youth Vision Trees conducted at the middle school.
- Conducting youth conversations with freshman, sophomores, and seniors at Vista Grande and young people employed in the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps.

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Young people in Taos love Taos for all the same reasons adults do. The beauty of the sunrises and sunsets, the mountains, the culture and connections to heritage, family, and the safety of a small town. They appreciate the activities available to them at the YFC, sports, outdoor recreation, and events on the Plaza. However, youth, particularly teens, expressed and overwhelming dissatisfaction with having enough youth friendly things to do and they had no shortage of ideas to remedy this concern. Their willingness to stay in Taos or return later in life was primarily connected to a desire to be close to family, the natural setting and outdoors, more higher education opportunities, and jobs. Youth want many of the same things adults want for Taos - to keep it special and maintain a small-town feel - but as young people, they want more to do and some growth is seen as positive. Importantly, youth expressed a more direct ethic environmental ethic including wanting: to protect the environment in Taos, more recreational and transportation trail networks, better local food systems, and consideration for future generations. Finally, youth also expressed more frequently a concern over the prevalence of drugs and alcohol abuse, gangs, violence, and homelessness. This concern was both about their own public safety as well as concern over youth getting into trouble for lack of other options.

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**APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY COMMENTS
WHAT WE LOVE ABOUT TAOS**

Below are excerpts for the public comments that help express the community’s values.

FREEDOM OF INDIVIDUAL EXPRESSION and OPPORTUNITY

There is a welcoming me of artistic freedom and choices that lie well outside the norm of conformative culture. ~ Survey

It's freedom which allows one "to breathe". ~Survey

When you find a niche, you can build your future w/hard work and determination. ~SK Run

I love living in Taos because I am from Taos Pueblo and have been connected to this land since my mother’s mother and the ones before them. I love living in Taos because there is room to breathe, be ourselves, and practice our traditional pueblo culture with respect from all communities. It impacts my life because the town is working towards inclusiveness and I feel it is important to continue to do so. It impacts my life because Taos Pueblo people are part of the bigger whole. ~Survey

INTELLECTUALLY INTERESTING & STIMULATING

Taos is a very intelligent place, people are aware, in tune and willing to discuss just about anything. We make up our own minds here. ~Survey

I'm grateful for the high level of art and creativity in writing, film, wall art, sculpture, music. I'm inspired by being able to participate in the educational programs for seniors. ~Survey

Outdoor activities, skiing, rafting, cycling, community, people places like the farmers market, schools, a learning environment where you can learn and have fun at the same time. ~Rodeo de Taos

I love that the arts flourish in this community, but they need to be embraced more. Taos is so much deeper and more meaningful because of this. I've lived in communities that seem so one dimensional. Or they are shallow and lack depth. That's what living among people who have been here for many generations provide. ~Survey

RICH CULTURE & HERITAGE

I love the fact that Taos remains an Art Colony 100+ years after the founding of the Taos Arts Society. It remains a place where the arts are honored. I appreciate that most weeks, my challenge is how to take advantage of all that is offered. Though I am not an artist, I can immerse myself in the creativity of those who work hard to produce the arts that I love. ~Survey

I love the land of my indigenous people, my heart is here, and my children’s life is here. ~SK Run

I love that my family is here, and deep roots and tradition is now my responsibility to carry on. ~El Taoseño Restaurant

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I love living in taos because of its history of faith and ranching. it is important to me because it makes our community come together to work together and celebrate. ~Fiestas de Taos

AN ACCEPTING COMMUNITY

I love how culturally diverse taos is, I enjoy that anyone can move to Taos and they are accepted no matter their race, religion, color or creed. ~Farmers Market

I love that in Taos, you can make your creative/artistic dream come true; you can invent your own way of being, if you have the drive and desire. ~Survey

The feeling I get from Taoseños is that we are all free to be who we want to be. There is no judgement in the community for being 'different'. ~ Survey

I think that the biggest asset in Taos are the people. It is an open friendly community that welcomes anyone who moves here. Other places are closed and private. ~Survey

DIVERSE COMMUNITY

Multi everything: age, gender, orientation, ethnic, polarity, everything and that is SO SPECIAL. ~Survey

It's a liberal community with such diversity and varying lifestyles. ~Survey

All of the diversity from communities and their own cultural heritage. it is important for my children to enjoy and become familiar with more traditions from what they already know. ~Immigrant Meeting

CARING COMMUNITY

We all come together as a community to help each other out. ~ Taos Plaza

Love how the community comes together during hard times. ~ Ziggy's

We can take care of each other because we are all "related" -by neighborhood, by experience, by working with each other, by serving each other, by worshipping with each other, by going to school together, by compadrisimo or by blood or by adoption. ~Survey

The one thing that I love about Taos the most is the sense of community. Anywhere I go, I see someone that I know! I know that there are always neighbors to help in a crisis. When people ask how you are, they really mean it. ~Survey

SMALL & FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

How friendly, incredibly open and straightforward people are here, even to out-of-town strangers. ~Survey

I love that we are essentially a "one road town", no interstates, no big freeways. I love (and hate sometimes...) that people know me. I go to the grocery store and see people I have known my whole life, teachers, friend's parents', and even just familiar faces. But that does sometimes make it hard to dash in

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and out! I love that people wave on the road, and that you make eye contact and smile at people no matter where you are. Acknowledge their presence as another human being. ~Survey

I love the rural small-town atmosphere of Taos that makes it feel set apart from the hectic, high pressure and fast pace of most big cities. ~ Fiesta de Taos

Taos is a place people come to in order to flee the busy lives that they have. ~Raptors and Reptiles

I love living in a small town where you run into friends everywhere. ~ Survey
Small size makes Taos very connected. ~ Fiestas de Taos

The small community, you lose closeness with others in big towns. ~Taos County Fair

I love that we don't have too big box stores or franchises. Home town restaurants, bed and breakfasts rather than chain hotels. I love the open spaces. ~Survey

The small-town simplicity and being able to know everyone from a young age so tight bonds are formed. ~Fiestas de Taos

It is a small community that really respects the history and doesn't corrupt to large tall buildings that take up every view of the mountains, etc. ~Taos Alive

THE BEAUTY

I love the physical beauty of Taos. It's one of the few incredibly beautiful places I've ever been that hasn't been turned into Disneyland. ~Survey

The beauty of the architecture, the mountains, and the bluest skies in the world. ~Survey

Beauty is everywhere, and I appreciate it. ~Immigrant Meeting

I love the way the cool air feels against my skin. I love the quiet. I love the dark skies. I love the outdoors....I love the colors in the early morning as the sun rises in the east and I love the colors in the evenings as the sun sets across the mesa. O love the peacefulness of where I live. ~Survey

The natural beauty of the mesa and the mountains that surround it is exceptional. The ever-changing skies are spectacular, and the light here is sublime. ~Survey

Nature is minutes away. It's out my window. ~Survey

LOTS OF THINGS TO DO AND ACTIVITIES

Things like farmers markets and other things that brings us together as a community. ~ Taos Alive

Love the music/art and culture, it is important because those things bring people together. ~ Taos Plaza

I love to live here because of the chile. ~ Taos County Fair

I love our farmer's market and am grateful to all the local producers. I also love the remnants of farm life in our community and am wistful about its passing. ~ Survey

I love the diversity and how we have events that bring us together. ~Fiestas de Taos

There is always something interesting happening for such a small place, culturally, spiritually and just fun. ~Taos Plaza

IT'S HOME

Born and raised here. Its home, the weather, everyone knows one another. ~ Raptor's and Reptiles

I love living in taos because of its diversity. I love that it has a hometown feel. ~Taos Plaza

The thing I love about taos is the community is all of the events, the scenery. It is important because it is home. It is where my family is from, the culture is the acceptance of everyone. ~Ziggy's

Taos is a beautiful community and the people that live here are awesome. Taos is a wonderful place to live because it's home. ~Fiestas de Taos

AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY

It is quirky, funky, authentic. It still retains some local flavor rather than being dominated by corporate franchises. The multi-cultural aspect of the community contributes to this. Taos attracts a lot of "characters", thus contributing to the sense of place. ~Survey

As a result of all of this art and creativity, people are more authentic here. There is less posing, and more truth-telling. People say no if they don't want to do something. ~ Survey

I love the real and authentic personalities of the people. Combines with the relaxed atmosphere makes for a fulfilling experience. ~Farmer's Market

SAFE COMMUNITY

I feel safe here -- the racism that's exploding across the country won't find a way to Taos. We live and let live here. I think the Mountain will spit out any alt-right freaks if they try to set up shop in Taos. ~ Survey

I am from another country and it is so scary for me to come to live to the USA and to small town like Taos. People open their arms, make you feel at home, make you feel that you belong here. They help you even though sometimes we do not think alike, they understand you and respect you (most of the time). Taos is not perfect, we are not perfect, but Taos is a special and wonderful place to live. ~ Immigrant Meeting

I love taos because it is a place in which someone can work and live without violence. ~Immigrant Meeting

FAMILY ORIENTED

I love: the Cultures; the landscape/riders; a smaller environment; my family is from here; the native music! Spanish + Native American; the diversity. ~ Taos Alive

You can feel at home. Family oriented. ~Fiestas de Taos

My dog and my family. ~ Youth & Family Center

Family, I don't know of anywhere else that holds family like Taos. ~Taos County Fair

Because my family is here, my ancestors are buried here, and I belong here. ~Immigrant Meeting

SPIRITUAL & HEALTH ORIENTED

I came to Taos for natural healing. The natural beauty here, fresh air, pure water, abundant sunlight, medicinal plants, and diverse cultural and spiritual communities representing all my roots is medicine for me. It allows me to love life, love myself and share the healing with others. ~Survey

The farmers market because it supports local farmers and provides healthy food. ~ Farmer's Market

I love that there is virtually NO CORPORATE influence (yet) in Taos. I love that the community is mainly progressive in political thinking and has a plethora of avenues for spiritual discovery/exploration. I love love love that confrontation is alive and well and embraced in Taos. I love that I can go to Wild River National Monument and watch meteors and sleep under the stars without worry. The reason these things matter to me is because I am fundamentally opposed to the way our society sees the economy as the driving life force. I am actually more than fundamentally opposed to that, I am absolutely opposite. I was killing myself with stress on the hamster wheel. Traffic and stress and too many people in one place was making me ill. In order to save myself, my husband and I took road trips over the US for 8 years looking for a place that made sense. Taos made sense to us. We could have a green house, water catchment and low stress, meet our spiritual needs and have solid nutrition. ~Survey

RECREATION & OUTDOORS

That it's clean here. Mountains, lakes lots of fishing. That keeps us busy and out of trouble. Important for kids to experience. ~Rodeo de Taos

I love living in Taos because of the access to our beautiful outdoors. I enjoy skiing, hiking, mountain biking, road biking and golf. Beautiful, wild outdoor spaces are important to me because they provide recreation and they "restore my soul" to keep me healthy and in balance. My social circles center around these outdoor activities. It's important to me to have good trails and easy access to trails so that I can get into the wilderness without burning much (or any) gas, or spending too much time getting there. ~Survey

I love being able to see the mountains and horizons of great distance. I feel a great deal of gratitude that the mountains and wilderness areas are easily accessed within a short period of time. We often take our grandchildren on afternoon hikes in the mountains or down to the river. ~Survey

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY COMMENTS CONCERNS AND HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

Community Character: Build a Better Taos, Not a Different Taos

"Pretty much everything south of Walmart just looks terrible. Even as a local I avoid the area because it's just not pleasant to be around that area of town. I moved here to get away from strip malls and box buildings built on the cheap. Taos is a beautiful place and our first impression is not reflective of who we are as a community." ~Survey

"I would like to see the town of Taos take more pride in its appearance. In some cases, the shops, homes and streets appear shabby and poorly maintained. To be fair, the town's appearance has begun to show improvement, particularly since the new administration came into office." ~Survey

"I am troubled by the lack of opportunities for youth here after graduation from high school or college. The saying "you can't keep 'em down on the farm" seems to apply here. Related to this is the classic tug of war between those who want Taos to remain like the old days as a subsistence farming community as one extreme and those who want development in hopes that will bring jobs. How to control that development in order to prevent some of the negative aspects that that often brings while still creating opportunity. I am troubled by the very obvious commercial vacancies in our downtown that create a feeling of decrepitude." ~Survey

"Have a balance between development and preservation of cultural identity." ~Farmer's Market

"Keep the integrity of our community. change can take place but keep our uniqueness." Fiestas de Taos

"That we honor history and tradition while innovating for the future. not running rough sod over the uniqueness of taos for short term, short sighted goals." ~Fiestas de Taos

"Keep Taos, Taos!" ~Community Meeting

"I want to see Taos be a great place for the people who live here, not just for visitors." ~Community Meeting

"Leave Taos as a better place, not a different place, than you found it. Don't "love it to death" but recognize the good aspects of each other and find ways to include everyone." ~Survey

"We wish for Taos to move forward with a strengthened economy achieved without damage to its natural setting and historic appearance, and without ignoring its cultural heritage and a history with diverse roots." ~Survey

"That Taos can come together and forward true economic development that does not compromise it's unique cultural identity and geographic splendor. That the community grows in a planned and reasonable manner and advance into the 21st century." ~Survey

"My concerns are that narrow minded people who want Taos to remain without change are blocking the potential of the community. The goal for more /better jobs and for more housing supply are not exactly shared by everyone." ~Survey

Better Community Development

"There is no Masterplan anticipating the Town's growth." ~Survey

"No sense from the present administration of an economic plan, just secret plans sprung upon the citizens who then get criticized when they voice their opposition." ~Survey

"There is not an adopted master plan for Taos and its future and officials are piece milling projects without thoughtful planning thinking corporate boxes will be the solution." ~Survey

"Local politics lacks vision and is making decisions in more and more reactionary ways rather than being proactive." ~Survey

"We need a true economic development department/plan with action items, targets, goals with the goal of diversifying the economy and attracting geographic neutral businesses." ~Community Meeting

"I appreciate all the town is trying to do to keep Taos what we want it to be.....even though some of the governing individuals do not seem to have the same plan. I do believe they are trying however, and we all must help as much as possible." ~Survey

"Growth rooted in tradition." ~Community Meeting

"The town badly needs a short-term and a long-term plan both for the preservation and development of the town, for economic development that fits with the town's unique history and location, and education, re-education, job training, and business assistance programs to attract new businesses and keep our youth here." ~Survey

Downtown

"Not enough green space in plaza." ~Survey

"Not to mention the plaza - it's very people unfriendly now. Few places to even sit down." ~Survey

"Design a plaza that is a compelling reminder of the sacred land that Taos occupies. the Town's economic difficulties are a result of forgetting this." ~Pancake Breakfast

"I would like to see more sidewalks, bike trails, and little gardens downtown so that it is really pretty place to saunter around, a place that is safer to bike and walk." ~Taos Plaza

A Vibrant More Diverse Economy

"My biggest concern is that Taos will become isolated and reduced to being a community that is about tourism only. Skiing and the arts are sustainable for some, and a source of economic benefit,... but for most of the people here (excluding retirees), there needs to be more economic opportunity to find a fulfilling life - because we are diverse in our needs, interests, passions, abilities. Too many of our promising youth leave and don't return until they retire, if then."

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"That Taos will lose its strong sense of place because of an emphasis on "Economic Development" that doesn't take that importance into account." ~Survey

"I am concerned that our leaders see progress in terms only of attracting real estate development, and that any job is seen as a good job. I wish there were more effort given to building a sustainable economy that provides good wages and enables the people who want to stay in Taos to stay here." ~Survey

"Taos has suffered financially and Taosños are feeling a bit left behind. I am concerned that in a sincere but perhaps un-coordinated effort to help the town grow economically, the town government is grasping for investments and development that will not successfully develop the local economy and will, instead make Taos more like every other small western town. The town should work to restore and strengthen those aspects and qualities that make Taos unique, build on the events that already bring tourism and business to our area, and preserve the very unique historic, cultural, and outdoors opportunities that will make Taos an attractive community for small businesses, tourism, arts events, and intercultural understanding. Trying to be like every other town and the many casinos in the valley by offering large, loud, pop concerts does NOT seem like a good direction for this unique community. "I worry about the financial health of the town and its citizens. The open (unrented) store fronts along Paseo del Norte, give the impression that Taos is NOT flourishing. The empty, closed hotels along the main drag do not inspire tourist visitation." ~Survey

"I remember attending Matthew Sprigg's presentation a few years ago, after he completed his study on Taos' economic situation and what we need, and agreed with his findings that technology would be the ideal industry for Taos because it doesn't need -- or leave -- a huge footprint on the landscape, it provides high-level employment opportunities and it's something the town can sustain, especially now with Broadband capability. I worked at Siriusware for 10 years and can attest to this -- but he also found that our youth aren't prepared for the tech industry, and UNM-Taos doesn't offer tech industry degree programs. The vast majority of the Siriusware staff moved here from other states or were telecommuters, because there was no available pool of local talent for designing and building software solutions. But there COULD be...We need careers that make our youth want to stay here. Tourism can't sustain us. I don't want to see factories here, we live here because it's small and beautiful." ~Survey

"I'm concerned that we're not grasping the opportunity to become an outdoor mecca, particularly in regards to road and mountain biking. Look at Fruita, CO or Moab, Utah that have built their economies on cycling. With the proper infrastructure for bicycles, we could have a healthier Taos population, increased bicycle tourism, and an increase in property values because people want to live in places with good bike trails." ~Survey

"I think the emphasis on tourism is out of proportion, and there is no evidence anywhere that it is a "stopgap" measure until we find a better way to support ourselves. We need to aggressively find small businesses, and clean businesses, that can come to Taos and create jobs, and real jobs with benefits and a living wage....You can't just promote tourism and then expect something better to happen, we should be promoting opportunities for real jobs, in solar, organic farming, light manufacturing, whatever we can find to lift people out of poverty." ~Survey

"We could use a computer-type school or community type college for tech. Also a trade school for after high School for plumbing, welding, etc. Good paying jobs!" ~Survey

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"I do not like that it is hard for people to make a living and afford to live here. We have a lot of "out of towners" who don't rely on making money here to live here, and that hurts a lot of people. Also that we rely so heavily on tourists." ~Survey

"Wages don't support workers. there's constant pressure to cave in and become just another generic town of commercial franchise operations. balancing historic preservation with growth is tough." ~Survey

"My biggest concern is that Taos will become isolated and reduced to being a community that is about tourism only. Skiing and the arts are sustainable for some, and a source of economic benefit,... but for most of the people here (excluding retirees), there needs to be more economic opportunity to find a fulfilling life - because we are diverse in our needs, interests, passions, abilities. Too many of our promising youth leave and don't return until they retire, if then." ~Survey

"It is of great concern that so many businesses in the center of town are vacant. I think that my biggest concern is that there are few opportunities for young people. To maintain a truly dynamic and strong community, there need to be jobs that encourage young people to stay in or move to the community. I think that the focus of UNM Taos on health related fields is a positive step. Many young people love Taos, but the opportunities for remaining in the community are limited. As I move around town and visit businesses I talk with the same young people working across yoga studios, coffee shops, and restaurants -many with 2-3 jobs. These individuals love Taos and want to stay, but it is very challenging and many eventually leave. There is a great deal of poverty in Taos (as in many towns in America). This is a serious concern. Taos is a beautiful community, and the maintenance of the physical features of the city contribute critically to its appeal. Careful planning of physical growth is crucial." ~Survey

"I'm concerned that with many monied people moving to Taos, people who don't need to earn a living here, there is less reason to create businesses that employ people. Although it wasn't well run, and the salaries were ridiculous, a business like the Taos Moccasin Company gave many people steady employment. That kind of industry would be good." ~Survey

"I am especially concerned that there are not good well-paying jobs for our young people. We are losing the youth because they cannot support themselves and their families here. I hate to see Taos continue to become just a retirement/tourist destination and economy. We need to grow our economy in ways that open up opportunity for entrepreneurialism and agriculture." ~Survey

"I'm concerned that we don't stifle growth, but that growth is planned and done intelligently. For example, keep the charm of the downtown (with improvements to the plaza), and let growth happen on the southside "strip" along NM68 since it already has Walmart, etc. And, since (hopefully) people will be coming here to recreate during the day, have fun things happening downtown in the evenings (including shops open) for tourists to do." ~Survey

"Taos also needs a town plan to avoid Paseo del Pueblo looking like Cerrillos rd....Taos needs to remember what makes Taos special and unique, if we look and feel like every other city in the SW why will they come here?" ~Survey

"Please don't cave in to developers for the sake of growth. Keep Taos Taos. Keep adobe structures and blue doors and low buildings that don't block the view of our mountains. No chain restaurants or retailers needed here." ~Survey

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"That the town cares more about tourists than its own people, drugs, too many alcohol outlets, don't like the chain stores, hotels coming in, too many dollar stores. Need safer walking, bike trails in and around town." ~Survey

"Taos is a beautiful community, and the maintenance of the physical features of the city contribute critically to its appeal. Careful planning of physical growth is crucial." ~Survey

"1. I worry that kids will grow up here with a poor education, 2. that unemployment will remain high, 3. that doctors will no longer want to work here, 4. that our hospital will not be supported and shut down, 5. that we become unfriendly to visitors(I especially blame Judy Cantu and Jeff Northrup), 6. that we become so unfriendly to business that Taos falls into a death spiral, 7. that our roads, bike paths, and sidewalks continue to suck." ~Survey

"The dilemma of holding onto tradition while adapting to modern realities puts Taos in a perilous position. Taos' population, demographics, economy, and climate are all changing, and people here will have to find ways to proactively address these issues if Taos is to remain a pleasant place to live. Because Taosños aren't known for their willingness or even ability to compromise, these are daunting challenges." ~Survey

"There is always a fear, well based, that Taos will become Not-Taos for any number of reasons and through many pressures. The fears are that Taos will become Santa Fe and unrecognizable to our oldest families. None of us want that. Period. If we wanted to live in Santa Fe, we would. We want something very different. We want Taos to be Taos. But there is a second and equal fear that is less well recognized sometimes. That is the fear that Taos will become Espanola or Questa. We do not want to drive away the newcomers who challenge Taos to change. We want and need these others. There are some who want the "old Taos", whatever that might be, but the dream is that it as a simpler, quieter, more unified, less pressured place. I fear that if that were to happen we would wind up with the old, the ill, the uneducated, and the unemployed. I certainly don't want that ever to be Taos. We need our young people to continue to live here, raise their families here, take care of their families here. That, however, means finding a way for them to make a living, not just living off the public dole. We need jobs. We need internet to sell and buy and work and get paid for work from Taos. They could work at any number of occupations from Taos if we had the infrastructure which permitted it. I am astonished at what is currently possible: A friend was the managing director of the legal department of an international construction company with offices and cases all over the world. Where was she? In Embudo. So it is possible is we have the infrastructure, the training, the education, the ambition, the foresight, the mentoring, the teaching etc to permit young people to seek out the possibilities. We have people in town now who, if permitted and encourage, could teach, train, mentor for professions/jobs of all kinds. We need to find these people and bring them out and pair them with young people and use our community to be the best it can be for all of us." ~Survey

"That the general economy of Taos can grow enough to provide the city the funds to maintain and improve our infrastructure and provide good paying jobs, but not so much that it changes the unique "feel" of this special community." ~Survey

"I hope we can be a community that provides the opportunity to live and thrive here for all of us." ~Rodeo de Taos

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Civic Culture and Social Cohesion

“My concerns about Taos would start with acknowledgement of the history of this land. To create healing and wellbeing between communities, it needs to be acknowledged that Taos Pueblo is still very much healing from the effects of colonization in every aspect- mentally, spiritually, physically- and are, at the same time, continuing to navigate the systems put in place to defeat our way of life. For example, the Taos Historical Fiestas, in particular the Parade, which prides itself in leading with conquistadores that can be interpreted as a symbol of genocide and hostility for those of us on the other side of the cattle guard. Did anyone ever inquire with us and how it made us feel to be demeaned and our history be seen as moot because this act of pride is even allowable? Our town prides itself in tourism and being able to connect people with the uniqueness of Taos, but fails to remember the pueblo story and seems much more satisfied in accommodating the outside influence rather than digging deep into the issues that need to be resolved.” ~Survey

“Another concern is a divide in Taos between Hispanic and Anglo communities that is difficult to bridge. Some on both sides of this divide feel ignored, discounted, or threatened by the other, and part of the misunderstanding emerges from a failure to embrace (and try to understand) the history of the Borderlands. History is not easy, and some turn instead to myths and false ‘facts’ to explain their feelings. Yet, historic patterns of settlement and the economic reality of continuing change have brought both good and bad to the Southwest, but they are part of what we all must live with. Cultural clashes over issues of water and land rights are legendary in our valley, but in resolving them we need well-informed voices of reason rather than emotional outbursts of accusation that fall back on tattered arguments about the loss of cultural heritage. We must find a way to end such victimization and blame. One way to leave this tortured path would be to dedicate several years celebrating the diversity of cultures found in Taos, something planned with input from a variety of well-informed individuals capable of helping people to understand such forces in our lives. This could be a model for other communities elsewhere in America, and there could be major foundation support for such a program. We have excellent elected representatives from local to state and federal offices who would be interested in helping endorse and promote such a program. Taos can set an example for many other communities!” ~Survey

“My biggest concern is that groups do not communicate with one another here. For example, there are five theatre groups in this town, and they rarely speak to one another. The non-profits do a marginally better job, but when territoriality takes over, there is no sense of community, even among people doing really similar work in a small town. This is disheartening. The other major division is among racial/ethnic groups. We use phrases like “the Hispanic community”, “the pueblo”, and “the Anglo community” as if these are solid, coherent things, and they help keep us divided--while ignoring other, smaller groups in town like African-Americans, Asian-Americans, etc. I would very much like to see a series of open-ended, community-building, long-term conversations among various ethnic groups in town.” ~Survey

“I sense a lack of Hispanic decision makers in our community for many non-profits, organizations, etc... seems to be often run and/or organized by Anglos ... we need more of a balance ... I also would like to see the Catholic churches play a more ‘active’ part in some of these community endeavors.” ~Survey

“I’m concerned that the only people that seem concerned are the old white people. The balance of the population will only show concern when something changes and they don’t like it. I’m also concerned

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about how changes will be designed, implemented and ultimately maintained; Taos doesn’t have a very good track record in the regard. My concern about old white people might be balanced by getting younger people and other groups of typically non-participating types to get involved. Maybe UNM, the high school, perhaps some Pueblo dwellers, Hispanics from other socially active groups should be encouraged to take part (I realize that this issue is already apparent).” ~Survey

“The “us against them” attitude between old time Taoseños and people who have chosen to move here. We all live here and should cooperate in making things better.” ~Survey

“Although I think most residents want to work as a community, we don’t seem to have created adequate structures and support for doing so.” ~Community Meeting

“The lack of civility of the public when there are disagreements.” ~Survey

“That we are too attached to only one political ideology and show low tolerance for people with different views. There is a lot of hateful signage and in our community and meetings which end up being filled with violent and bullying language. There is little opportunity for respectful dialogue with anyone who might have even slightly more conservative views about a few things as they are fearful of speaking up due to ostracism or bullying by the majority who think and talk alike and fueled with sarcasm. I feel saddened that we can’t be more open to seeking common ground and work together in approaching our critical problems. Every situation seems to lead to only more polarity and duality. I think this sends a strong unwelcome message to visitors from other parts of the country. Who wants to be in a hate filled environment scared you might say the wrong thing?”

“My concerns are that the attitude and feel of this place are changing. A newer group of activists seem to be fighting their fight, with no regard to the wishes, feelings or wants of others. All of this is creating a more hostile atmosphere in the political realm. People need to swallow their wants and pride and look at the community as a whole, and realize that maybe what THEY want isn’t necessarily what the other members of the community do. It is all well and good to speak your mind and fight for what you feel is right, but it’s immoral and all around wrong to simply fight for what YOU want, with no one else taken into regard. Too often I see and hear people stating, “Well if they’re so concerned and want these developments, why aren’t they here at the Council meeting?” Simply answered, they are working to pay bills and provide for their families. Several of the developments that have been proposed may not pay \$20.00 an hour, but they are a great stepping stone to building marketable skills and abilities in a higher paying market. Or to simply cover the bills while earning certificates at UNM Taos. If people can’t stop being greedy and trying to maintain their own private vision for the community, there won’t be a community left to fight for. The town is dying financially, and at this rate there will be no reason left for my children to stay here, which is my ultimate concern.” ~Survey

“Our individualism is nice, BUT we have been in a quandary for quite a while since every change is greeted with major negativism which makes it virtually impossible for anything in the way of progress to happen. No matter how big or how small the change, nothing is ever accomplished without an incredible amount of time, effort, and money and usually, as a result, nothing is accomplished.” ~Survey

“I worry about the divisiveness that has invaded our little community, the inability to calmly discuss issues that affect our town without resorting to vitriol. I worry about the world passing us by if we don’t actively discuss our future (jobs, housing, infrastructure) and how to best move forward.” ~Survey

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“My wish is that the community can work together-- the town government along with all the citizens to THOUGHTFULLY meet the communities needs and at the same time preserve its unique character.” ~Survey

“That a balance of respect and encouragement of all the cultures meeting here be maintained” ~Survey

“I suppose, underlying the above concerns, is a wish we become increasingly committed to being a community of people who respect others, live for the common good, able to compromise and learn and adjust and in so doing, because the “future” is a changing landscape.” ~Survey

“That the three cultures find a way to communicate and work for the common good.” ~Survey

“That people would swallow their pride, honestly make a compromise (not just make the statement that they are willing to), and do what is needed, even if unwanted, to ensure the survival of this town. It doesn’t matter how deep the roots run or how strong and amazing the culture is, if the town dies, all of those things die with it.” ~Survey

“One wish I have for the future of this community is to include all voices in conversations regarding our youth, being culturally sensitive and acknowledging and celebrating our youth.” ~Survey

“Understanding those who are less forceful with their opinions. I feel they are unheard. The newcomers to Taos seem to feel that only their opinion matters about what kind of growth we need.” ~Survey

“For the race and class segregation to be addressed and acknowledged.” ~Survey

More Effective Local Government

“One of our concerns about Taos relates to leadership and what could be characterized as its lack of openness of intent. We believe governance must be conducted with trust from the electorate, but there is a sense on the part of some in this community that elected officials are more interested in benefiting a small circle of friends rather than the populous at large, and they are secretive in the process. This extends beyond the town and county to such organizations as Kit Carson Electric. Such attitudes may be entirely baseless, but in order to dispel this kind of distrust more openness and communication is needed about goals and the methods for reaching them.” ~Survey

“Political leaders don’t listen – own agendas must change.” ~Community Meeting

“I wish we had a Town Council that listened to residents.” ~Community Meeting

“Continue listening to all people in Taos - all cultures and ages and points of view.” ~Community Meeting

“More respectful openness of information and process will lead to collaboration at all levels.” ~Community Meeting

“More community involvement in making Taos great.” ~El Taoseno Restaurant

Maintain A Livable Community

“Lack of affordable housing both to purchase and for long term rentals.” ~Survey

“The cost and availability of housing available to those who do not make as much as others.” ~Survey

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“More affordable housing and more affordability for low income families - better EQUALITY.” ~Taos Alive

Support Agriculture

“Taxes are too much and lands not producing enough.” ~Rodeo De Taos

“Why do you want to change taos? Taos was zoned res-agr why are we losing our ag status?” ~Rodeo de Taos

“If our urban acequia (ditch) system (water) is revitalized, kitchen gardens (land) will spring up (farmer’s market/culture) & our surface water delivery system will be refurbished; urban waters will drain to the parched lands to the west. The upper aquifer will be recharged; Ag land & its tax status will be protected. Long term sustainability enhanced. Revitalizing our acequias will lay the groundwork with the next gubernatorial election (2yrs.) to establish meaningful cash crops - hemp, precious plants, recreational marijuana. If families’ have an opportunity for a real cash crop utilizing their inter-generational Ag lands with a refurbished acequia system the demographics will begin to stabilize.” ~Survey

Promote A Healthy Community

“And being old here must really suck. Not much services for the elderly, I used hospice for my mother in 2012 and the resources they provided were practically nonexistent, the hospital can’t provide all the services needed, it’s a dangerous place to drive in the winter.” ~Survey

“I worry about health care and keeping good doctors and nurses.” ~Survey

“I’m concerned about the need for affordable housing and good jobs. I am concerned about the drug abuse and alcoholism that gives rise to domestic violence and worsens poverty. I am concerned about our schools and the difficulty we have reaching every student, especially the ones whose families live on the margins. I am concerned about gun violence and gangs and homeless youth. I am appalled at the dollar stores that pretend to offer deals but really don’t, and the fact that young people can’t get an education that serves them, equipping them to do well here and outside of here.” ~Survey

“The increasing drug epidemic and absolutely zero resources to offer them as far as detox and rehab” ~Survey

“No funding or political will to address seriously the substance abuse crisis in town and county.” ~Survey

“I’m concerned and perplexed by the alcohol and drug addiction in Taos. Also the high tolerance and occurrence of Domestic Violence. Not being born and raised here I don’t know all the intricacies of why this is so BUT I try to be a positive force for good in my community when I encounter folks in my work or otherwise who are struggling with these issues. There is only 1 race, the human race so we can all be a part of the solutions to decrease these issues in Taos.” ~Survey

“The medical care is very iffy here for someone like me who is older with a number of medical problems, including the need for a psychiatrist.” ~Survey

“My heart breaks when I see all the homeless people. Thank goodness for the men’s shelter; is it adequate? Also thank goodness for the organization looking out for our homeless women. Is there more we ordinary citizens can do to help?” ~ Survey

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"Great! For the white and privileged." ~Community Meeting

"Uneven - haves, have nots and barely squeaking by." ~Community Meeting

Foster Sustainability

"I am excited about Kit Carson's solar initiative, and the tree management plan. I would like to see the town step up environmental initiatives." ~Taos Plaza

"Protect our water to keep it clean, affordable water, encourage walking, biking in taos, slow down and enjoy the beauty. one way loop around a walking mall downtown." ~Pancake Breakfast

"That the earth and the water, the rivers and air, aquifers will always be honored and protected." ~Pancake Breakfast

Expand Community Oriented Assets

"Not enough proactive affordable community based event spaces." ~Survey

"More open events on the plaza. Family orientated we like plaza live." ~Taos Plaza

"More catering to Hispanics at the plaza music and taos news." ~Don Carlos Bar

Protect Culture & Heritage

"Taos needs an archives - repository for historic and government documents and photos." ~Community Meeting

"We need local resources for scholars to study us and our history." ~Community Meeting

"I wish to see a history and culture center." ~Pancake Breakfast

"To start using the land as our ancestors once did, we need to start going back to the old ways." ~Farmers Market

Build Better Transportation Systems

"Also the thru traffic issue needs to be improved. Bicycle paths should be expanded and promoted." ~Survey

"Lack of bike lanes and awful roads are a big detriment. It is dangerous to bike without shoulders and/or bike lanes." ~Survey

"Horrible town for cyclist. Crazy unsafe." ~Survey

"To become a truly bike friendly community for the safety and health of our children, elderly, visitors, and tourists. This would make our community more competitive as a destination. We would be a healthier community if we encouraged safe cycling. We would be less dependent on oil and gas. Having decent bike paths would help alleviate congestion through town and would lessen the building congestion on 64 West." ~Survey

"Bicycle/walking paths connecting all parks and radiating outward to all parts of town, so that one can bicycle/walk all over without riding/walking on the streets." ~Survey

"Make roads better, too many pot holes." ~Ziggy's Yogurt

A Better Future for Youth

"Another concern of mine is seeing little to no spaces for youth to engage. This town caters to the art/elderly community more than the youth community. Throw a youth-led event in the plaza! Stop promoting beer/alcohol events!" ~Survey

"More money and talent pouring into the public schools. The charter schools have exacerbated the problem by taking all the motivated parents and families out of the system. They are no longer involved in the public schools, and have the time and resources to transport their kids to charter schools and be more involved. That leaves the kids still in the regular schools to be the equivalent of the inner city, after everyone who could flee, did. The parents that have left their kids in the regular schools have to rely on school buses, and don't have the resources or the education to demand better of the school system, so there is no one left to work with the schools to help make them better. Coupled with the lack of funding, the poor pay of the teachers here, we get the abysmal performance of the schools." ~Survey

"I wish that the kids who go to our schools graduate with a clear hope for the future, rather than the dismal outlook that they have now. I want the children of the community to flourish, and come back to Taos and give back to the community so that the next generation can see that success is an option, no matter where you start from or how you end." ~Survey

"I would like to see more summer camps after school programs offered by the town of taos maybe a young mentor version of rocky mountains youth corps. Affordable and long hours are key. More activities and support for youth center, recreation sports." ~Rodeo de Taos

"Families can't be productive workers without reliable, affordable childcare and infants and toddlers need high quality child care to become high achievers in school and productive members of society later in life." ~Survey

APPENDIX C: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SUMMARY
WHO PARTICIPATED IN PHASE 1?

Public participation across the US trends towards older, wealthier and white. Strong At Heart made a concerted effort to reach deep into the Taos community. Decisions were made early in the project to reach not only the Town of Taos community members, but also surrounding unincorporated neighborhoods, representative age and economic groups, and targeted groups like the Taos Pueblo, youth, immigrants and legacy Hispanic families. In addition to meetings, the public engagement process included holding events at businesses around Taos (pop-ups), public meetings, online engagement with surveys and self-submissions, and targeted stakeholder events with specific demographic groups.

Two community meetings and ten different pop up events were hosted in June, July, and August. The public meetings included close to 400 people while the pop up events solicited about 720 postcards from individuals.

Pop Up Events	Date	Date
JUNE	JULY	
1. 5K Run for the Health of It	6.10.17	7. Farmer's Market
2. Taos Live Event Plaza	6.01.17	8. Mayor's Breakfast
3. Don Carlos Bar Frito Pie Night	6.23.17	9. Las Fiestas de Taos
4. Sherriff Rodeo	6.25.17	10. Taos County Fair
5. Raptors & Reptiles	6.16.17	
6. Ziggy Yogurt	6.26.17	

Targeted stakeholder events were organized with groups who are typically underrepresented in Taos including the Taos Pueblo, youth, and the immigrant population.

- September: *Taos Pueblo Community Conversation* included a small group of about seven. Facilitator - Aurora Trujillo
- July/August: *Immigrant Community Outreach* resulted in about 70 postcards collected. Facilitator: Jose Gonzales
- August/September: *Youth Outreach* to Vista Grande High School, the middle school, RMYC, and Taos Alive youth. Facilitators: Nathaniel Evans, John Miller, and Taos Alive staff. Input includes interviews, vision trees, and youth conversations. These events reached about 150 young people.

Total participation to date is estimated to be about 1,334 Taoseños, although in some cases there were not sign in sheets at all events and rough head counts were taken.

Type of Activity	Total Participation
Kick off Meeting	242 (not everyone signed in)
Community Conversations	106
Postcards/Installation	721
Online Participation	115

Youth Focused Events	150
	1,334

All demographic data for Strong At Heart was voluntary. Since not everyone feels comfortable providing this type of information, Strong At Heart does not have demographic data linked to every comment. However, it provides a good guide for Strong At Heart to assess whether all demographic groups are being reached.

Stakeholder Group	Total Participation	< 18	19-44	45-64	> 65
Kick Off Event		3	38	58	72
Community Conversations		0	21	29	29
Post Cards		164	297	196	146
Youth Vision Trees		75			
Youth Conversations RMYC			16		
Online Values Survey		3	17	37	58
TOTALS	1,259	245	389	320	305
		19.46%	30.90%	25.42%	24.23%

RESIDENCY	Fulltime	Part time	Visitor
Kick Off Event	171	7	0
Community Conversations	70	6	2
Post Cards	669	56	58
Online Values Survey	97	17	1
TOTALS	1,154	86	61
		87.26%	7.45%

INCOME	<\$35K	\$35-49K	\$50-75K	>\$75K
Kick Off Event	57	18	28	52
Community Conversations	15	11	28	18
Post Cards	241	126	98	64
Youth Conversations RMYC	14	3		
Online Values Survey	27	16	26	46
TOTALS	888	354	174	180
		39.86%	19.59%	20.27%

RACE/ETHNICITY	Hispanic	Anglo	Native American	Other	Multi
Kick Off Event	27	119	9	20	0
Community Conversations	10	57	2	10	0
Post Cards	374	273	24	88	16
Youth Conversations RMYC	8	7	4	1	
Pueblo Conversation			6		
Online Values Survey	11	96	1	7	0
TOTALS	1,170	430	552	46	16

36.75% 47.18% 3.93% 10.77% 1.37%

The lowest participation rate in all demographic data collected was for information about neighborhoods representation (410 responses). This information was only collected at the kickoff event, on online surveys, and postcards.

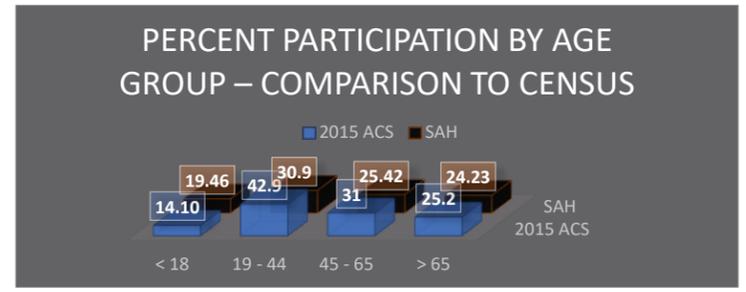
Town of Taos	Unincorporated County
104	306

How Representative Is the Phase 1 Public Input?

For the purposes of understanding the diversity of participants in Strong At Heart, demographic data from the most recent American Community Survey (2015) and the 2010 Census for the Town of Taos was compared to the demographic data collected from Strong At Heart. The US Census provides the most accurate count and demographic profile of people living in a community. However, the US Census is only updated every 10 years and every 5 years the Census Bureau conducts the American Community Survey (ACS). Gathering perfectly representative community input is nearly impossible without conducting statistically relevant data collection process – for example a randomized survey. These types of surveys cost significantly more than a more open and democratic process like Strong At Heart. The goal of collecting this information is to understand how well Strong At Heart did in hearing from and ensuring voices were heard from every demographic group. Strong At Heart was successful in hearing from all sectors of the Taos community, but as expected, will need to continue to work diligently to hear from those who are underrepresented.

Participation by Age

Strong At Heart did exceptionally well in collecting demographic data for youth under 18, a stakeholder group that was identified as critically important to this effort. Representation from the age group between 19 and 44, typically the hardest age groups to engage, was lower, while participation by 45 and above was close to representative.



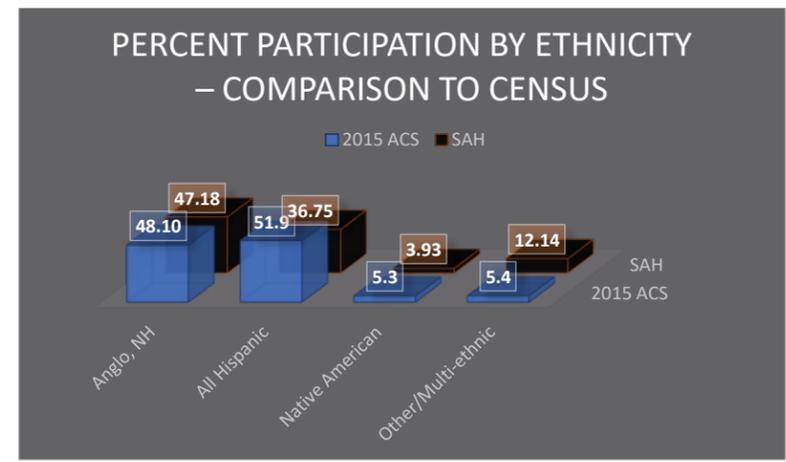
Participation by Income

Unsurprisingly, the participation rates for income show that the lowest income levels are the least representative. However, nearly 40% of all reported participation for income was below \$35,000.



Participation by Ethnicity

Taos prides itself on being a multi-cultural community. Strong At Heart participation by Anglo and non-Anglo breakdowns are similar to the ACS. An interesting result for the Strong At Heart project is the very high percentage of community members who identified as multi-ethnic or other rather than by the single tri-cultural identities. Strong At Heart participation by the Hispanic community was the least representative of the demographic groups.



Next Steps For Engagement

Based on this analysis, as Strong At Heart moves into Phase 2 the results of Phase 1 should be validated and confirmed with the groups who were under-represented including:

- Younger people between the ages of 19 – 44.
- Lower income community members who earn under \$35K per year.
- Hispanic community members, particularly legacy families.
- Targeted neighborhood groups identified by City Council.

APPENDIX D: HOW DOES SAH COMPARE TO VISION 2020?

The 1999 Vision 2020 is the Town's current community comprehensive plan. As a comparison, this project's public engagement process engaged about 350 people in 3 public meetings and 15 focus groups. No demographic data was included in the plan summary, so comparative representation is unknown. However, Strong At Heart has well exceeded the public engagement effort of the previous plan.

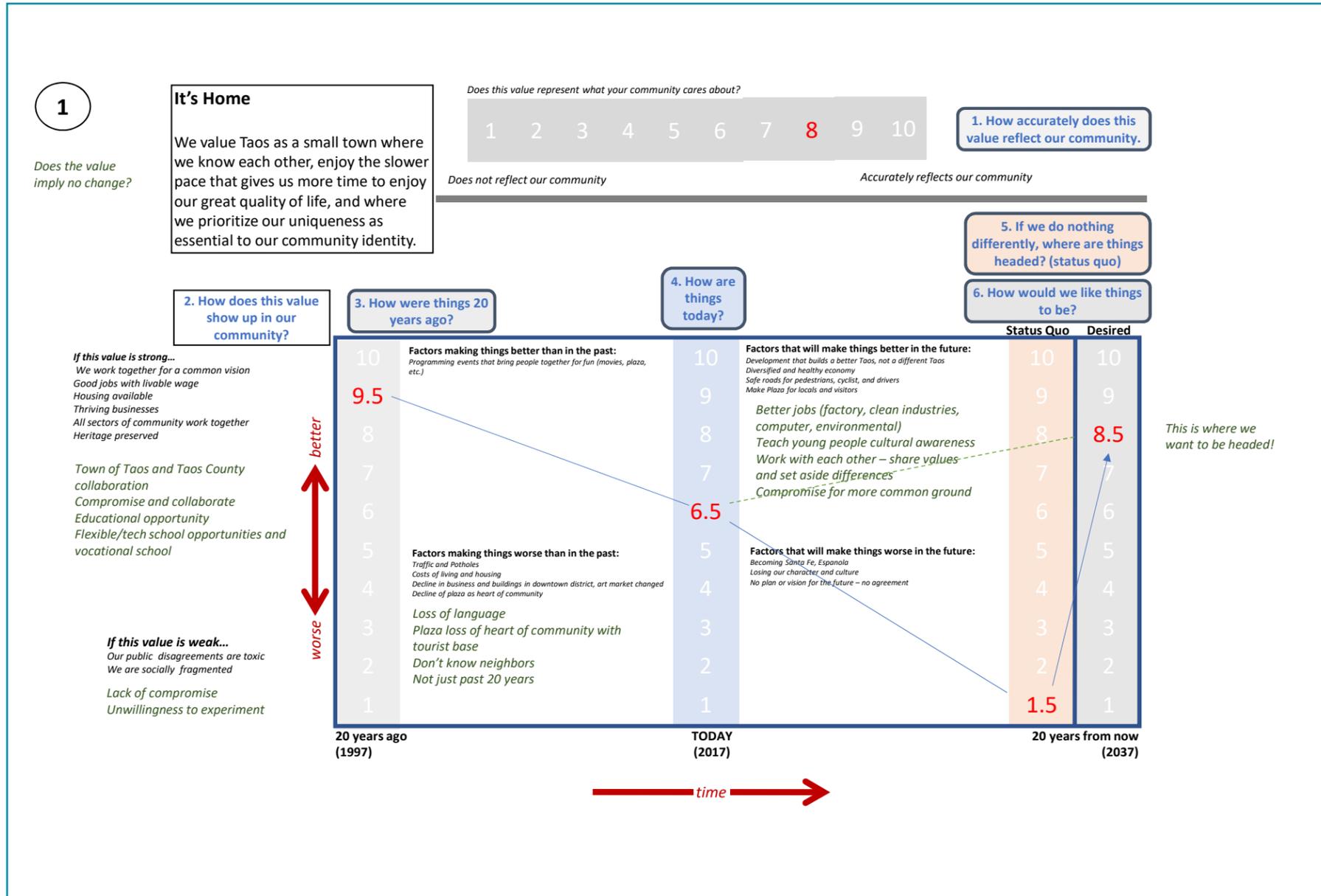


Figure 3 The Vision 2020 Master Plan was an ongoing, participatory process with over 350 community members taking part in 1998.

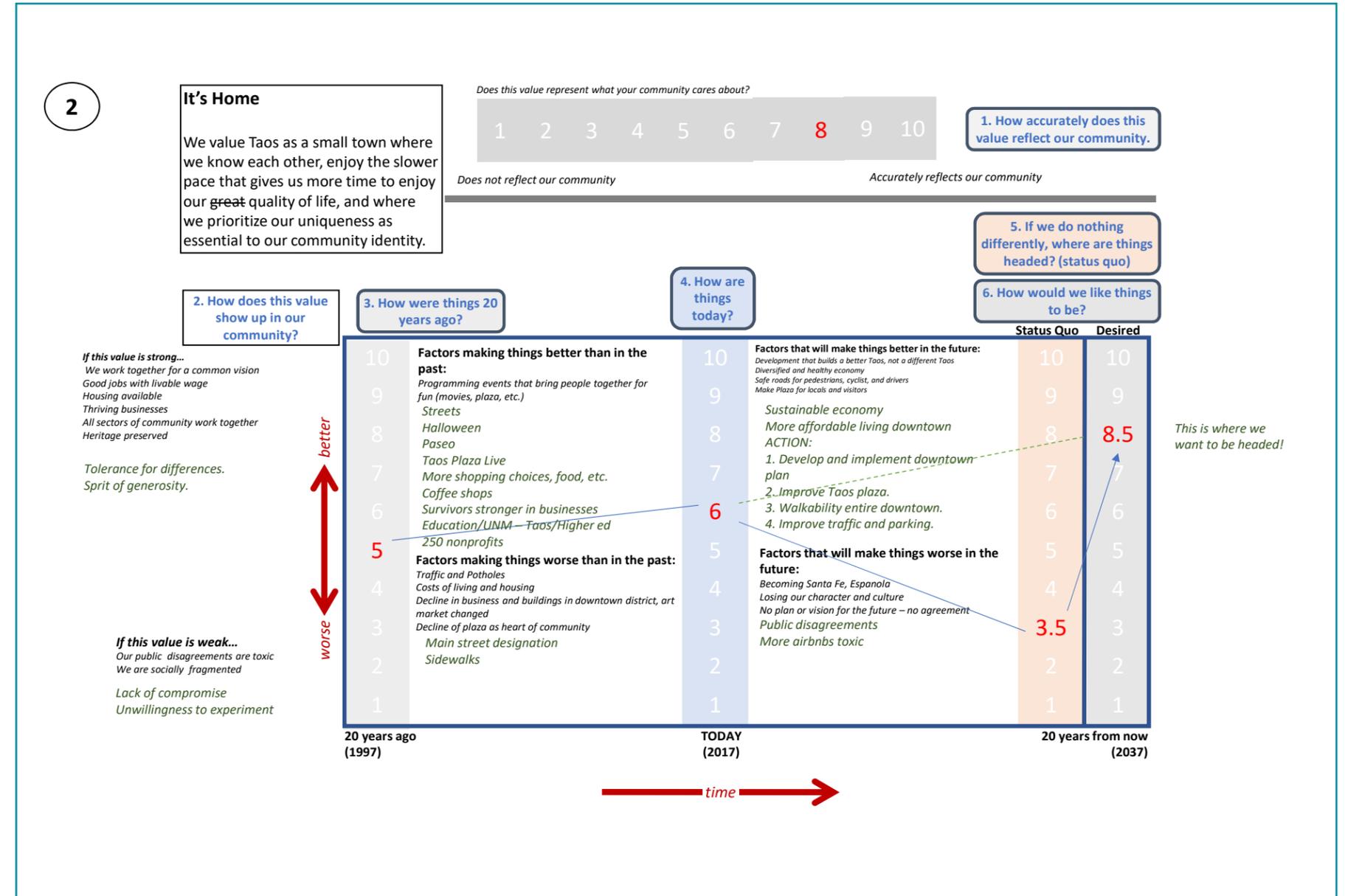
The good news is there is considerable consistency in the desired future identified in Vision 2020 and the results of the Strong At Heart values, concerns, and hopes. The primary difference is that additional important community values have been identified by Strong At Heart that are not identified in the Vision 2020.

The Vision 2020 goals included the following six goals.

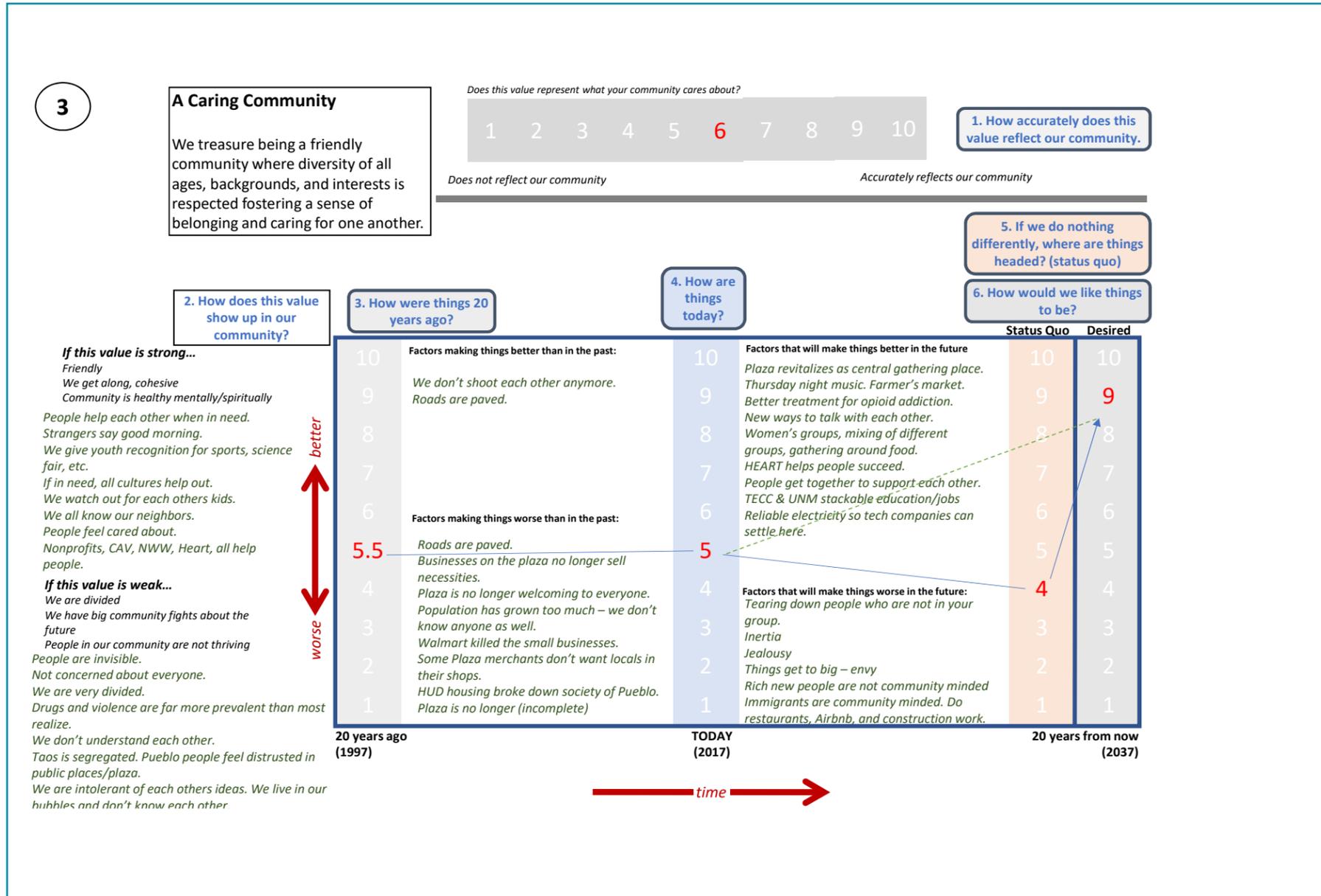
1. **Land Use Growth and Development:** Protect and enhance the natural resources, unique landscape, historic character, distinct neighborhoods, and economic opportunities of the Taos Valley.
2. **Agricultural and Open Space Preservation:** Taos' quality of life is maintained by preserving and enhancing our cherished open spaces and agricultural lands.
3. **Economic Development:** The Taos economy is diverse, self-sustaining, and provides rewarding jobs that pay well.
4. **Community Design:** Taos retains its small-town character and sense of community, respects and maintains cultural diversity, and builds upon history and traditions while utilizing appropriate technologies.
5. **Infrastructure Community:** Infrastructure is of high quality and accessible to all. Housing All Taos families and households have the opportunity to own quality, affordable housing.



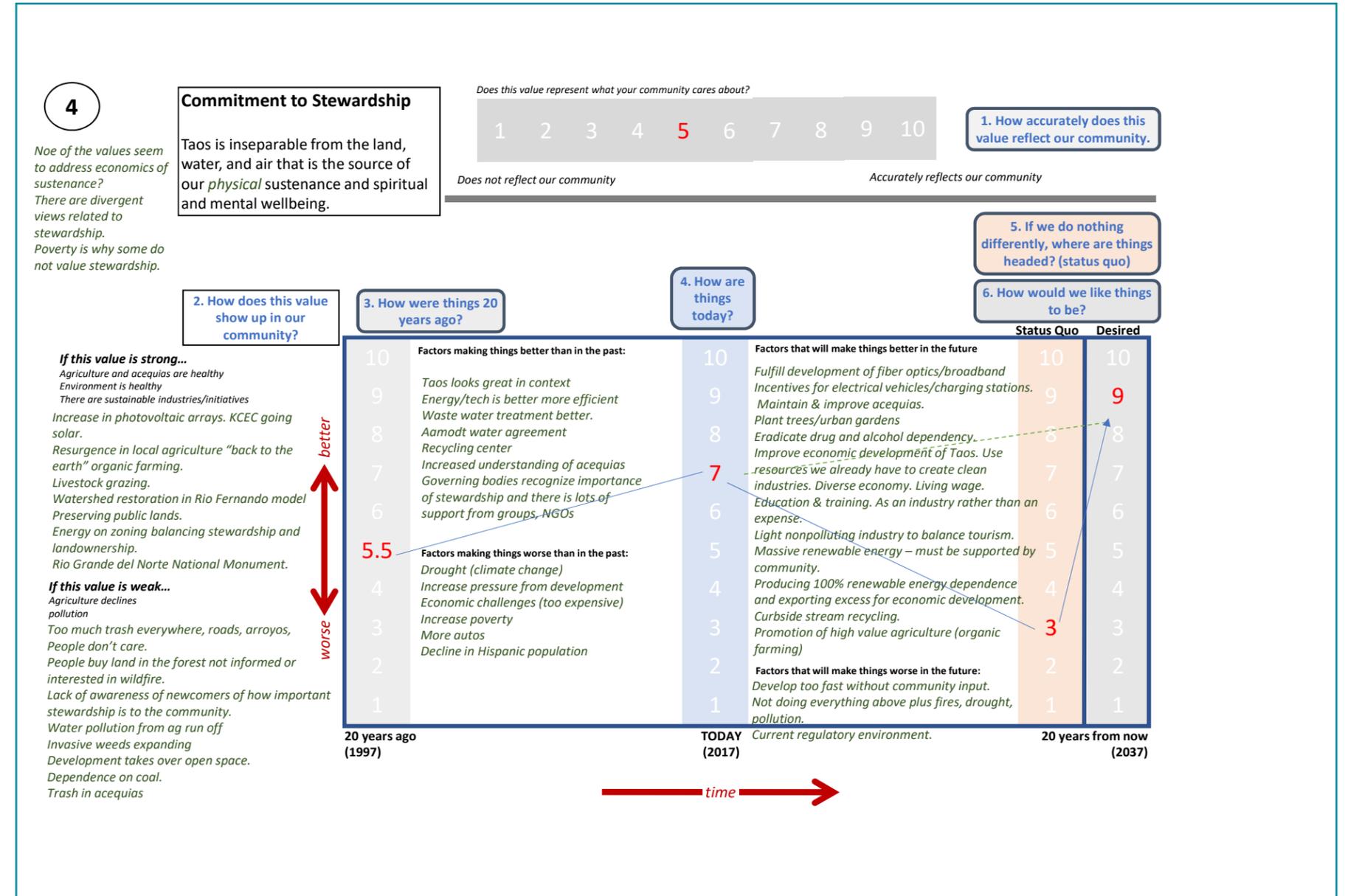
On Taos Time (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary
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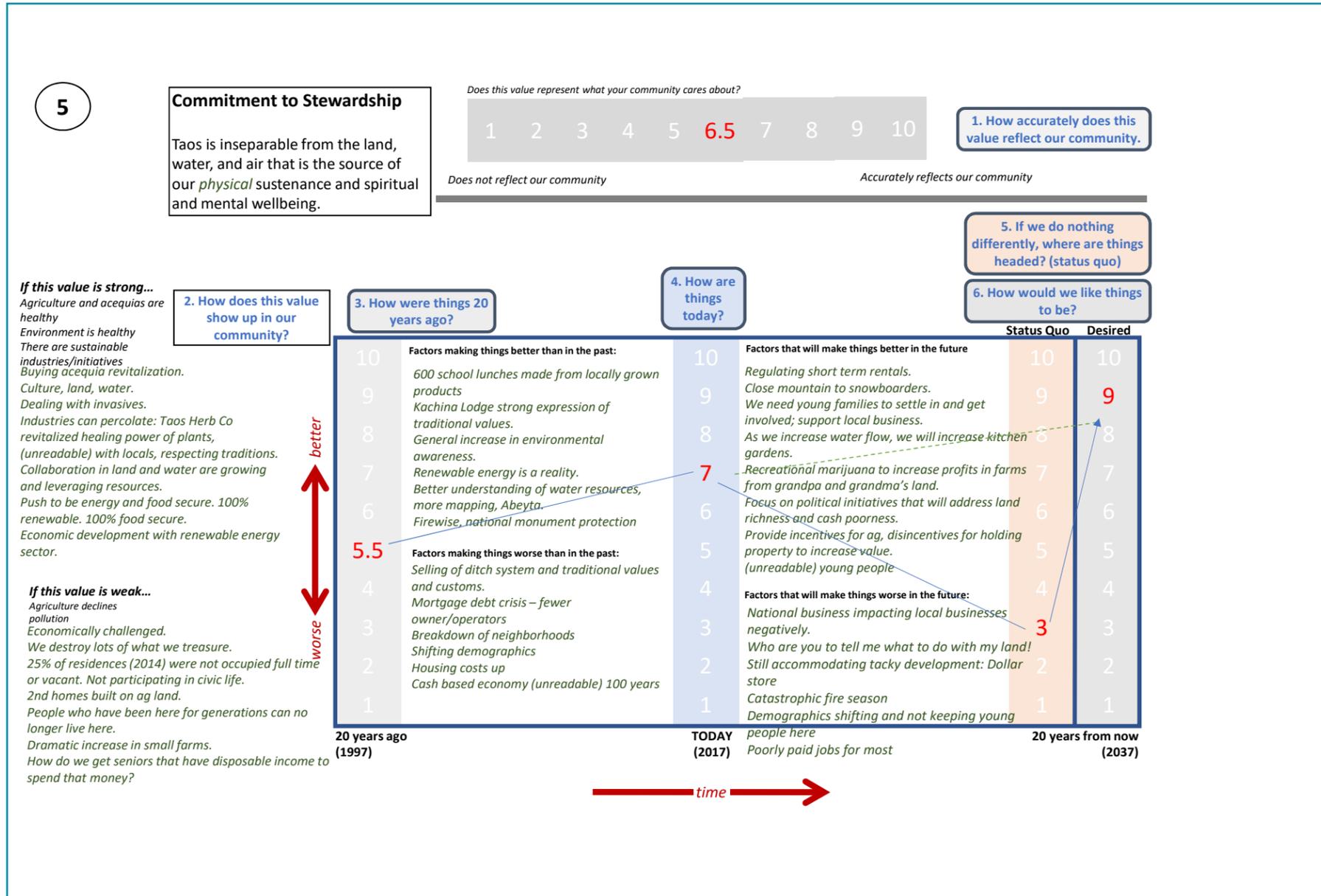
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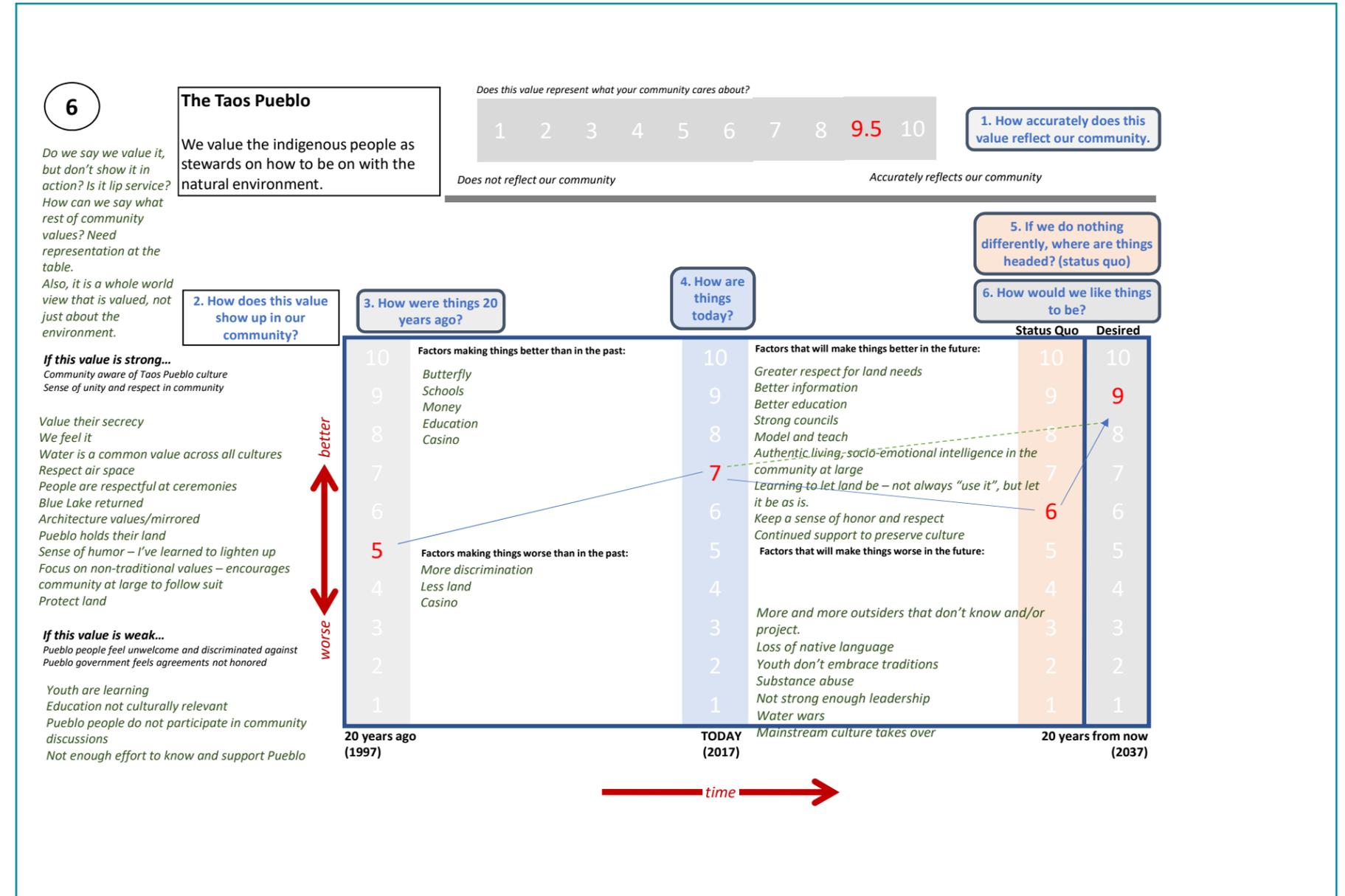
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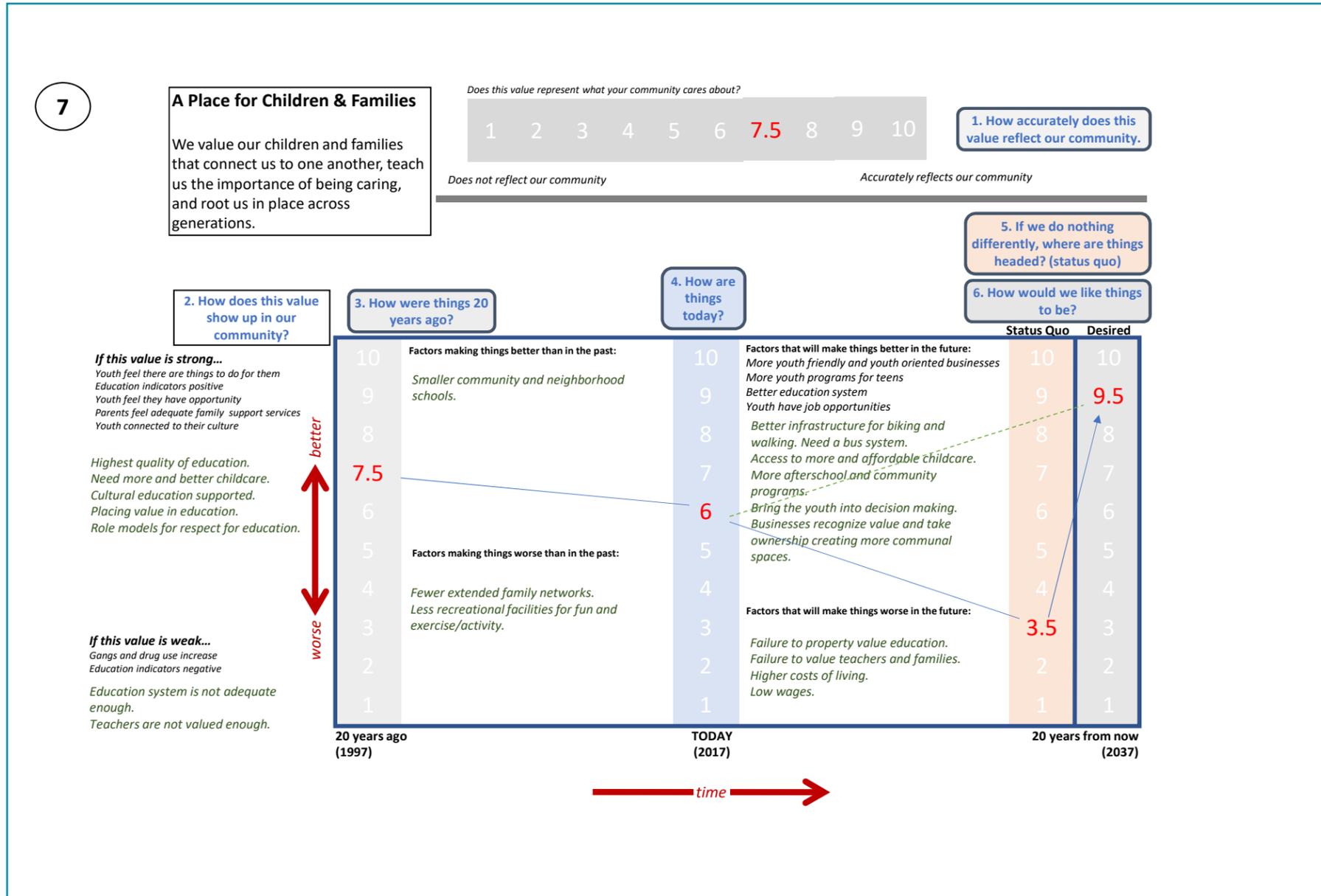
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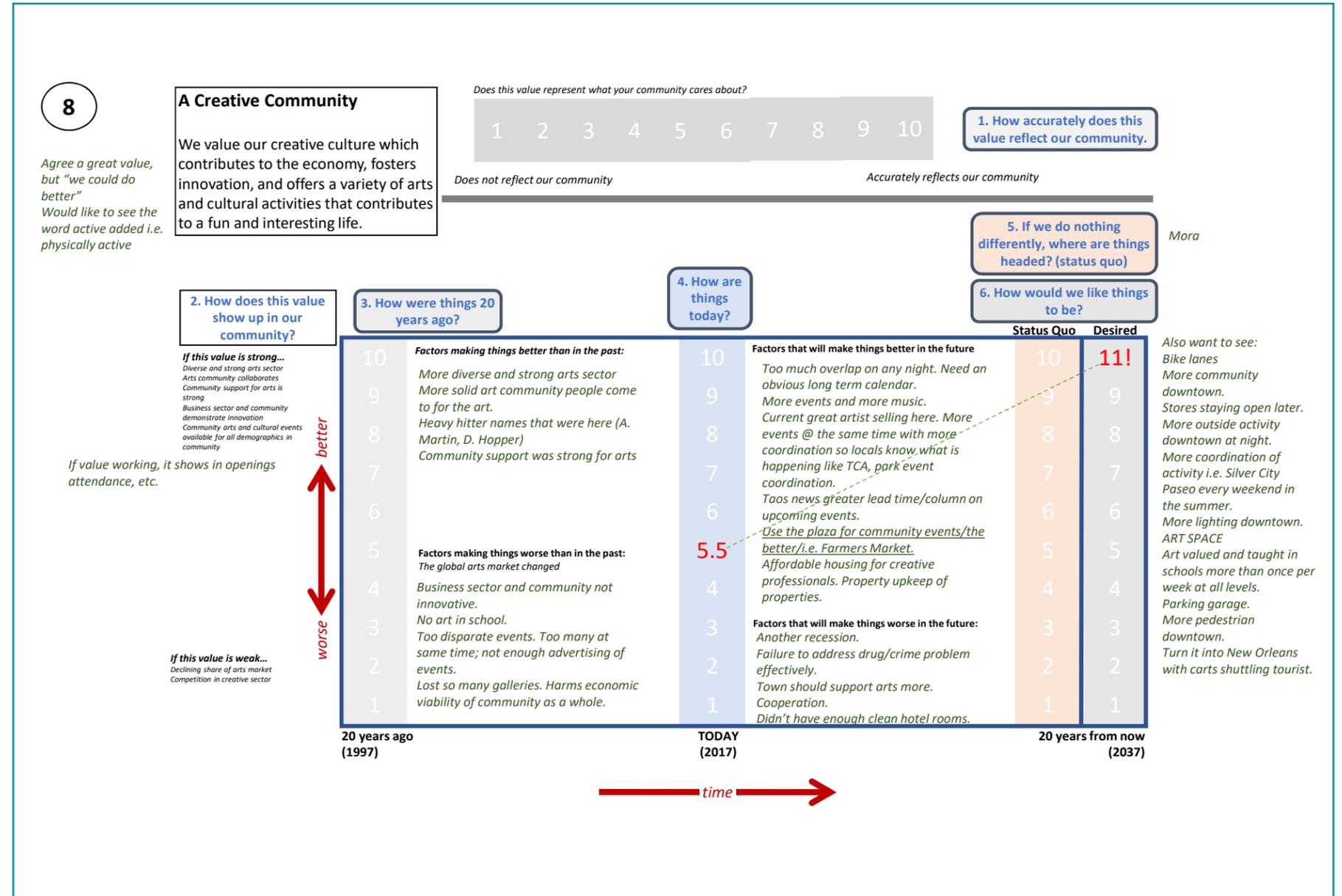
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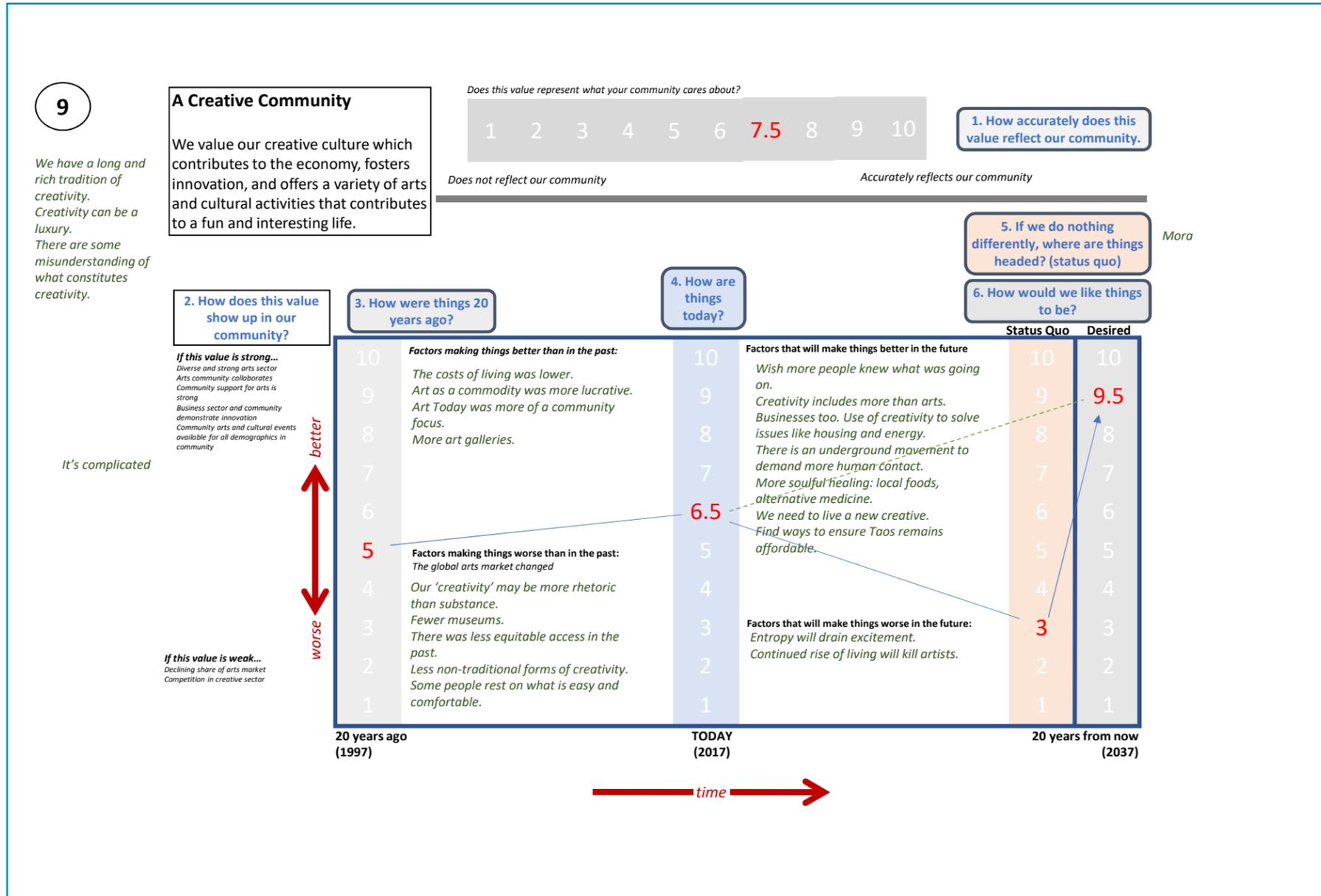
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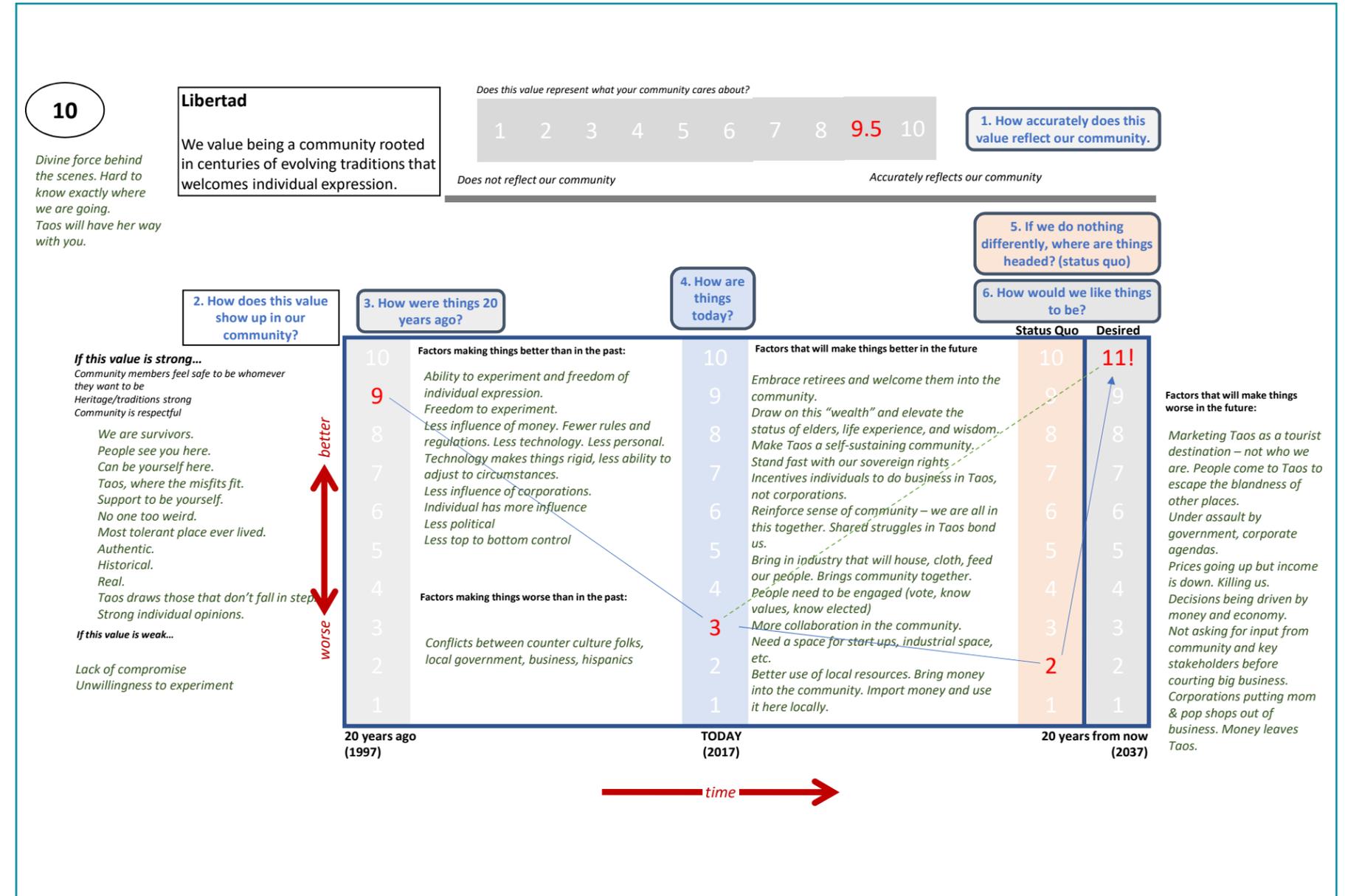
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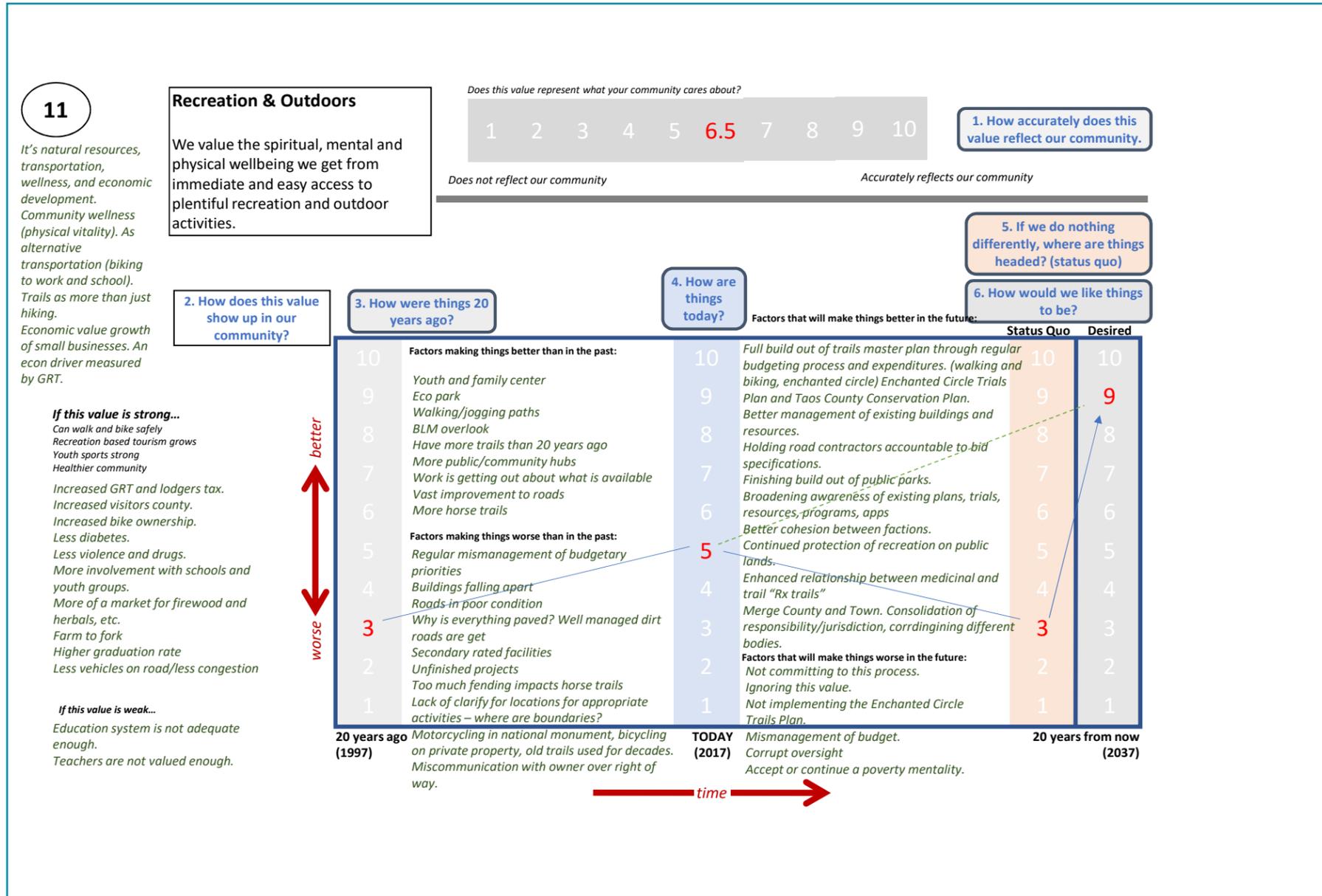
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Honoring Our Past, Creating Our Future
COMMUNITY MEETING SUMMARY
 Monday, November 27, 2018
 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.
 Bataan Memorial Hall, UNM Taos

1. Presentation: Our Vision Is Clearer, But How Do We Get There?

Following a welcome by the Mayor, Clark Anderson (Community Builders) and Marjo Curgus (Del Corazon Consulting) set the context for meeting activities by confirming our direction and addressing key community challenges. Strong At Heart has been working towards an end goal of a community vision and a downtown strategy. Strong At Heart has identified shared community values, reviewed important trends and issues affecting the status of our community values, identified key issues to be addressed, and identified focus areas for action. Some of these priorities are not dissimilar to our Vision 2020 Master Plan. The presentation from the meeting can be viewed in **Appendix A**.

2. Community Feedback: Focus Areas for a Creating A Stronger Taos

Participants had 30 minutes to review and comment on posters summarizing emerging focus areas from this effort, action to date, and generate ideas for action. The emerging focus areas include:

- 1. We have a more diverse and resilient economy that offers opportunity for Taoseños.**
- 2. We have a thriving downtown that is welcoming to all.**
- 3. We are a more affordable community with housing options.**
- 4. We manage growth in a way that is consistent with community values, enhances Taos's unique character, protects its cultural and natural resources, and supports fiscal health.**
- 5. We are an inclusive community where all Taoseños feel respected and can work together for a stronger community.**
- 6. We are a healthy community where residents have the support services they need to thrive.**
- 7. We have recreational and transportation infrastructure that creates value for Taoseños and visitors.**

The feedback gathered via the posters can be found on the following pages.

Honoring Our Past, Creating Our Future (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary
(Page 1 of 10)



A We have a more diverse and resilient economy that offers opportunities for Taoseños.

	2 VOTES	2 VOTES	6 VOTES		3 VOTES	4 VOTES	1 VOTE	2 VOTES	3 VOTES	13 VOTES
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	STRONGLY DISAGREE									STRONGLY AGREE

(please use one (1) sticky dot to indicate your response)

COMMUNITY VALUES SUPPORTED BY THIS:

IT'S HOME
We value Taos as a small town where we know each other, enjoy the slower pace that gives us more time to enjoy our great quality of life, and where we prioritize our uniqueness as essential to our community identity.

COMMITMENT TO STEWARDSHIP
Taos is inseparable from the land, water, and air that is the source of our sustenance and spiritual and mental wellbeing.

A PLACE FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES
We value our children and families that connect us to one another, teach us the importance of being caring, and roots us in place across generations.

A CREATIVE COMMUNITY
We value our creative culture which contributes to our economy, fosters innovation, and offers a variety of arts and cultural activities that contributes to a fun and interesting life.

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE'VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:

- Target specific industries to recruit and grow:
 - Clean Industries
 - Environmental and Green Industries **1 VOTE**
 - Technology
 - Recreation **1 VOTE**
 - Agriculture **2 VOTES**
- Invest in reliable infrastructure (ex. broadband) that supports economic development.
- Grow and support locally owned businesses. **2 VOTES**
- Grow and support entrepreneurs. **2 VOTES**
- Create space for start-ups. **1 VOTE**
- Identify innovation sectors in Taos to build upon local strengths. **2 VOTES**
- Market community for being a unique place, not just a tourist destination. **3 VOTES**
- More livable wages. **3 VOTES**
- More support for the arts. **2 VOTES**
- Support creative community expansion and coordination with a community events calendar, new releases, and community events column.
- More diverse businesses available locally (clothing, restaurants, shopping, home improvement, youth oriented - note these suggestions were all types: national franchises, chains, and locally owned). **1 VOTE**
- More places for locals to shop. **1 VOTE**
- Enhance recreational and transportation infrastructure that creates value for Taoseños and visitors. **2 VOTES**
- Develop more alternative education and workforce training programs in partnership with schools and businesses.
- Expand youth employment opportunities. **2 VOTES**

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:
(please use a Post-It to share your ideas below)

- Take pride in the appearance of our community i.e., litter, clean plaza, clean sidewalks in front of grocery stores, deal with abandoned building issue. **2 VOTES**
- Form a "clean" Taos committee.
- Regional Economic Development Council.
- "More diverse" than what?
- Develop infrastructure for Tech. manufacturing.
- I would like to see an updated and expanded recycling center.
- Economic Development Department or separate 501(C)(3) for Town and County. Most others in NM have this already. What happened to ours?
- Extended hours throughout businesses and youth/family center. Past 6pm youth and residents have nowhere to go.
- Poorly worded - what does that look like? How would we know?
- We must look to communities that are economically vibrant, arts, holistic health, film festivals, music and literary history/festivals, Taos Pueblo (World Heritage Site), sustainable solar, architecture and innovators are strengths in our uniquely multi-cultural community. **1 VOTE**
- Authentic culture is attraction - if the Plaza feels like Disney trinkets it's not authentic.

WHAT PLANS/ACTIVITIES DO WE HAVE RELATED TO THIS:

- Taos Entrepreneurial Network (TEN)
- Kit Carson Electric Cooperative (KCEC) Solar Initiative
- Interim Community Economic Development Strategic Plan (2011)
- Survey of Artists' Space Needs and Preferences (2010)
- Taos Arts and Cultural District Resource Team Assessment (2009)
- Town of Taos \$2,000,000 1 megawatt solar array (2017-2018)
- Town of Taos land lease to Guzman Energy for 2-megawatt-solar-array (2017-2018)- edit: 3 megawatt array by 2020
- Town of Taos Resolution on the Environment (2017)
- \$24,000,000 Airport Expansion Project (2016-2017)
- Connecting air service beginning (2018)
- \$.4,000,000 in local road improvements (2014-2017)
- \$.3,500,000 in sewer and water improvements (2014-2017)
- Town/UNM project to convert RIO Grande and Bataan Hall into a health sciences center for massage, nursing, EMT/Paramedic training (2014-2015)
- Town Masterplan for a regional fire sciences, emergency management, police and workplace safety training center, with corresponding curriculum through UNM (2017-2018)



B We are a more affordable community with housing options for everyone.

	7 VOTES	7 VOTES	3 VOTES		5 VOTES		1 VOTE		6 VOTES	17 VOTES
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	STRONGLY DISAGREE									STRONGLY AGREE

(please use one (1) sticky dot to indicate your response)

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A CREATIVE COMMUNITY
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IDEAS FOR ACTION WE'VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:

- Downtown housing. **2 VOTES**
- Homeless shelter.
- Ensure Taos has a sufficient supply of housing affordable to all Taoseños. **1 VOTE**
- Develop a short-term rental policy in the Town of Taos. **1 VOTE**
- Develop housing for creatives/artists. **1 VOTE**
- Develop affordable family housing. **2 VOTES**
- More affordable housing choices. **1 VOTE**

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:
(please use a Post-It to share your ideas below)

- Please Note: Most of us strongly agree this is the direction to go in and we strongly disagree that we have this now. We need low barrier emergency housing. **1 VOTE**
- Define "affordable" – affordable for who?
- Housing options that meet all modern codes is incredibly important, much housing lacks basics such as safe and updated electricity/plumbing, housing where landlords must uphold the responsibility to replace/renovate essentials.
- When?
- We need new leadership!
- Aesthetic, with green belts and recreation facilities to promote health and well-being.
- Smart growth principles defined, voted upon by Council, and implemented.
- Cap on AirBnB's, Home Away from Home and VRBO's OR tax this income and earmark it for workforce/affordable housing.
- Don't forget the water.
- Need houses.
- Need housing for the elderly. **1 VOTE**
- With changes in rules, affordable group homes for elders could employ people to take care of them.
- We need a warehouse type of store near the dump where people can leave things they no longer need but still have a use. Too much good stuff gets thrown out!
- We need to build on our strengths and reputation as a place that promotes the arts, music, alternative building and energy – agriculture and the farm to table food movement.
- Complicated issue – will housing developers respond.
- What Community Development/Arts funding is available? Are grants out there for low-income housing? Foundations?

WHAT PLANS/ACTIVITIES DO WE HAVE RELATED TO THIS:

- (Re)vision 2020 - Affordable Housing Element (2012)
- Interim Community Economic Development Strategic Plan (2011)
- Town and County financial support and provide property for the Taos Men's Shelter
- Town donated land and constructed the buildings for a domestic violence shelter and hires full-time domestic violence officer for the Center Against Violence and has served as financial agent for numerous operating grants
- Heart of Taos is forming a Women's Shelter and the Town is offering two 3 bedroom houses and requesting a 5 bedroom house from Northern Regional Housing Authority to be dedicated toward transitional housing for women and children
- Town/County initiative 60 units of affordable housing at Herdner Road Public Works Yard (2017-2018)
- Town initiative 60 units of affordable housing at the Mary Medina site
- 10 units of affordable home ownership housing created in conjunction with Habitat for Humanity, Homeless and private developers through Chamisa Verde, Phase 1 (2017)
- 10 lots valued at \$300,000 donated to Habitat for Humanity for construction of an additional 10 affordable first time home buyer houses for Chamisa Verde, Phase 1 (2017)
- Town in discussions with a private developer for donation of \$300,000 of land in Chamisa Verde Phase 2 for construction of 60 affordable rental units (2017-2018)
- Town Council has schedule a short-term rental policy ordinance for January 2018
- Artspace initiative - Town funded Phase 1 and 2 for \$75,000 and has funded Phase 3 for \$350,000 to create 60 units of affordable live-work downtown artist-based housing, performance and display space (2017-2019)

C We manage growth in a way that is consistent with community values, enhances Taos's unique character, protects its cultural and natural resources, and supports fiscal health.

		1 VOTE	1 VOTE	4 VOTES	1 VOTE	1 VOTE	5 VOTES	2 VOTES	3 VOTES	14 VOTES	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	STRONGLY DISAGREE										STRONGLY AGREE

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THE TAOS PUEBLO
We value the indigenous people as stewards on how to be one with our natural environment.

A CREATIVE COMMUNITY
We value our creative culture which contributes to our economy, fosters innovation, and offers a variety of arts and cultural activities that contributes to a fun and interesting life.

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE'VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:

1. Balance growth with keeping what we love about Taos.
2. Redevelop areas in decline.
3. Thoughtful growth management plan. **1 VOTE**
4. Building height limits (3-stories).
5. Better regulations that allow for traditional building patterns. **1 VOTE**
6. Beautify and expand parks and recreation. **1 VOTE**
7. Economic development industries consistent with community values. **1 VOTE**
8. More places for locals to shop. **2 VOTES**
9. More affordable housing choices. **5 VOTES**
10. More pedestrian and bike friendly. **6 VOTES**
11. Manage traffic congestion and improve road conditions. **1 VOTE**
12. Enhance recreational and infrastructure that creates value for Taoseños and visitors. **3 VOTES**
13. Protect agricultural lands and acequias. **1 VOTE**

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:
(please use a Post-It to share your ideas below)

1. Dealing with crime and repeat offenders in our community. **2 VOTES**
2. Increase neighborhood watch programs throughout Taos.
3. Build affordable tiny home communities.
4. Work with the Taos Land Trust on walking paths.
5. Managing growth does not mean stifling growth. We need to create a greater awareness of what is possible. Hoping for a kind of growth we cannot attract is futile.
6. We need new leadership.
7. We need to attract high-tech entrepreneurs plus established and recognized sustainable businesses. Must lower crime and beautify and use unoccupied businesses via some economic incentives. **1 VOTE**
8. Implementation of existing plans.
9. Change building codes to allow owner-builders to make their own homes and share land, provide simple homes for elders and let people be more free.
10. A new combined City-County government would include all players and all resources; EA character: a growth vision to include all but more efficient under unified leadership.
11. 1st time attendee – how to make town recycling more sustainable, effective and how it can be expanded and accessible to all. Glad it is here but how can it be supported effectively.
12. 2-stories is great for the views! Respectfully.

WHAT PLANS/ACTIVITIES DO WE HAVE RELATED TO THIS:

1. Rio Fernando Revitalization Group and Project
2. Taos County Conservation Plan (2017)
3. Taos Historic Plaza: Cultural Landscape Report (2016)
4. Weaving Together Past, Present, Future: Identifying Opportunity Within the Arts + Cultural District of Taos, NM (2010)
5. Taos Arts and Cultural District Resource Team Assessment (2009)
6. Taos Land Use Code Update to implement Vision 2020 Master Plan (1999)
7. Amendments to the Town's Code that have addressed:

i. Landscape	iv. Historic Preservation
ii. Dark Skies	v. Signage
iii. Community Design	vi. Noise
8. Historic Overlay Zoning District
9. Town requires new residential and commercial buildings to comply with certain sustainable building practices.

D We are an inclusive community where all Taoseños feel respected and can work together for a stronger community.

		1 VOTE	2 VOTES	3 VOTES	2 VOTES		3 VOTES	7 VOTES	2 VOTES	13 VOTES	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	STRONGLY DISAGREE										STRONGLY AGREE

COMMUNITY VALUES SUPPORTED BY THIS:

A CARING COMMUNITY
We treasure being a friendly community where diversity of all ages, backgrounds, and interests is respected fostering a sense of belonging and caring for one another.

THE TAOS PUEBLO
We value the indigenous people as stewards on how to be one with our natural environment.

LIBERTAD
We value being a community rooted in centuries of evolving traditions that welcomes individual expression.

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE'VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:

1. Reinforce sense of community and that we are all in this together.
2. Ensure people (of all ages) are registered to vote, have access to information about elected officials, and get involved. **1 VOTE**
3. Greater collaboration between the Town of Taos and Taos County. **3 VOTES**
4. Continue to revitalize the use of the plaza as a community gathering space. **3 VOTES**
5. Support programming, like Thursday night music and Farmer's Market, that brings community members together. **3 VOTES**
6. Develop new programs that bring together diverse sectors of the community to promote cross-community connections and discussions (ex. community groups, shared meals). **1 VOTE**
7. Develop cultural awareness/cultural competency training for schools and community that builds pride and respect. **1 VOTE**
8. Support new communal spaces (ex. 3rd Spaces). **2 VOTES**
9. Create a program to elevate the wisdom of elders (new comers and old-timers). We should welcome wisdom.
10. Strengthen engagement in local government.
11. Support a more open and transparent local government. **3 VOTES**

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:
(please use a Post-It to share your ideas below)

1. Transparency for all city government actions.
2. Stop criticizing people who are involved.
3. Alternative transportation (trails and bike lanes) can bring people out of their cars and together.
4. Listen and learn effective communication techniques.
5. Allow multi-unit dwellings, like several small homes on one acre with alternative energy and gardens so people can afford to live here.
6. Continue to support maint. and build more fac. For the youth.
7. Taos may be inclusive for adults but not so much for teenagers.
8. To be a more inclusive community requires blending City/County government to harness all team members towards a common (and larger) community. Yes, this is a huge concept but until we change into a form that can respond to the diverse community as it is and with all players (values) united within a whole boundary we will not make the leap from a variety of villages to a functioning larger community.
9. Have Community Action Days to make improvements, garden spaces, plant trees, clean parks, etc.

WHAT PLANS/ACTIVITIES DO WE HAVE RELATED TO THIS:

1. Strong at Heart process to build community dialogue and consensus (2016-2018)
2. Town and County joint meetings
3. Town and County submitted first joint funding application in the state for a capital outlay and CDBG for Youth and Family Center (2016-2017)
4. Town and County continue to hold joint meetings on roads, recycling, animal ordinances and sheltering, substance abuse, roads and other issues
5. Town and County are completing a joint affordable housing project for 60 units (2017-2018)
6. Town and County are working with UNM on a joint day care project (2017-2018)
7. Town and County have executed several land swaps to accommodate road, senior centers, affordable housing, public works and transfer stations (2014-2018)
8. Town and County have MOUs on fire, public safety, solid waste, and housing of prisoners
9. Regional agreements and shared services JPA's on E-911 and solid waste (2014-2018)
10. Town, County and Taos Ski Valley are actively working on coordinated marketing efforts (2017-2018)
11. Intergovernmental Council has been revitalized to create better intergovernmental cooperation and coordination (2017)
12. Activities on the Plaza: Farmer's Market, Tree Lighting, expanded Fiestas as Joint Town/Fiesta Committee cooperative effort, Taos Plaza Live, New Year's Eve celebration, Sabor: A Taste of Taos concerts, moved fireworks for 4th of July to the downtown, continued to create more usable space by leveling obstructions and replacing hardscape with grass, 17 trees to be planted on the Plaza this spring (2015-2018)
13. Cultural Landscape Report - \$100,000



E We are a healthy community where residents have the support services they need to thrive.

	1 VOTE	3 VOTES	2 VOTES	2 VOTES	2 VOTES	3 VOTES	3 VOTES	5 VOTES		11 VOTES	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	STRONGLY DISAGREE										STRONGLY AGREE

COMMUNITY VALUES SUPPORTED BY THIS:

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A PLACE FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES
We value our children and families that connect us to one another, teach us the importance of being caring, and roots us in place across generations.

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE'VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:

1. Address community substance abuse. **4 VOTES**
2. Expand after school programs. **3 VOTES**
3. Expand access to affordable childcare. **3 VOTES**
4. More activities for teens. **2 VOTES**
5. Unify charter and public school so no perception of divide. **3 VOTES**
6. More activities for teens. **1 VOTE**
7. Expand healthcare, especially mental health and aging in place. **5 VOTES**
8. Access to culturally appropriate education. **2 VOTES**

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:
(please use a Post-It to share your ideas below)

1. Training in jobs.
2. More street outreach to help the homeless population.
3. Non-school related activities for teens – have them involved.
4. How about trying to implement one of the many plans that have been developed?
5. We vote for the hospital bond issue to keep Holy Cross viable – but if a patient is low-income that patient gets shipped out to ABQ – WRONG. Patients heal better close to home.
6. We need more support for our youth. As many may know Taos has a high teen suicide rate... we need to change that.
7. Where is hospital?
8. More Fed/State funding for drug abuse.
9. Create group homes for elders with garden areas.
10. Take old buildings and make art studios to rent cheaply.
11. Provide irrigated land for community gardens and teach youth to grow and preserve food.
12. Cut crime – need to deal with drug users who break into homes.

WHAT PLANS/ACTIVITIES DO WE HAVE RELATED TO THIS:

1. Interim Community Economic Development Strategic Plan (2011)
2. The Town obtained and provided a facility for a detox center and has worked with the County to identify additional providers and programs for the community (2010-2016)
3. The Town has partnered with Taos Alive to conduct alcohol, education and training for businesses serving or selling alcohol and required alcohol sales to be made from behind a separated secured area with security (2017-2018)
4. The Town has established a computer center at the Youth and Family Center for after-school studies and allows schools to drop off students on their way home until parents can pick them up, serving as the largest after-school program in the County. The Town has increased security and installed complete internal and external video surveillance to ensure student safety (2017)
5. The Town has increased speed and access to computers for students at the Town's Library (2016-2017)
6. UNM, Town and County initiative to establish a daycare center for working and student parents (45 slots) at Town Hall for free for two years to start and then to transition into the larger currently being renovated Ancianos Senior Center, which the Town will deed to the County (2017-2018)
7. Movies in the Park (2015-2018)
8. The Toolbox/Taos Hub (2016-2018)
9. Summer reading program
10. The Town has expanded Halloween in the downtown, New Year's Eve and other Town events to include after-event teen dances and other alcohol and substance free events in a secure environment (2017-2018)
11. The Town will begin reinstating teen dances at the Youth and Family Center beginning this winter (2018)



F We have a thriving downtown that is welcoming to all.

	1 VOTE		2 VOTES	4 VOTES	1 VOTE	2 VOTES	8 VOTES	1 VOTE	1 VOTE	13 VOTES	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	STRONGLY DISAGREE										STRONGLY AGREE

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IDEAS FOR ACTION WE'VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:

1. Create a more walkable downtown. **3 VOTES**
2. Develop and implement a Downtown Plan that integrates more affordable living, creates a better transportation network and revitalizes and rehabilitates buildings and spaces (ex. the plaza). **1 VOTE**
3. Invest in reliable infrastructure (ex. broadband) that supports economic development. **3 VOTES**
4. Grow and support locally owned businesses and entrepreneurs. **4 VOTES**
5. Support public art. **1 VOTE**
6. Rehabilitate and restore areas of decline. **2 VOTES**
7. Beautify the plaza (more attractive lighting, sitting places, green it up). **2 VOTES**
8. More programming events that bring the community together, celebrate diversity, and are family friendly. **1 VOTE**
9. Free and/or more parking for locals. **1 VOTE**
10. Address traffic congestion. **3 VOTES**
11. More locally oriented businesses downtown in addition to tourism.
12. Businesses more welcoming to locals. **1 VOTE**
13. Housing downtown. **2 VOTES**
14. More support for the arts and creative community.

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:
(please use a Post-It to share your ideas below)

1. How do we deal with aggressive panhandlers?
2. "Thriving" is a different topic than "Welcoming." (Mixed message! Try again.)
3. Panhandlers are facing a discriminatory permit for occupying space and projecting art, this in no way supports the music and arts, people who play the streets are struggling and cannot pay for a permit, also there is a possibility of selective approval, this violates freedom of speech.
4. Taos has more attractions for tourists than locals. The downtown area does not appeal to younger crowds.
5. Close the Plaza to vehicular traffic and create an environment that encourages socializing (i.e., cafes). Let people sell food, make music on the Plaza – No Cars. Fewer rules. **1 VOTE**
6. Implement the Enchanted Circle Trails Plan. **2 VOTES**
7. Maybe allowed busking areas, are supported and defended/protected.

WHAT PLANS/ACTIVITIES DO WE HAVE RELATED TO THIS:

1. New Mexico Department of Transportation redesign of NM 68/US 64 to include north and southbound sidewalks and bicycle lanes (2017-2020)
2. Taos Historic Plaza: Cultural Landscape Report (2016)
3. Weaving Together Past, Present, Future: Identifying Opportunity Within the Arts + Cultural District of Taos, NM (2010)
4. Taos Arts and Cultural District Resource Team Assessment (2009)
5. Town of Taos Bicycle Master Plan (2002)
6. The Town's Downtown Zoning District does not require off-street parking (which is an impediment to downtown redevelopment in other communities). There is also no building setback requirement so downtown buildings can be built up to the sidewalk, which helps to activate downtown streets.
7. ADA improvements, landscape and irrigation throughout the downtown (2017-2018)
8. Family-friendly community events
9. Enchanted Circle Trails Plan (2017)



G We have recreational and transportation infrastructure that creates value for Taoseños and visitors.

IS THIS THE RIGHT DIRECTION FOR US TO MOVE IN?
(please use one (1) sticky dot to indicate your response)

1

2

3

4
1 VOTE

5
5 VOTES

6

7
4 VOTES

8
5 VOTES

9
2 VOTES

10
12 VOTES

STRONGLY DISAGREE

STRONGLY AGREE

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Taos is inseparable from the land, water, and air that is the source of our sustenance and spiritual and mental wellbeing.

RECREATION & THE OUTDOORS
We value the spiritual, mental and physical wellbeing we get from immediate and easy access to plentiful recreation and outdoor activities.

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE'VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:

1. Implement the Enchanted Circle Trails Plan. **1 VOTE**
2. Create more walking and biking paths for youth to get around safely. **3 VOTES**
3. Create a more walkable downtown. **1 VOTE**
4. Invest in parks. **2 VOTES**
5. Maintain access to public lands for recreation purposes. **1 VOTE**
6. Build awareness of existing recreation and outdoor plans and resources.

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:
(please use a Post-It to share your ideas below)

1. Bicycle Plan needs to cooperate with NM 64 redesign as it happens. **2 VOTES**
2. Thistle management (elimination). **1 VOTE**
3. We need walking streets like John Dunn – no cars **1 VOTE**
4. Alternative road than only one congesting downtown.
5. Engage with health community to encourage outdoor activity.
6. Bike and walking paths all over and parking areas connected to bus routes – rental bikes at lots also.
7. A more pedestrian friendly downtown: Close down streets, clean up the parks significantly, mini-parks like San Francisco. **1 VOTE**
8. Get drugs out of the park!
9. Clean up parks, take care of trees and landscaping.
10. Offer hazardous dispensers for needles at public spaces, we cannot act like the drug problem doesn't exist. Employees and children are at risk of accidental jabs when handling trash or sitting on a needle in grass. **2 VOTES**

WHAT PLANS/ACTIVITIES DO WE HAVE RELATED TO THIS:

1. New Mexico Department of Transportation redesign of NM 68/US 64 to include north and southbound sidewalks and bicycle lanes (2017-2020)
2. Rocky Mtn Youth Corps and Enchanted Circle Trails Coalition working to increase hiking and biking trails in and around Taos.
3. Town of Taos Parks Master Plan (2017-2018)
4. Enchanted Circle Trails Plan (2017)
5. Town of Taos Bicycle Master Plan (2002)

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3. Community Discussion: Tackling Trade-offs and Tensions -Using Our Values to Guide Action

Strong At Heart identified discussions that need more clear direction from the community. The goal of achieving a more prosperous future and stronger Taos includes the interrelated issues of addressing types and form of industry, managing growth, and building a more cohesive & collaborative community.

- 1. Moving from the Economy We Have to the Economy We Want: Choices and Tradeoffs**
- 2. Developing Principles for Managing Growth Consistent with Our Values**
- 3. Building A More Inclusive and Collaborative Community: Finding Starting Points for Living Our Multicultural Values**
- 4. Strengthening Civic Culture: Ideas for Improving Local Participation, Collaborative Problem Solving, and Government Transparency.**

Meeting participants self-selected into one of four groups to discuss these issues and how best to approach them going forward. Handouts were provided in each discussion group that provided background context and links to resources on best practices. These discussion guides are provided in **Appendix B.**

Discussion 1: Moving from the Economy We Have to the Economy We Want

The group began with an initial discussion about what “prosperity” means in Taos.

- 1. How do we want to define prosperity for Taos?**
 - Shared prosperity. We are all in it together.
 - Aesthetics: attractive, vibrant, inviting.
 - There is a healthy local business climate. This looks like: GRT increase, successful / more locally owned businesses, people shop locally.
 - Strong meaningful employment with good living wages. Need more good jobs. Improved potential for economic mobility.
 - Youth and our children have opportunity for good jobs/income.
 - Community abundance. Consider that prosperity is not just about how much money we have. It is about what we get from living here.
 - Businesses work together. Sense of community/support network of businesses in the downtown area with comradery and cohesion.
 - Self-sufficiency. A place where people and businesses can make it w/out reliance on outside investment.
 - A place that is economically diverse.
- 2. What are some guiding principles for...**
 - a) Sustaining/Expanding Tourism**
 - Attract a quality of tourist that shares a respect for the natural environment
 - Leverage sports & recreation events/activities/tournaments
 - Diversify lodging options/established campgrounds

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- Manage short term rentals: property tax increase, pay lodger’s tax, register as a business and pay GRT.
- Expand housing: affordable workforce and rentals for employees key to success of businesses

b) Strengthening Other Existing Sectors

- UNM Taos is a critical asset.
- Agriculture: extend local food growth with greenhouses
- Expand architectural experiences and options: earth ships, adobe, passive solar
- Internet tech based businesses e.g. Siriusware, at home businesses, strong broadband, location neutral
- Artists: attract students – our arts community
- Alternative health care practitioners
- Health, wellness, and aging care
- Bikes/cyclist: high altitude training
- Architecture/housing for retirement: valverde commons, group homes, memory care, assisted living

c) Attracting New Sectors

- Location neutral, high speed broadband, internet based business
- Expand environmental film festival with health festival- come together
- Educational tourism – CE credits
- Conferences – e.g. Keystone Symposium
- Artisan economies: e.g. chocate, cashmere, weavers, small to global furniture, value added products
- Shop Taos First/Taos First Buy Local Campaign and Hire Local
- Local energy production

d) Investing In Place

- NM Permanent Fund – Bolster local business, energy, and early childhood
- Don’t sprawl – smart growth and infill development
- Bike lanes and pedestrian safety
- Infrastructure: existing, water, sewer, electric: do it once, assemble \$\$
- Street lighting and dark skies
- Quality parks – green space requirement for scales, funds for town to maintain
- Trails
- Housing in 2nd story
- Improve public transit/RTD weekends and TSV and late night
- Convention center
- Vote turnout
- Policies / laws need to change and then need to be enforced

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- 3. What do we need for workforce preparedness?**
- K-12 greatly need improvement and to be competitive
 - Curriculum broadened to include work training and trades
 - Foster work ethic
 - Clean low impact jobs for high tech manufacturing technology
 - Employment chases competent employees
 - Strengths to build on? Lifestyle, quality of life, culture, acequia history of native culture, accessible for music theater and sports, amazing public lands and world class skiing, diverse population, sustainable and holistic groups.

Discussion 2: Growing Consistent with Our Values

- 1. Creating more economic opportunities while protecting what we love about Taos...how do we describe the balance we refer to?**

Balanced	Not Balanced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscaping and architecture • Infrastructure investments that highlight our natural assets • Housing and business units with more space (square footage) and that are more affordable • Living wage • Densify development • Transportation justice (alternative transportation options) • Connected transportation • Affordable/livable housing • Business that offers a livable wage and benefits the community • Shop local initiative • Parking options • Better use of underdeveloped properties (code enforcement and condemnation) • Mixed-use development • Predictable, consistent and streamlined process for developers • Innovation in entrepreneurship • Focus on growth in clusters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Health ○ Healthy lifestyle ○ Renewable energy ○ Location neutral businesses • Market what is already here • Shared office/incubation space • Grow economy around our assets • Community benefit component of business application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing not balanced today • Foreign or non-local big business paying low wages and putting local business under

- 2. What type of development do we want?**
- Development that benefits our community
 - Reward creative projects
 - Development and infrastructure that works to better connect the community:
 - Dense development
 - Mixed-use
 - Transportation options
 - Development that is sustainable, efficient, low footprint
 - Development that incorporates affordable housing
 - Growth in education and increased funding

- 3. What should this development look like?**

What We Want:

- 2005-2006 Transportation Plan
- Manzanita Market (communal space)
- Farmhouse
- John Dunn Plaza
- Sawmill House of Trust
- Co-working/incubator spaces
- Siriusware (encourage walkability)
- Expand walkable and bikable development:
 - Build infrastructure to support this
 - Incentivize this
 - Align regulations to support this

What We Don't Want:

- Airbnb
 - Regulate how many are allowed
 - Tax to help with local housing challenges

- 4. Where should this development be located?**

- Locate walkable and bikable development near existing infrastructure and nodes
- Infill in town
 - Incentivize filling empty building
- Cañon
- Don't build on the places that provide us with food and inspiration

- 5. What are our recommendations?**

- Update regulations to align with our community values
 - Build community support and political will for this
- Increase cooperation with county land use
- Better code enforcement/improve existing properties
- Explore opportunities to grow upwards to preserve the places that are important to us
- Create opportunities for shared work space and infrastructure

- Development that is sensitive to its context/protect historic neighborhoods
 - Preserve acequias to define neighborhoods
- Be bold and creative on the way we approach monies and funding
 - Airbnb tax
 - Non-resident tax
 - Park tax
 - Impact fees
- Ensure that neighborhoods have adequate park space and recreation opportunities
- Better collaboration between the Town, County, and Pueblo

Discussion 3: Building More Inclusive Community

- 1. What ideas do you have for a more inclusive community?**

SHORT TERM

- Story circles and dialogues
- Neighborhood associations
- Education (books, series)
 - Harwood Museum Series
- Acknowledge the segregation
- Locations, "pockets" of comfort
- Meet people
- Visit Taos Pueblo during the Feasts
- Take a tour on any day the Pueblo is open to learn about Pueblo history

LONG TERM

- Reconciliation commission: schools, businesses, arts coming together
- Deep, sincere dialogue
- Strengths building
- "Code of Taos County"
 - Less like a city code and more a code of tradition and respecting people. May include a brief history of our heritage.
- Multiculturalism events: ceremony, recapture the fiestas
- Deconstruct racism
- Rename "Columbus Day" to "Indigenous People's Day"

- 2. Who could be a convener, sponsor, or lead for these ideas?**

- Casa Taos: reading to end racism – Daniel Escalante
- Strong At Heart Participants: 11.27.17
 - Begin change with ourselves first.
- Town and County Planning for "Code of Taos"
- Taos Historic Society
- Taos Chamber of Commerce
- Radio and PSAs: Moccasin Wire and KTAO

- Quechua
- Education lecture series
- Government Proclamation Day
- Sensitivity training for new city employees

- 3. What should the next steps be?**

- Discussion groups
- Interfaith Council/Culture group
- Understand that Inclusivity means **everyone** – regardless of race, or time spent in Taos
- What programs/groups are already existing?
 - Reach out to diverse groups like Parent-Teacher Associations for all schools, church groups, etc.
- How do we not preach to the choir?
- How do groups begin to talk to each other?
- "This is what reconciliation looks like to me..." in arts – Taos Arts Council Association?
 - Ask for a visual representation of reconciliation. This can be in the form of a painting, sculpture, play, song, poem, writing, or another form of art.
 - Ask Native and Hispanic Arts what reconciliation looks like so it is on terms of the persons who are oppressed.
- Avoid labels
- Just be kind: hope is re-gifted
- Own your bias, own your privilege

- 4. Any volunteers?**

- Daniel Brown
- Irene Loy

Discussion 4: Strengthening Our Civic Capacity

- 1. What are our goals for strengthening civic capacity in Taos?**

- We want to be proactive, not just reactive. We tend to engage when we are against something. We also need to advocate and work for what we want.
- We want to treat each other with more respect and be civil.
- We need to more collaborative regionally. We are all in this together.
- We want to feel heard but also need to understand the processes for dialogue with our Council, not just rely on the Public Hearing process. Are there new processes or best practices we can adopt?

- 2. What are some of our challenges?**

- At public hearings, it is the last step in the process. You are allowed to make a comment, but not have a discussion.
- At public hearings and city council, you make a comment or write a letter, but you may not be acknowledged or know what difference it makes. It makes residents feel they are not heard.

- How do we identify newer ways of doing things?
 - How do we create more opportunities to engage different voices and have more equality or balance in making comments?
 - Are there other processes we can institute? Are there more culturally appropriate ways to engage people?
 - What are the existing methods? Open door hours? Formal versus informal communication?
- How do we deal with the outsider culture? How do we determine who is disempowered versus simply does not want to be involved?

2. What are ideas for how Taos could strengthen its civic capacity?

SHORTER TERM

- Better promote existing monthly development planning review meetings with staff or come up with an alternative method to Q&A
- Create an educational on-line information page for people to learn how to become involved.
- Make the notification process for agendas automated with email sign up versus having to call the Town Clerk
- Create a formal online comment process where you know it was received, read, and there is follow up.
- Connect with Leadership Taos (Austin Cox)
- The timing of agendas (Friday before meetings) makes it harder for community members to know whether they should attend. Create longer term “discussion topics” that are announced with a proposed schedule. This would work for policy discussions. For development proposals consider broader neighborhood notification requirement.
- Create more opportunities for dialogue.
 - In arts community, Art Salons
 - Think Tanks to focus on issues
 - At the neighborhood outreach level
- Advertise how to communicate formally and informally with the elected body.
- Celebrate successes more often – we do it right too!

LONGER TERM

- Strengthen organizational networks for collaborative problem solving. The Early Childhood Network is a good example. The Community Foundation is going to initiate 8 collaborative pathway dialogues.
- Strengthen intergovernmental relationships to create more effective regionalism
- Reintroduce civics education for youth to learn how the process works
- Create educational programming for community members to learn government process
- Create more volunteer opportunities for people to be introduced at different levels and build leadership capacity over time
- Create a civility program that teaches behavior. Leaders and community members model it! Use arts groups for a campaign.

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3. Who could conveners or sponsors be?

- Networks: Community Foundation, Interfaith Alliance
- Schools and arts groups: for Civic Mindedness and Education
- Local Government: for system improvement for community meetings and public participation to engage people?
- Strong At Heart? Brand it? Carry community engagement long term?

4. What might be immediate next steps?

- The Renaissance 20/20 project can integrate civics into arts campaign (examples were discussed from other communities like [Mountain Manners](#) and community civility projects like in [Boise](#) and [Gunnison](#))
- It is on every one of us to each own and model civility. Start with being self-accountable!

Next Steps

During January, the Strong At Heart team will be working to use the input collected to date to create draft guiding principles, goals and strategies. These draft goals and strategies will correspond to the 7 focus areas and community values. Learning activities will be organized in early February 2018 for Taoseños to learn about how different strategies might achieve different goals. In late February, a public design workshop is planned to apply all we have learned to a specific strategy for our downtown.

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**COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GROUP A:
Moving from the Economy We Have to the Economy We Want:
Choices and Tradeoffs**

WHAT TAOS HAS SAID ABOUT BUILDING A STRONGER AND MORE DIVERSE ECONOMY DURING STRONG AT HEART: COMMUNITY VALUES AND GOALS

Taoseños would like a stronger more diverse economy that balances more and better paying jobs that will make Taos more livable but also complement Taos' uniqueness and sense of place. During the October community meeting, interrelated goals emerged around economic development and quality of life.

Build a stronger more diverse and resilient economy through the following strategies:

- Target specific industries
- Clean industries
- Environment and green industries
- Technology industries
- Recreation economy

Develop and implement a downtown plan that integrates more affordable living, creates a better transportation network and revitalizes and rehabilitates buildings and spaces (e.g. plaza).

- Invest in reliable infrastructure that supports economic development (e.g. energy, broadband).
- Grow and support locally owned businesses and entrepreneurs.
- Support creative community expansion and coordination with a community events calendar, new releases, and community events column.
- Identify innovation sectors in Taos to build upon local strengths.
- Create a start-up space.
- Market community for it being a unique place, not just a tourist destination.

Enhance recreational and transportation infrastructure that creates value for Taoseños and visitors.

- Implement the Enchanted Circle Trails Plan.
- Create more walking and biking paths for youth to get around safely.
- Create a more walkable downtown.
- Invest in parks.
- Maintain access to public lands for recreation purposes.
- Build awareness of existing recreation and outdoor plans and resources.

Support a vital agricultural industry in Taos.

- Protect and restore acequia infrastructure and systems. (Support work of Rio Fernando group)
- Support high value agricultural operations.
- Promote community gardens.
- Expand policy incentives that can support agricultural operations.
- Disincentivize agricultural land conversion.
- Implement the Taos County Conservation Plan.

Create pathways of opportunity for Taoseños.

- Develop more alternative education and workforce training programs in partnership with schools and businesses.
- Expand youth employment opportunities.

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STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES FOR STRENGTHENING LOCAL ECONOMIES

Building the economy you want requires understanding your own strengths and opportunities and pursuing the appropriate strategies. Economic development has a number of approaches that can be applied to a comprehensive economic development plan. Most frequently, communities emphasize more than one approach recognizing it is about how the different strategies work together. The Town has an economic development plan adopted in 2011. http://nmmredi.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Town_of-Taos_CED_Strategic_Plan.pdf

1. Cluster Based Strategy
Clusters are geographic concentrations of competing and collaborating firms that tend to produce innovation and higher than average wages. Cluster-based economic development strategies are interventions designed to improve a cluster's performance by addressing the common needs of businesses within the cluster.
http://icma.org/en/international/resources/insights/Article/101968/ClusterBased_Economic_Development_Strategies
<https://smartgrowthamerica.org/resources/made-in-place/?download=yes&key=44389930>

2. Entrepreneurial Development & Economic Gardening Based Strategy
Economic gardening is an entrepreneurial approach to economic development that seeks to grow the local economy from within. Its premise is that local entrepreneurs create the companies that bring new wealth and economic growth to a region in the form of jobs, increased revenues, and a vibrant local business sector. Economic gardening seeks to focus on growing and nurturing local businesses rather than hunting for “big game” outside the area.
http://icma.org/en/Article/100633/Seven_Steps_to_Developing_an_Economic_Gardening_Implementation_Strategy
http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/documents/kn/Document/301732/Role_of_Entrepreneurship_Innovation_in_Regional_Economic_Development

3. Asset Based Strategy
Asset-based economic development is a bottom-up approach to economic development that builds on existing local resources to strengthen local and regional economies. Asset-based economic development focuses on a community's natural environmental, socio-cultural, and economic advantages and how these can be leveraged into sustained economic growth and productivity. It focuses on building capacity in communities and strengthening connections within regions.
<https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/publications/Pages/default.aspx>

4. Business Retention & Expansion Strategy (BR&E)
Focuses on business assistance and targeted assistance with acceleration with the goal of keeping what you have and helping it grow.
<https://www.cdext.purdue.edu/signature-programs/economic-business-development/business-retention-expansion/>

5. Business Attraction Strategy
Economic development marketing and attraction are techniques used to attract prospective firms. Incentives, marketing, and policies that recruit companies to move into a community and create jobs. The firms may be relocating to the community, expanding from their current location, or starting up new operations in the community.
http://icma.org/en/Article/102200/Incentives_for_Business_Attraction_and_Retention
<http://www.slideshare.net/FourthEconomy/economic-development-marketing-attraction-trends-tools-tactics>
http://www.slideshare.net/wright0405/rethinking-economic-development-marketing?next_slideshow=1

6. Place Value Strategy
Building a strong and resilient economy starts with creating a great community where people want to live and work. Both business owners and community members overwhelmingly value community quality above other factors when choosing a place to live or start a business.
<https://communitybuilders.org/how-we-help/research/place-value>

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**COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GROUP A:
Moving from the Economy We Have to the Economy We Want:
Choices and Tradeoffs**

1. How should we define prosperity for our community? What are some of the tensions that exist between our values and hopes for the future?

2. A diverse and resilient economy is one where there are multiple strong industry sectors. Taos's economy does have some diversity, just not all of them are as strong as tourism. What guidance or principles do we want to recommend to the Town and economic development partners for building on what we have while we begin the longer process of fostering new opportunities?

Sustaining and/or Expanding Tourism

Strengthening Other Existing Sectors/Industries

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Attracting New Sectors/Industries

Investing in Place

3. What should the Town of Taos and economic development partners do to engage the community in discussions about trade-offs between economic development opportunities and other values when they may occur?

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**COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GROUP B:
Developing Principles for Managing Growth with Our Values**

WHAT TAOS HAS SAID ABOUT GROWING CONSISTENT WITH OUR VALUES DURING STRONG AT HEART:

Taosños would like a stronger more diverse economy that balances more and better paying jobs that will make Taos more livable but also complement Taos' uniqueness and sense of place. This is consistent with the vision created during Vision 2020 that articulates: "By balancing the need for increased opportunities and the need to protect the unique qualities that Taos residents value, Taosños will flourish in their home community." Ideas emerging around this notion of growth and character include:

1. Build a stronger more diverse and resilient economy.
2. Develop and implement a downtown plan that integrates more affordable living, creates a better transportation network and revitalizes and rehabilitates buildings and spaces (e.g. plaza).
3. Enhance recreational and transportation infrastructure that creates value for Taosños and visitors.
4. Support a vital agricultural industry in Taos and protect acequias.
5. Build more affordable housing.
6. Develop better planning frameworks (growth management plan and development codes).
7. Support local entrepreneurs and businesses. More local businesses (shopping, restaurants, stores, youth friendly businesses, etc)
8. Protect historical character and natural resources (water, air, wildlife).

STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES FOR MANAGING GROWTH

1. Taos Walking Map of Historical Architectural Styles
<http://gbasantafe.com/taos-walking-map-historical-architectural-styles/>
2. Querencia: Placemaking in the Heart of Northern New Mexico
http://digitalrepository.unm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1007&context=crs_rio_chama
3. RESET: Assessing Future Housing Markets in the Rocky Mountain West
<https://communitybuilders.org/how-we-help/research/reset>
4. RESTORE: Commercial and Mixed-Use Development Trends in the Rocky Mountain West
<https://communitybuilders.org/how-we-help/research/restore>
5. Missing Middle: Responding to the Demand for Walkable Urban Living
<http://missingmiddlehousing.com/>
6. Higher-Density Development - Myth and Fact
http://uli.org/wp-content/uploads/ULI-Documents/HigherDensity_MythFact.ashx_.pdf

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EXAMPLES OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES

When making and adopting legislative land use decisions, consider the impacts of:

- **Economic prosperity.** Encourage land use decisions that support a low-carbon economy and foster employment growth, competitiveness, and equitably- distributed household prosperity.
- **Human health.** Encourage land use decisions that avoid or minimize negative health impacts and improve opportunities for Portlanders to lead healthy, active lives.
- **Environmental health.** Encourage land use decisions that recognize, incorporate, and sustain valuable ecosystem services related to air, water, and land quality, and the intrinsic value of nature.
- **Equity.** Encourage land use decisions that reduce existing disparities, minimize burdens, extend benefits, and improve socio-economic opportunities for under- served and under-represented populations.
- **Resilience.** Encourage land use decisions that improve the ability of individuals, communities, economic systems, and the natural and built environment to recover from natural and human-made disasters, climate change, and economic shifts.

**COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GROUP B:
Developing Principles for Managing Growth Consistent with Our Values**

1. The Vision 2020 plan and Strong At Heart have both identified that a majority of Taosños want to grow in a way that offers more economic opportunity but is balanced with protecting what we love about Taos. How do we describe what "balance" is to decision makers who have to interpret our meaning?

Examples of Balanced	Examples of Not Balanced

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2. In community planning, the **TYPE/FUNCTION** of development (ex. commercial, residential, industrial, etc.), the **CHARACTER/LOOK** of development (building design, scale of buildings, site design, etc.), and the **LOCATION** (in town vs. in the county, in the core of town vs. the edge of town, proximity to existing streets, water, sewer, parks, etc.) are tools that can be used to align development with community goals. How can these different tools be used more effectively in Taos?

Type/Function Of Development (What types of development do we want?)

The Character/Look (What should different types of development look like?)

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The Location (What type of development goes where? Does the character/look and type/function of development need to be different based on location?)

3. Let's summarize our ideas, what can we agree on that we want to recommend to Strong At Heart and the Town of Taos going forward about how we grow consistent with our values?

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**COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GROUP C:
HOW CAN TAOS COMMIT TO FOSTERING A MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY?**

**WHAT TAOS HAS SAID ABOUT BUILDING A MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY DURING STRONG AT HEART:
COMMUNITY VALUES AND GOALS**

The desire for a more inclusive community was identified as a key issue and a wish for the future during Phase 1 Public Input. While there is a deep appreciation of multiculturalism, there is also a recognition that Taos is not living up to the value of inclusion across social, economic, or community participation sectors.

A Caring Community
We treasure being a friendly community where diversity of all ages, backgrounds, and interests is respected fostering a sense of belonging and caring for one another.

The Taos Pueblo
We value the indigenous people as stewards.

Libertad
We value being a community rooted in centuries of evolving traditions that welcomes individual expression.

STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES FOR FOSTERING A MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

Enhancing cultural competency and fostering inclusivity requires a commitment from all levels of government and community institutions. So how do communities approach fostering community inclusion?

- a. **CITIZEN BOARDS OR TASK FORCES:** A common approach is to create a citizen's board who can focus on organizing community training on cultural competency and diversity, celebrating community multi-culturalism, assessing or advising on programs, responding to negative events, advising departments on sensitivity, building relationships between local government and diverse populations, fostering new leadership, and supporting community engagement of diverse populations. These boards often have support of the local government(s) and are funded with a facilitator for the first 6 months to a year to support first building board member trust and skill in addressing these complex issues and second, developing an action plan.
- b. **DEDICATED STAFF PEOPLE:** Another approach is to create staff positions focused on increasing accessibility and inclusion. As an example, Gunnison County has a grant funded multicultural coordinator within the Public Health Department to support the immigrant population with access to health care resources. Hiring a staff person does enhance service delivery, but cannot be the only approach taken to enhance organizational cultural competency.
- c. **ACCESSIBILITY FOR ENGAGEMENT:** Lastly, accessibility of information is important for building trust and understanding with the public. Things like child care, meeting times, or translating key documents can demonstrate a commitment to community inclusion. While not every language is written, many local governments provide multi-lingual websites and translation of key documents (E.G. a summary of plan outcomes). An easy first step for all local governments is to add Google Translate to their websites. While it does not offer a truly professional quality of translation, it greatly increases accessibility for very little effort.
- d. **COMMUNITY BUILDING:** Programming that is focused on connecting people in a common sense of purpose, commitment, and action around community. These are often community driven efforts intended to build relationships necessary for working together.
- e. **CAPACITY BUILDING:** Local organizations, government, and foundations often sponsor training programs and workshops to build capacity for equity, inclusion, and cultural competency.

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INCLUSIVITY RESOURCES

- f. Engaging Hispanic and Latino Communities: <http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/2016-51LatinoCommunicationsGuide.pdf>
- g. City of Seattle Guide for Inclusion and Engagement <https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSII/GRE/OPEguide01-11-12.pdf>
- h. Immigrant Integration Toolkit <https://www.gcir.org/publications/toolkit>
- i. Everyday Democracy resources for addressing racism: <https://www.everyday-democracy.org/resources/racial-equity>
- j. Building Inclusive Communities Toolkit: <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/culture/cultural-competence/culturally-competent-organizations/main>
- k. City of Eugene Strategic Plan for Inclusivity: <https://www.eugene-or.gov/DocumentView.aspx?DID=515>
- l. City of Boulder Inclusivity Project One Boulder: <https://www.bouldercounty.org/news/boulder-county-commissioners-approve-inclusivity-resolution/>
- m. City of Westminster Inclusivity Board and Programs: <https://www.cityofwestminster.us/Government/BoardsCommissions/InclusivityBoard>
- n. City of Ontario Diversity Board/Diverse Ontario Project: <http://celebratingdiversity.ca/resources>
- o. Mohawk Student Club: <https://www.npr.org/2017/11/16/563311015/native-american-students-fight-discrimination-by-celebrating-their-heritage>
- p. Gunnison County, CO Multicultural Coordinator: <http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/650/Multicultural-Resources>
- q. Google Translate
 - o Google Translate Instructions to Add to Website <https://translate.google.com/manager/website/>
- r. Community Building Initiatives:
 - o *Salida Soup: A community potluck to fund community projects* <https://www.gopca.com/salida-soup/>
 - o *Annual Community Dinner*: <http://www.bvstrong.com/>
 - o *Neighborhood Navigators Program*: <http://eaglevouth.org/index.php/main/integreat-ercv/youth-and-family-engagement>

Defining an Inclusive Community (example)

1. Does everything that it can to respect all its citizens, gives them full access to resources, and promotes equal treatment and opportunity.
2. Works to eliminate all forms of discrimination.
3. Engages all its citizens in decision-making processes that affect their lives.
4. Values diversity.
5. Responds quickly to racist and other discriminating incidents.

City of Riverside Principles for Inclusive Community from Mayor's Forum

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY. Increasing diversity means that all of us, as individuals, need to learn continuously about our differences while also seeking common ground based on our similarities, our linked goals, and our commitment to the best in basic human and American values.

GROUP RESPONSIBILITY: Like any large city, riverside is both a community and the home to many smaller communities, such as extended families, neighborhoods, schools, religious institutions, ethnic organizations, youth groups, and diverse affinity associations. A key to Riverside's future will be our ability to develop a balance between unity (a collective sense of community) and diversity (the inevitability of smaller communities).

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY: Riverside institutions, both public and private, should be role models of inclusiveness by demonstrating a commitment to fairness, equality, respect, and understanding.

THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE: All Riversiders need to recognize that change is inevitable and that we can influence its directions while also making constructive adaptations.

WITH THESE PRINCIPLES IN MIND, WE AS RIVERSIDERS - ACCEPTING OUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS INDIVIDUALS, AS MEMBERS OF GROUPS, AND AS PARTICIPANTS IN INSTITUTIONS - HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES TO THE GOAL OF BUILDING A MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY. <http://www.riversideca.gov/mayor/pdf/inclusive-community-statement.pdf>

*Honoring Our Past, Creating Our Future (Phase 1)
Discussion Handouts and Summary (Page 10 of 14)*

**COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GROUP C:
HOW CAN TAOS COMMIT TO FOSTERING A MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY?**

1. Where could the Taos community start? What could be a first step? What might be more long term?

Shorter Term	Longer Term

2. Who could be approached to convene, sponsor, or lead an effort like this?

3. What should next steps be?

*Honoring Our Past, Creating Our Future (Phase 1)
Discussion Handouts and Summary (Page 11 of 14)*

**COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GROUP D:
HOW CAN TAOS STRENGTHEN CIVIC CULTURE?
Ideas for Improving Local Participation, Collaborative Problem Solving, and Government Transparency.**

STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES FOR STRENGTHENING CIVIC CAPACITY

As part of being an inclusive community, Strong At Heart has identified a desire to strengthen Taos's civic culture includes local governance, the level of community participation in civic life, and the capacity of these sectors to work together to address community issues. Led by advances in technology and driven by the increasing expectation by the public for involvement in decision making, there is a growing trend in local governments towards strengthening democratic practices to strengthen civic culture. Additionally, local agencies, governments, and organizations are also learning they cannot solve big challenges without working together to align and coordinate individual efforts. Types of strategies include:

A. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICIES
Public participation policies most frequently establish guidelines or standards for local government on how to engage the community in decision making and policy making. These are most frequent procedural policies adopted by resolution and implemented by department heads.

B. NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES OFFICES
Many cities provide support to neighborhood associations through a committee or staff person.

C. PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PROTOCOLS
Participatory budgeting processes break the traditional management mold of local government wide open and make the budgeting process transparent and participatory by including the community in the decision making process.

D. OPEN GOVERNMENT POLICIES
The open government movement aims to increase government transparency by making more information easily available to the public.

F. E-GOVERNMENT POLICIES
"E-Government" refers to the use by government agencies of information technologies (networks, the internet, and mobile devices) that have the ability to transform relations with citizens, businesses, and other arms of government. The goal is to use technology to improve services delivery to citizens, improve interactions with the community, empower citizens through access to information, or have more efficient government management.

G. INCLUSIVENESS & EQUITY COUNCILS
Many local governments and institutions are establishing task forces or committees dedicated to developing strategies for improving community respect for diversity and increasing inclusion.

H. PUBLIC PROCESS DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION
A key component of effective community participation is simply conducting effective public engagement in planning and decision making processes. However, designing and implementing a high quality public process is challenging. If you do not have a lot of experience, it is good to work with skilled engagement consultants to build your community's capacity.

I. COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING
Networks, collaboratives, and collective impact models are all examples of how community agencies come together to share information and resources, develop comprehensive strategies, and evaluate progress on community challenges.

J. COMMUNITY BUILDING INITIATIVES
Programming that is focused on connecting people in a common sense of purpose, commitment, and action around community. These are often community driven efforts intended to build relationships necessary for working together.

*Honoring Our Past, Creating Our Future (Phase 1)
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K. CIVIC LEADERSHIP TRAININGS
Local organizations and foundations often sponsor leadership training programs to build capacity for community involvement, leadership, and problem solving.

RESOURCES:

a. **Public Participation Model Ordinance:**
https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKewjAw4z8ts7XAHV:V1mMKHRnVDY4QFgg4MAI&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nationalcivicleague.org%2Fmaking-public-participation-legal%2F&usq=AOvVaw1XgrUuP-Z6do90sob_3XeP

b. **City of Roanoke, VA Neighborhood Services Program:** <https://www.roanoke.gov/1073/Neighborhoods>

c. **Participatory Budgeting:** <https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/how-pb-works/>

d. **Policies for Open Government:** <http://opengovernmentinitiative.org/>

e. **E-government Best Practices:** <http://www.ctg.albany.edu/about/>

f. **Best Practices Community Engagement:** <http://ncdd.org/rc/pe-resource-guide>

g. **Collaborative Problem Solving:** <http://collaborativeleadersnetwork.org/strategies/collaborative-problem-solving/>

h. **Community Building Initiatives:**

- o *Salida Soup: A community potluck to fund community projects* <https://www.gopca.com/salida-soup/>
- o *Annual Community Dinner:* <http://www.bvstrong.com/>

i. **Community Leadership:** https://www.rdiinc.org/rural_community_leadership_program

Defining Good Governance

Good governance is a global movement that works to institutionalize democratic practices in government practices. Key principles include:

- 1. Accountable:**
Decision makers and departments take responsibility for decisions and there are policies in place for citizens to address improvements to administration.
- 2. Transparency and Openness:**
Decisions are made in accordance with the rules and regulations. The public has access to all the information, in accordance with the law, to assess the basis for these decisions.
- 3. Civic Participation and Civic Culture:**
The local government works to represent all of the community, to build consensus and mediate conflict around policy, and support increased citizen involvement in decision making. There is a civic culture that is inclusive, cohesive, and participatory.
- 4. Responsiveness:**
There are clear rules, structures, and procedures that outline how services are provided. Services are delivered fairly and equitably.
- 5. Effectiveness and Capacity:**
Local government strives to enhance performance and be results oriented. Performance management, community surveys, and audits provide feedback loops for continuous improvement.
- 6. Ethical Conduct:**
Public servants work towards the public good and place that before individual interests.
- 7. Fiscally Responsible:**
Public finances are managed with prudence through multiyear budgets creating a sustainable financial future.
- 8. Long term Orientation:**
The long term health and sustainability of the community is taken into account in all decisions. There is a long term vision and clear policies identified to inform decision making.

http://www.ca-ilg.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/checklist_v4.pdf
<http://www.goodgovernance.org.au/about-good-governance/what-is-good-governance/>

*Honoring Our Past, Creating Our Future (Phase 1)
Discussion Handouts and Summary (Page 13 of 14)*

**COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GROUP D:
HOW CAN TAOS STRENGTHEN ITS CIVIC CULTURE?**

1. Where could the Taos community start to address this goal? What could be a first step? What might be more long term?

Shorter Term	Longer Term

2. Who could be approached to convene, sponsor, or lead an effort like this?

3. What should next steps be?

*Honoring Our Past, Creating Our Future (Phase 1)
Discussion Handouts and Summary (Page 14 of 14)*

OVERVIEW

SNAPSHOTS OF TAOS

Where are we now?

Since June, we have been working to surface shared, community-wide values. A number of engagement activities were employed to gather input from Taosños including - meetings, interviews, focus groups, online surveys, and pop-up events. Over 1,000 people of all ages and diverse backgrounds from in and around Taos participated in these activities.



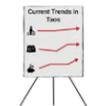
Community Values
Identifying our shared values allows us to understand who we are as a community and what makes us special.

Identifying shared values is an important first step. This helps us better understand who we are as a community and what makes us special. The next step for Strong at Heart is to define our goals for what a successful downtown looks like in the future. Our goals for the downtown will be based in our shared values.

As we work to develop a plan for where we want to go, and how we get there, it is important for us to understand where we are now.

Looking at the hard facts about our town allows us to hold up a mirror to who we are as a community: Do our actions support our values? If not, how can we change to support the things we love about Taos?

The Snapshots of Taos will help us to better understand where we are today. They describe trends in our community—whether it's something from our past that's made us who we are today or something happening right now that's shaping our future. This information will help inform the upcoming dialogue around goals.



Snapshots of Taos
Snapshots help us understand the factors at play in our community and enable us to better prepare for the future we want.

Snapshots will help us better understand...

Our Community Who are we? How have we changed?	Our Economy How are our people doing? How's our local economy doing?	Our Housing Can we afford to live here?
Our Downtown How is our downtown doing?	Our Heritage How are we doing preserving our agricultural heritage?	Stay tuned as we release additional snapshots over the coming weeks. Visit the Strong at Heart website for more information: www.downtowntaos.com

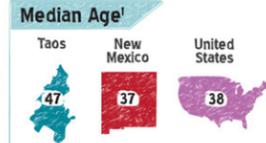
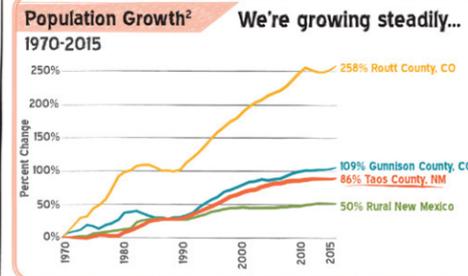


Snapshots of Taos: Overview (Page 1 of 1)

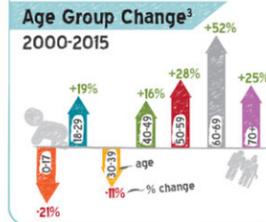
DEMOGRAPHICS

SNAPSHOTS OF TAOS

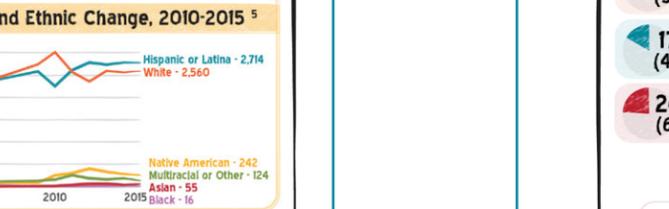
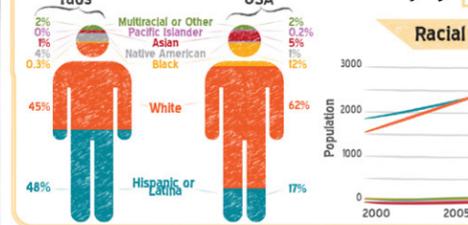
Who are we? How have we changed?



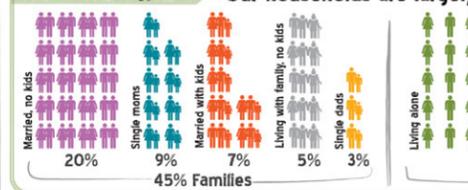
We're an aging community...



Racial Makeup⁴ We're diverse, and always changing...



Household Types⁶ Our households are largely "non-traditional"...



SOURCES: 1) American Community Survey, 2015 data. 2) Headwaters Economics, 2015 data. 3) US Census Bureau 2000 and American Community Survey 2015 data. 4) American Community Survey, 2015 data. 5) US Census Bureau 2000 and American Community Survey 2005-2015 data. Annual data from 2001-2004 are not available and are not reflected in this chart. 6) American Community Survey, 2015 data.



Snapshots of Taos: Demographics (Page 1 of 1)

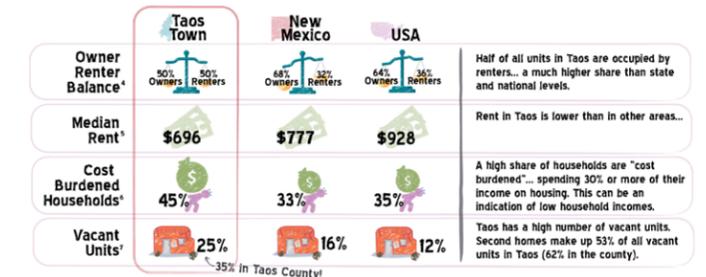
HOUSING

SNAPSHOTS OF TAOS

Can we afford to live here?



Housing Affordability³



SOURCES: 1) 2015 figures for Taos Town, data courtesy of Taos County Association of Realtors and Paul Romero. 2) Gross median rent, 2015 American Community Survey (ACS). 3) Household income from 2015 ACS data. Amounts that households can afford to spend on housing was calculated based on three times annual median income for each income bracket. Affordable rent calculated based on 30% median monthly income. Affordability Gap calculated using 2015 ACS data and Taos County Association of Realtors data on 2015 Median sales prices by unit type. 4-7) 2015 ACS data.

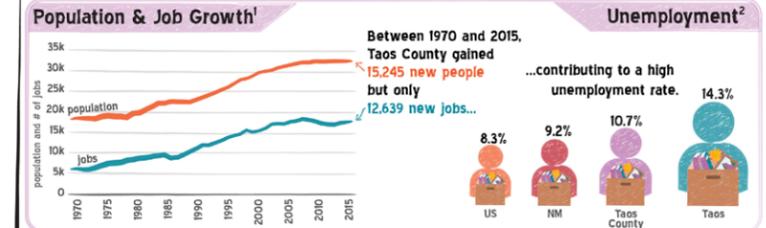


Snapshots of Taos: Housing (Page 1 of 1)

ECONOMY

SNAPSHOTS OF TAOS

How is our economy doing?



Key Employment Sectors



SOURCES: 1) U.S. Department of Commerce, 2016. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Washington, D.C. Table CA30. Provided by Headwaters Economics. Figures for Taos County. 2) American Community Survey (ACS), 2015 data for Taos County. 3) Headwaters Economics 2015 data for Taos County. 4) American Community Survey (ACS), 2015 data for Taos County. 5) U.S. Department of Commerce, 2016. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, Washington, D.C. Table CA30. Provided by Headwaters Economics. Figures for Taos County. 6) "Incomes" refers to annual per capita income. 7) "Wages" refers to average annual earnings per job.



Snapshots of Taos: Economy (Page 1 of 1)

SOCIOECONOMICS

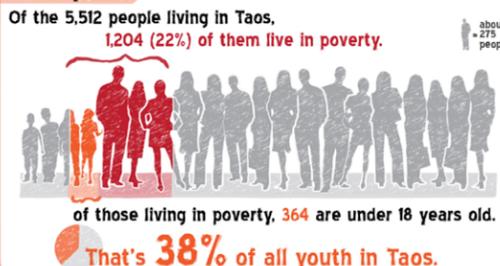
SNAPSHOTS OF TAOS

How are our people doing?

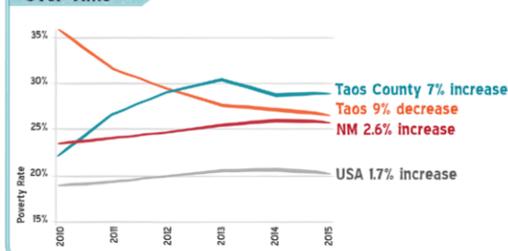
2015 Federal Poverty Level

- \$11,770 for a single person
- \$15,930 for a 2-person household
- \$20,090 for a 3-person household
- \$24,250 for a 4-person household

Poverty Rate



Poverty Change Over Time



Although the poverty rate in Taos is still high, it has been dropping over the past five years while poverty increases elsewhere. The poverty rate in Taos went from 30.8% in 2010 to 21.8% in 2015, a 9% difference.

Unfortunately, poverty in Taos County has been growing at more than twice the rate of New Mexico, and four times faster than nationally.



Incomes in Taos are much lower than in other areas, with Median Household Income 42% lower than the national level.



Taosenos receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits (food stamps) at nearly twice the national rate.

SOURCES: All data from 2015 American Community Survey, provided courtesy of Headwaters Economics. 1) To learn more about eligibility for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, also known as Food Stamps), or to see if you qualify, please visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligibility>



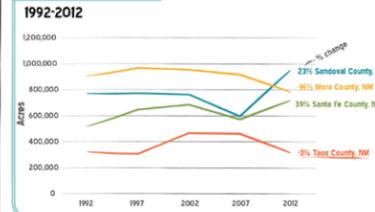
Snapshots of Taos: Socioeconomics (Page 1 of 1)

AGRICULTURE

SNAPSHOTS OF TAOS

Are we preserving our Agricultural Heritage?

Land in Farms¹ 1992-2012



Change in # of Farms (by Size)¹ 1992-2012



Taos' Acequias...

The acequias of northern New Mexico are centuries-old, communally-managed irrigation systems that are a critical piece of the subsistence farming and ranching tradition of the region. These hand-dug, gravity-fed systems created lush, verdant valleys in the high desert, and nurtured a deep and abiding connection to the land and water that remains integral to the identity of local cultures.

Acequia governance rests on the premise that water is a resource to be shared fairly, especially in times of drought, and the community as a whole is responsible for the maintenance and function of the ditch system. This democratic approach to water management was among the first forms of formal government in the frontier region, and even today, acequia associations remain well-respected in rural communities that carry on the proud tradition of acequia irrigation.

Today, acequia remain a vibrant part of everyday life in many communities, though development, the rising cost of living and an aging population have made the maintenance and use of these ditches more challenging. Local acequia advocates and farmers continue to champion the protection of the acequias and the acequia culture. More recently in Taos, elected officials have voiced unprecedented support for revitalization and responsible stewardship of acequias as cultural treasures that have myriad social, economic and ecological benefits. This includes those ditches that once carried water in and around the center of downtown Taos.

SOURCES: 1) USDA Census of Agriculture, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2012 data. 2) USDA Census of Agriculture, 2012 data.



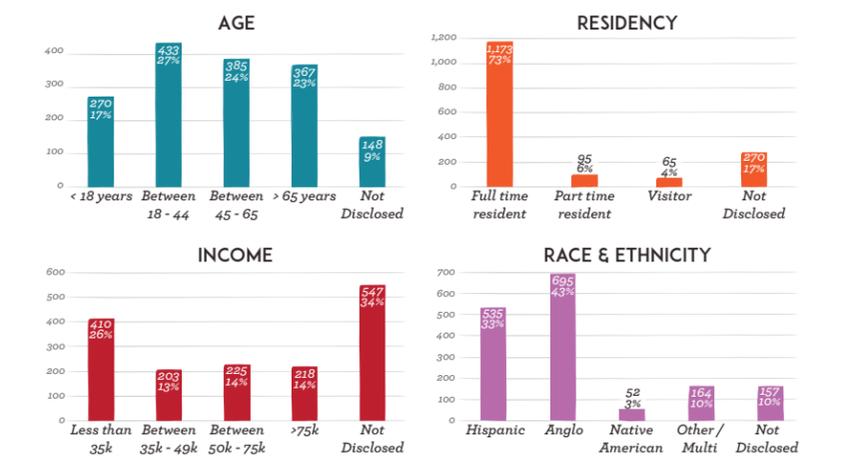
Snapshots of Taos: Agriculture (Page 1 of 1)



Creating a process that is engaging, interactive, and inclusive of the entire Taos community has been a top priority of Strong at Heart. The project used a wide variety of public engagement activities, from large public meetings to one-on-one interviews and pop-up events. The project has also focused on engaging stakeholder groups who are less likely to participate in large public meetings through small group discussions and interviews. To date, over 1,600 participants have been engaged through the Strong at Heart process.

MEETINGS AND ENGAGEMENT COUNTS TO DATE		
Phase 1	1,388	Strategy Sessions 105
Kick Off Event*	242	Youth (Taos Charter School)
Community Conversations*	99	Economic/Business Leaders
Pop-Up Events/Post Cards	721	Town Staff and Commissions
Online Community Values Survey	115	UNM Faculty, Staff and Students
On Taos Time	94	ESL Students (TECC)
Honoring our Past, Creating our Future*	55	Non-Profit Groups
Online Focus Area Feedback Form	12	Ag & Trails (Taos Land Trust)
		Downtown Taos: Moving Forward 166
		Taos Charter School
		Non-Profit Groups
		Vista Grande HS
		Downtown Business Leaders
		Downtown Institutions
		Community Meeting*
		Total Participants to Date: 1,609

* events with an asterisk represent large public meetings.



Phases 1-3 Demographic Summary (Page 1 of 1)



Held between March 26-29, 2018, Downtown Taos: Moving Forward consisted of a series of meetings that provided opportunities for stakeholders to come together to provide feedback on draft goals and principles, discuss and refine strategies for the downtown, and learn what other communities are doing to create successful downtowns. The meetings focused on small group conversations, organized in partnership with local host organizations who brought representatives of their constituency into the dialogue.

- Focus Group Meetings:**
- Taos Charter School Students
 - Vista Grande High School Students
 - Non-Profits Groups
 - Rotary
 - Downtown Business Leaders
 - Downtown Institutions (Town, County, UNM, and School District)
 - TECC Students

The series concluded with a community meeting on March 28, providing the public the opportunity to give feedback on goals and share their ideas for the downtown. This meeting also included a series of activities aimed at exploring the role and character of three different neighborhoods in Taos; Paseo Del Pueblo Norte, the Plaza and Historic Core, and Paseo Del Pueblo Sur. For each neighborhood, participants had the opportunity to vote on twelve different types of public spaces, housing, business space and streets, enabling them to indicate what ideas best fit that neighborhood.

The prioritized goals and ideas from *Downtown Taos: Moving Forward* will be used to develop specific strategies and design concepts for downtown Taos during the upcoming *Design Workshop* the week of May 14, 2018.

- Prioritized Goals for the Downtown**
We want a downtown that...
1. Is safe, walkable and easy to access
 2. Offers a variety of housing choices affordable to people who live and work here
 3. Is an authentic place that reflects our creativity, cultures and heritage
 4. Has places and opportunities for the community to come together
 5. Offers fun and unique things for Taosenos to do and see
 6. Is a place with thriving local businesses that support the community
 7. Has a network of streets, alleys and pathways that connect people to places
 8. Is the economic and cultural heart of the community

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 1 of 23)

DOWNTOWN TAOS: MOVING FORWARD MEETING SERIES INPUT



Contents:

- 2 *Input on draft goals*
- 5 *Neighborhood character exercise*
- 11 *Crashes, close calls, and common routes map*
- 12 *Neighborhood character poster with voting*

INPUT ON DRAFT GOALS

Prioritizing Goals: One of the main objectives of the Downtown Taos: Moving Forward meetings was to get the community's feedback on the draft goals for the downtown developed during the Strategy Sessions meetings. As a part of this feedback, the goals were prioritized through several worksheet exercises with local youth, as well as through an open-house exercise at the Downtown Taos: Moving Forward public meeting. These rankings will help us to understand the some of the community's priorities, and will help to direct efforts during the Design Workshop.

	Middle School Students (48)	High School Students (17)	TECC Students (11)	All Combined Student Ranking (76)	Public Mtg (46)	ALL (122)
Is safe, walkable and easy to access	1	1	4	1	3 / 4	1
Has places and opportunities for the community to come together	5	5 / 6	3	4	3 / 4	4
Is a place with thriving local businesses that support the community	6	7	6	7	n/a (removed)	6
Is an authentic place that reflects our creativity, culture and heritage	8	4	2	6	1	3
Has a network of streets, alleys and pathways that connect people to places	4	8	8	5	7	8
Offers a variety of housing choices affordable to people who live and work here	3	3	1	3	5	2
Offers fun and unique things for Taosenos to do and see	2	2	7	2	8	5
Is a place where local businesses and entrepreneurs can thrive	7	9	5	8	2	7
Is the economic and cultural heart of the community	9	5 / 6	9	9	6	9

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 2 of 23)

DOWNTOWN TAOS: MOVING FORWARD MEETING SERIES INPUT



Public Meeting Input on Draft Goals:

- Authentic, cultural, historical, traditional*
- Taosentic! Transparent, Authentic, Organic, Sustainable *
- "Downtown" + "Affordable" housing don't match. Get people to downtown with city transit.
- no one way streets on Paseo and Placitas
- Fix the sidewalk in front of Taos Inn*
- Bike lanes, street lights, safe sidewalks, one way streets, plaza more lively with events, music, food, drink, farmers market, parking garage next to Tuesday Morning, boutique hotels, later scene, more festivals, plaza walking only
- How do you prioritize these goals? How do you put them into practice? Why would anyone object to these goals?
- open up available parking lots/spaces on martry's lane & down (more accessible parking!)
- Building a long-term vision with an identity (we're different!) Eco-innovators (earthships), indigenous, art as community practice, environmental justice, food justice, racial justice
- Improve roads / walkways first
- Sustainable & resilient development for climate crisis *
- Why not split economic and cultural? Economic heart may come from other areas.
- Traffic relief*
- Keep Taos righ, historic, creative, diverse, multicultural, accepting, loving
- not to interfere with plaza businesses. Have parties, etc. in appropriate places
- (in response to above:) Like the plaza!
- D&H need clarity
- Leave Taos alone! What brought you here?
- Stop try to change things everythings fine!
- San Luis CO has done an excellent job of a new "front face" on buildings and art murals
- Traffic control- review plan for one-way streets on Placitas & Paseo
- Leave Taos along, families have lived here for many years. Nothing needs to change. If you don't like the way we do things, there's the door.
- Safe access to downtown by bike
- Leave Taos alone!

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 3 of 23)

DOWNTOWN TAOS: MOVING FORWARD MEETING SERIES INPUT



Student Input on Draft Goals:

- More community events.
- Housing choices should not destroy beautiful landscapes
- Things that also involve animals
- Homeless help
- There should be more fun and safe places that kids can hang out at and its easy to get there
- Dirt bike track
- Less trash around town
- More protection
- combine business duplicates, and combine safe / walkable with network of streets*
- Make it feel more like a home than a mall. This town is a family that can get along, if it feels like and home we'll get along better.
- A place to learn, have fun, create, and live
- a reason to go every day
- A place to do meaningful things
- Come together, multi-generational, locals + tourists, poor, middle class, wealthy

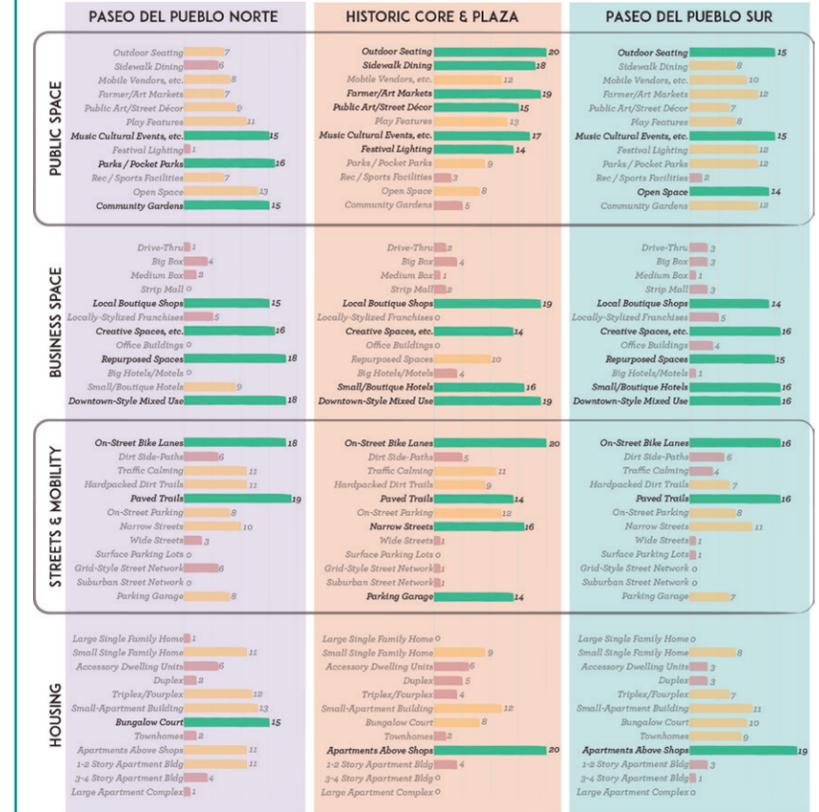
Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 4 of 23)

DOWNTOWN TAOS: MOVING FORWARD MEETING SERIES INPUT



NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER EXERCISE

One goal of the Downtown Taos: Moving Forward meetings was explore the role and character of three different neighborhoods in Taos; Paseo Del Pueblo Norte, the Plaza and Historic Core, and Paseo Del Pueblo Sur. For each neighborhood, participants had the opportunity to vote on twelve different types of public spaces, housing, business space and streets, enabling them to indicate what ideas best fit that neighborhood.



Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 5 of 23)

**DOWNTOWN TAOS: MOVING FORWARD
MEETING SERIES INPUT**



Paseo Del Pueblo Norte:

What type of place do you want this to be? What does it look like? What does it feel like?

- Traffic congestion needs to be fixed (near Kit Carson & Paseo Del Pueblo N)
- Spirit-filled space
- No more garden okay!!
- The sidewalk in front of the Taos Inn is dangerous
- Looks like: views, open space
- More park space
- Open space & views best here
- Separate bike path along the shoulder of the road
- Bike trail from arroyo seco to plaza
- Not Forgotten Outreach's plan is fabulous
- It would be nice to have a less terrifying way to get across downtown N & S and vice versa *
- Beautiful entryway into town
- Beautiful open space
- [Feels like] Taos
- Home-town, cozy, residential, proud. A place I'd like to live. Islands of open creativity. Neighborhood gardens & small parks.
- This area north of plaza should be a continuation of the center - street lights, safe sidewalks, safe places to park, and lots of things to do.

What role does this neighborhood play in Taos? What kind of things do you do here? What do you wish you could do here?

- Identity, pride, history, events, civic engagement, art history
- bike safely
- route to ski valley, open grassy fields, buffalo pasture
- Things I do: shop, eat, walk
- Encourage agri-history here
- Community gardens, land-based learning, dryland farming techniques, permaculture, co-op businesses
- Role: extension of the downtown. Places to live. *
- Never build anything along Paseo Del Norte between Pueblo Rd & OBL
- Taos may benefit from a "Truth and Reconciliation" similar to what South Africa had when Mandela was released from prison - as a way to healing. Maybe it's a deliberate healing that needs to happen before real or true progress can happen.

6

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 6 of 23)

**DOWNTOWN TAOS: MOVING FORWARD
MEETING SERIES INPUT**



Historic Core & Plaza:

What type of place do you want this to be? What does it look like? What does it feel like?

- Vibrant, Activities *
- We love Taos Plaza the way it is. Keep it open to people & traffic. It is an essential hub to east/west traffic & essential to the locals of Taos who are the essence of the culture & heritage that visitors love. **
- Taos is family to family's don't change it!
- Keep it as historic as possible
- Feels like Taos
- Taos is perfect the way it is, it's been this way for hundreds of years! It is so unnecessary to change anything!
- don't change it because there family that grew up here don't change it!
- Municipal substance recovery space
- Looks like: authentic, respectful of history & culture(s)
- Lots of people and activity
- A place that celebrates historic & current diversity - multicultural, celebratory, nooks & crannies you want to explore
- I would love for the plaza to have more life. Music, food carts, no cars, pedestrians only, patio seating for restaurants, look at plazaz in Eupore = heart of the town
- This is the core, should be a destination for tourists and locals alike. Food carts, music, buskers, unique shops, opportunities for local artists to vent.*
- Feels relevant to locals, not just tourists
- Related to our identity of indigenous resistance, water technologies, art, eco-innovation
- plaza needs more music, food, events and more diverse shops. Should be a walking areal. There should be a parking garage and one way streets with bike lanes. More boutique hotels and lively scene. Sidewalks need to be fixed, as town center should be a safe walking place. Streetlights should illuminate all downtown streets for safety. Food trucks also.
- Historic district is vital heart of Taos but public spaces feel abandoned. Invest in upkeep.*
- Find a way to convert existing buildings into sustainable businesses.

What role does this neighborhood play in Taos? What kind of things do you do here? What do you wish you could do here?

- One of the most essential neighborhoods in Taos. We eat, shop, cruise, watch, listen, dance, perform ritual heritage here
- Turn visitors loose & know they'll learn about & feel Taos culture & heritage & creativity - relax and meet friends and strangers
- Core of Taos where creatives can sell
- Taos is great, we don't need people trying to change what we've been doing for over 100 years. If you don't like it get out!

7

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 7 of 23)

**DOWNTOWN TAOS: MOVING FORWARD
MEETING SERIES INPUT**



- Sidewalk cafes*
- I wish the art in the Taos plaza were redone
- Rename Kit Carson Park, Kit Carson Drive *
- Reach out to Taos Pueblo Communities*
- Where people can gather to brainstorm answers to energy & water issues - community biotech lab - hubs to gather scientists, artists, policy makers
- Town of Taos public space on the plaza for teens, adults, indoor space / coffee, art- music space
- Keep Taos Taos! Leave outside opinions outside - meaning non-cultural attitudes!
- Farmer's market the best thing *
- Community gathering place for celebrations, meetings, protests
- Bring out more of the history - avoid "cliches"
- A place to learn real history & that reflects the real present

Other comments:

- [re:parking garage] The town has sacrificed space to convenience visitors - no parking garages - this isn't east coast!
- [re:parking garage] A parking garage is really important close to the plaza. It'll help visitors have a focal point to get out of their cars, find a bathroom & orient themselves better
- We need an anti-loitering ordinance. Rude homeless people scare both merchants and tourists
- [re: Apartments Above Shops / Mixed Use] 2 Story max!*

8

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary - (Page 8 of 23)

**DOWNTOWN TAOS: MOVING FORWARD
MEETING SERIES INPUT**



Paseo Del Pueblo Sur:

What type of place do you want this to be? What does it look like? What does it feel like?

- Tiny homes, Couse Pasture
- No large stores in Couse Pasture!*
- Nothing above 2 levels*
- It fine the way it is, leave it!
- Leave it alone, down town has always been the oldest part of citys and towns
- This place is magic, unique cultures, unique architecture, world-class art/music.theatre, more murals, more sculpture, feels like Taos, Looks like Taos
- Keep it Taos!
- Save the Couse pasture - Park, walkways, etc.
- Green space*
- Trees/ shade. Spen spaces to play and creativity, food trucks, compact service centers (laundry, food, coffee, mailing store, etc.), pedestrian friendly
- We have to do something about the seedy ludian hills & the adjoining buildings. What a waste of real estate & potentially valuable cultural venues.
- Better lit road entering Taos. Beautify the road entry
- Leave well along! I want Taos to remain Taos and not become Santa Fe. Think of the real locals!
- The pedestrian experience on this side of town is abysmal. Can't cross Pasuo between Smith's & Albertsons. Treed median would help
- No Holiday Inn Express Box
- Reflects & orients our identity- greenscaping, permaculture, resilience, art
- I think we need a beautiful line of trees & landscaping down the center of the road (Paseo del Pueblo Sur) coming into town. Similar to when you drive up to Abq. Airport arrivals. This space could also have sculptures between landscaping.
- Looks inviting and looked after. - Like we care. More trees & Landscaping down Paseo del Pueblo Sur

What role does this neighborhood play in Taos? What kind of things do you do here? What do you wish you could do here?

- This is entrance to core historic - keep it car friendly but add landscaping & ped interface
- Support small sommercail services in the zone
- No large stores in Couse Pasture
- Leave everything alone!
- It's an important role that brings Taos ??? Together
- Think of this as an innovation hub / training center. Natural building & earthships, train solar technologies, rainwater cachement, permaculture.
- Large Scal projects that build skills. Demonstration gardens, training ppl for sustainable future
- family's live here don't change it! Plz, you don't need to go and change it for you!

9

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 9 of 23)

DOWNTOWN TAOS: MOVING FORWARD MEETING SERIES INPUT



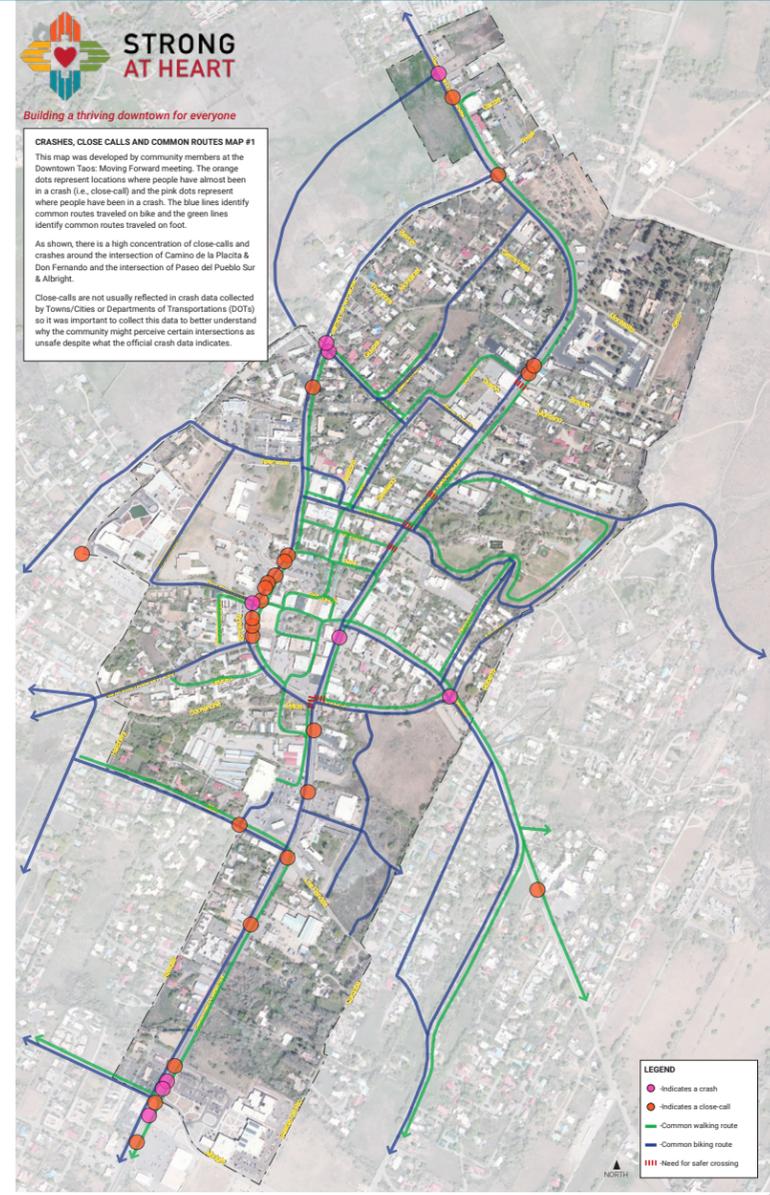
- Would like to see: stiff regulation & zoning for structures to keep in sync with Taos culture
- I wish Taos would remain a quaint little town without extreme outside influence
- now: commerce for franchise & box stores
- Maybe the locals want box stores
- Limit box stores
- Keep pasture land so there is open space
- Sur - higher density housing with safe walk to downtown, plaza, grocery
- Might be a good place for nearby techy creative business folks to live near & recreate. A place I'd like to go for lunch & wk. A place that caters to millennials, a creative experience
- This is a more commercial area with beauty. More car oriented with bike paths that are safe.

Other comments:

- [re: On-Street Bike Lanes] Absolutely not! Streets are narrow enough
- [re: On-Street Bike Lanes] Needs good separation from traffic
- [re: On-Street Parking] Leave everything the way it is!
- [re: Wide Streets] add median plte & curbs
- [re: Wide Streets] wide streets need landscaping, trees, plants & sculptures down median with access points just onto main roads
- [re: surface parking lots] landscape parking lots @ retail
- [re: Parking Garage] parking garage needs to be on plaza area

10

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 10 of 23)



11

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 11 of 23)

What kinds of **PUBLIC SPACE** ideas would you like to see in the **PASEO DEL PUEBLO NORTE** neighborhood?
 Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

Outdoor Seating 7	Sidewalk Dining 6	Mobile Vendors, Food Trucks, Pop-up Businesses 8
Farmers / Art Markets 7	Public Art / Street Decor 9	Play Features 11
Music, Festivals, and Cultural Events 15	Festival Lighting 1	Parks / Pocket Parks 16
Recreation / Sports Facilities 7	Open Space 13	Community Gardens 15

STRONG AT HEART 12

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 12 of 23)

What kinds of **HOUSING** ideas would you like to see in the **PASEO DEL PUEBLO NORTE** neighborhood?
 Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

Large-Lot Single Family Home 1	Small-Lot Single Family Home 11	Accessory Dwelling Units / Mother-In-Law Apartment 6
Duplex 2	Triplex / Fourplex 12	Small-Scale Apartment Building (5-10 Apartments) 13
Bungalow Court 15	Townhomes 2	Apartments Above Shops / Mixed-Use 11
1-2 Story Apartment Building 11	3-4 Story Apartment Building 4	Large Apartment / Condo Complex 1

STRONG AT HEART 13

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 13 of 23)

What kinds of BUSINESSES SPACES ideas would you like to see in the PASEO DEL PUEBLO NORTE neighborhood?

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

Drive-Thru 1	Big Box 4	Medium Box 2
Strip Mall 0	Local Boutique Shops 15	Locally-Styled Franchises 5
Creative Spaces (eg. Coworking, Makerspace, Incubators) 16	Office Buildings 0	Repurposed Space (eg. Gas Station to Cafe) 18
Big Hotels / Motels 0	Small / Boutique Hotels 9	Downtown-Style Mixed Use 18

STRONG AT HEART 14

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 14 of 23)

What kinds of STREETS AND MOBILITY ideas would you like to see in the PASEO DEL PUEBLO NORTE neighborhood?

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

On-Street Bike Lanes 18	Dirt Side-Paths / Single-Track Sidewalks 6	Traffic Calming 11
Hardpacked Dirt Trails 11	Paved Trails 19	On-Street Parking 8
Narrow Streets 10	Wide Streets 3	Surface Parking Lots 0
Grid-Style Street Network 6	Suburban-Style Street Network 0	Parking Garage 8

STRONG AT HEART 15

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 15 of 23)

What kinds of PUBLIC SPACE ideas would you like to see in the HISTORIC CORE & PLAZA neighborhood?

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

Outdoor Seating 20	Sidewalk Dining 18	Mobile Vendors, Food Trucks, Pop-up Businesses 12
Farmers / Art Markets 19	Public Art / Street Decor 15	Play Features 13
Music, Festivals, and Cultural Events 17	Festival Lighting 14	Parks / Pocket Parks 9
Recreation / Sports Facilities 3	Open Space 8	Community Gardens 5

STRONG AT HEART 16

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 16 of 23)

What kinds of HOUSING ideas would you like to see in the HISTORIC CORE & PLAZA neighborhood?

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

Large-Lot Single Family Home 0	Small-Lot Single Family Home 9	Accessory Dwelling Units / Mother-in-Law Apartment 6
Duplex 5	Triplex / Fourplex 4	Small-Scale Apartment Building (5-10 Apartments) 12
Bungalow Court 8	Townhomes 2	Apartments Above Shops / Mixed-Use 20
1-2 Story Apartment Building 4	3-4 Story Apartment Building 0	Large Apartment / Condo Complex 0

STRONG AT HEART 17

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 17 of 23)

What kinds of BUSINESSES SPACES ideas would you like to see in the HISTORIC CORE & PLAZA neighborhood?

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

Drive-Thru 2	Big Box 4	Medium Box 1
Strip Mall 2	Local Boutique Shops 19	Locally-Styled Franchises 0
Creative Spaces (eg. Coworking, Makerspace, Incubators) 14	Office Buildings 0	Repurposed Space (eg. Gas Station to Cafe) 10
Big Hotels / Motels 4	Small / Boutique Hotels 16	Downtown-Style Mixed Use 19

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Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 18 of 23)

What kinds of STREETS AND MOBILITY ideas would you like to see in the HISTORIC CORE & PLAZA neighborhood?

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

On-Street Bike Lanes 20	Dirt Side-Paths / Single-Track Sidewalks 5	Traffic Calming 11
Hardpacked Dirt Trails 9	Paved Trails 14	On-Street Parking 12
Narrow Streets 16	Wide Streets 1	Surface Parking Lots 0
Grid-Style Street Network 1	Suburban-Style Street Network 1	Parking Garage 14

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Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 19 of 23)

What kinds of PUBLIC SPACE ideas would you like to see in the PASEO DEL PUEBLO SUR neighborhood?

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

Outdoor Seating 15	Sidewalk Dining 8	Mobile Vendors, Food Trucks, Pop-up Businesses 10
Farmers / Art Markets 12	Public Art / Street Decor 7	Play Features 8
Music, Festivals, and Cultural Events 15	Festival Lighting 12	Parks / Pocket Parks 12
Recreation / Sports Facilities 2	Open Space 14	Community Gardens 12

20

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 20 of 23)

What kinds of HOUSING ideas would you like to see in the PASEO DEL PUEBLO SUR neighborhood?

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

Large-Lot Single Family Home 0	Small-Lot Single Family Home 8	Accessory Dwelling Units / Mother-In-Law Apartment 3
Duplex 3	Triplex / Fourplex 7	Small-Scale Apartment Building (5-10 Apartments) 11
Bungalow Court 10	Townhomes 9	Apartments Above Shops / Mixed-Use 19
1-2 Story Apartment Building 3	3-4 Story Apartment Building 1	Large Apartment / Condo Complex 0

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Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 21 of 23)

What kinds of **BUSINESSES SPACES** ideas would you like to see in the PASEO DEL PUEBLO SUR neighborhood?

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

 Drive-Thru 3	 Big Box 3	 Medium Box 3
 Strip Mall 3	 Local Boutique Shops 14	 Locally-Styled Franchises 5
 Creative Spaces (eg. Coworking, Maker space, Incubators) 16	 Office Buildings 4	 Repurposed Space (eg. Gas Station to Cafe) 15
 Big Hotels / Motels 1	 Small / Boutique Hotels 16	 Downtown-Style Mixed Use 16

 **STRONG AT HEART** 22

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 22 of 23)

What kinds of **STREETS AND MOBILITY** ideas would you like to see in the PASEO DEL PUEBLO SUR neighborhood?

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

 On-Street Bike Lanes 16	 Dirt Side-Paths / Single-Track Sidewalks 6	 Traffic Calming 4
 Hardpacked Dirt Trails 7	 Paved Trails 16	 On-Street Parking 8
 Narrow Streets 11	 Wide Streets 1	 Surface Parking Lots 1
 Grid-Style Street Network 0	 Suburban-Style Street Network 0	 Parking Garage 7

 **STRONG AT HEART** 23

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 23 of 23)

DOWNTOWN TAOS: STRATEGY SESSIONS MEETING SUMMARY

Held between February 5-7, 2018, the *Downtown Strategy Sessions* provided opportunities for different parts of the community to discuss their ideas for the future of downtown Taos. These sessions allowed for focused and engaging, small-group conversations in a comfortable setting, as well as the opportunity to tailor the discussion to the different needs and interests of different constituencies.

The goal of these conversations was to discuss the key themes that have emerged from public input so far, and to begin exploring some of the community's ideas and strategies for the future of downtown Taos. Each session was organized in partnership with local host organizations who brought representatives of their constituency into the dialogue.

Input from these conversations was used to craft a set of draft goals for Downtown Taos. The draft goals were then taken back to the community during the *Downtown Taos: Moving Forward* meetings to be vetted and prioritized.

Strategy Session Meetings:

- Youth Strategy Session (Taos Charter School)
- Economic/Business Leader Session
- Town Staff and Commissions Session
- Non-Profit Groups Session
- UNM Faculty, Staff and Student Session
- ESL Students (TECC)
- Agriculture & Trails Session (Taos Land Trust)

Key Themes Explored:

1. Land Use and Development
2. Housing Choices and Affordability
3. Transportation and Mobility
4. Placemaking and Sense of Place
5. The Economy
6. Implementation

Draft Goals for the Downtown

We want a downtown that...

- Is safe, walkable and easy to access
- Has places and opportunities for the community to come together
- Is a place with thriving local businesses that support the community
- Is an authentic place that reflects our creativity, culture and heritage
- Has a network of streets, alleys and pathways that connect people to places
- Offers a variety of housing choices affordable to people who live and work here
- Offers fun and unique things for Taosenos to do and see
- Is a place where local businesses and entrepreneurs can thrive
- Is the economic and cultural heart of the community

 **STRONG AT HEART**

Downtown Taos: Strategy Sessions (Phase 3) Meeting Series Summary (Page 1 of 1)



Downtown Design Workshop (Phase 4) Meeting Series Summary (Page 1 of 20)

OVERVIEW

The Downtown Design Workshop was a multi-day event that built on previous Strong at Heart engagement efforts. This workshop brought together key stakeholder groups and members of the public to explore strategies and design concepts for achieving the community's goals for the downtown.

The workshop culminated in the Civic Plaza Drive Street Party where an outdoor open house served as an opportunity for Taoseños to review and comment on the ideas for the downtown that emerged over the course of the week.

This document provides a summary of key outcomes and community input from the Downtown Design Workshop.



Downtown Design Workshop (Phase 4) Meeting Series Summary (Page 2 of 20)

STRONG AT HEART - PROCESS OVERVIEW

Strong at Heart, a project of the Town of Taos and a range of local partners, is focused on working with Taoseños to create a vision for a thriving downtown for everyone.

The goal of the project is to develop a strategy that communicates our shared values, guiding principles and vision for downtown Taos, and includes an action-plan to get things done.

The Strong at Heart process kicked off in June 2017 and the hope is to wrap things up Summer 2018.

A top priority has been to create a community-driven process that is engaging, interactive and inclusive of the entire community.

A variety of public engagement activities have been used: large public meetings; one-on-one interviews; pop-up events; online questionnaires; stakeholder group meetings; small group discussions; and, a large street party! To date, over 1,600 contacts have been made with Taoseños.



DOWNTOWN GOALS

1. A Walkable and Bikeable Downtown

- Create a downtown that is safe to walk and bike and easy to access.
- Create a network of streets, alleys and pathways that connect people to places.

2. Places for People

- Provides places for Taoseños to socialize and opportunities for the community to come together.
- Offers fun and unique things for Taoseños to do and see.

3. A Strong Economy and Thriving Local Businesses

- A place where local businesses and entrepreneurs can thrive.
- Our downtown supports a strong and diverse local economy that expands opportunity for the people who live here.

4. A Real Place Where Locals Want to Be

- An authentic place that reflects our creativity, culture and heritage.

5. An Affordable Place to Live

- Downtown provides a variety of housing choices affordable to people who live and work here.

STRATEGIES FOR THE DOWNTOWN

The workshop resulted in several ideas and key strategies that support the downtown goals, including:

1. Create a “Park-Once-and-Walk” district, improve walkability and enhance street life.
2. Enhancing the downtown alley network.
3. Create a safe and connected downtown bike network.
4. Enabling infill housing and mixed-use development.
5. Encourage entrepreneurship and local businesses.

Illustrations and diagrams were prepared and presented to the public to help people visualize concepts and enable them to provide more detailed feedback. There were a number of opportunities for the community to review and provide feedback over the course of the Downtown Design Workshop. The input collected is provided on the following pages.

Note: The illustrations on the following pages represent ideas (such as infill development) and **do not** represent an actual proposal for a specific site in Taos.



3

Downtown Design Workshop (Phase 4) Meeting Series Summary (Page 3 of 20)

1. Create a “Park-Once-and-Walk” district, improve walkability and enhance street life.

The following concepts for a “Park-Once-and-Walk” district, improving downtown walkability and enhancing street life were developed in support of these downtown goals:

- A walkable and bikeable downtown.
- Places for people.
- A real place where locals want to be.
- A strong economy and thriving local businesses.

i. IMAGINING A DOWNTOWN PARKING GARAGE ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE PLAZA



😍 Yahoo...

49 votes

😐 Meh...

2 votes

😞 No Way...

1 vote

Write-In Comments:

- I like it but what happens to Tuesday Morning?
- Beautiful idea.
- Keep after <unknown word> shops - such as Tuesday Morning, etc. in the plan.
- Don't mess with the OG parking.

4

Downtown Design Workshop (Phase 4) Meeting Series Summary (Page 4 of 20)

BENEFITS OF A “PARK-ONCE-AND-WALK” DISTRICT

A “Park-Once-and-Walk” district enables people to park their vehicle in a convenient location that enables them to walk to various destinations within the district (i.e., neighborhood).

The benefits of a “Park-Once-and-Walk” district in Taos include:

- Allows locals and visitors alike to easily park once and access downtown businesses and opportunities on foot.
- Increases business by creating easier pedestrian access and creating more life in the street.
- Decreases traffic congestions by minimizing the number of cars that are cruising for a parking space.
- Decreases parking demand in key locations.

BENEFITS OF ENHANCED STREET LIFE

Visible activity along downtown streets (i.e., street life) is an important element of a vibrant downtown as busy sidewalks serve as a magnet for other people.

The benefits of enhancing streets in downtown Taos include:

- Provides places for the community to come together.
- Supports local businesses by creating an active street.
- Increases the quality of life for Taoseños by providing fun things to do.

ii. IMAGINING EXTENDED SIDEWALKS AND OUTDOOR DINING IN THE PLAZA



😍 Yahoo... 62 votes
😐 Meh... 4 votes
😞 No Way... 3 vote

Write-In Comments:

- Yes, if we get the parking lot.

iii. IMAGINING CIVIC PLAZA DRIVE AS A "FESTIVAL STREET"



😍 Yahoo... 66 votes
😐 Meh... 1 vote
😞 No Way... 5 votes

Write-In Comments:

- Overhead light stringers are tacky and ultimately sag. Uniform, attractive street lamps are more reliable and require less maintenance. Stringers also hook tall trucks.

iv. IMAGINING BENT STREET ENHANCEMENTS



😍 Yahoo... 47 votes
😐 Meh... 3 votes
😞 No Way... 2 votes

Write-In Comments:

- Not yet someday sam's.
- How did Bent Street miraculously get so wide?

v. IMAGINING LEDOUX STREET ENHANCEMENTS



😍 Yahoo... 44 votes
😐 Meh... 0 votes
😞 No Way... 0 votes

Write-In Comments:

- N/A

IDEAS FROM OTHER COMMUNITIES



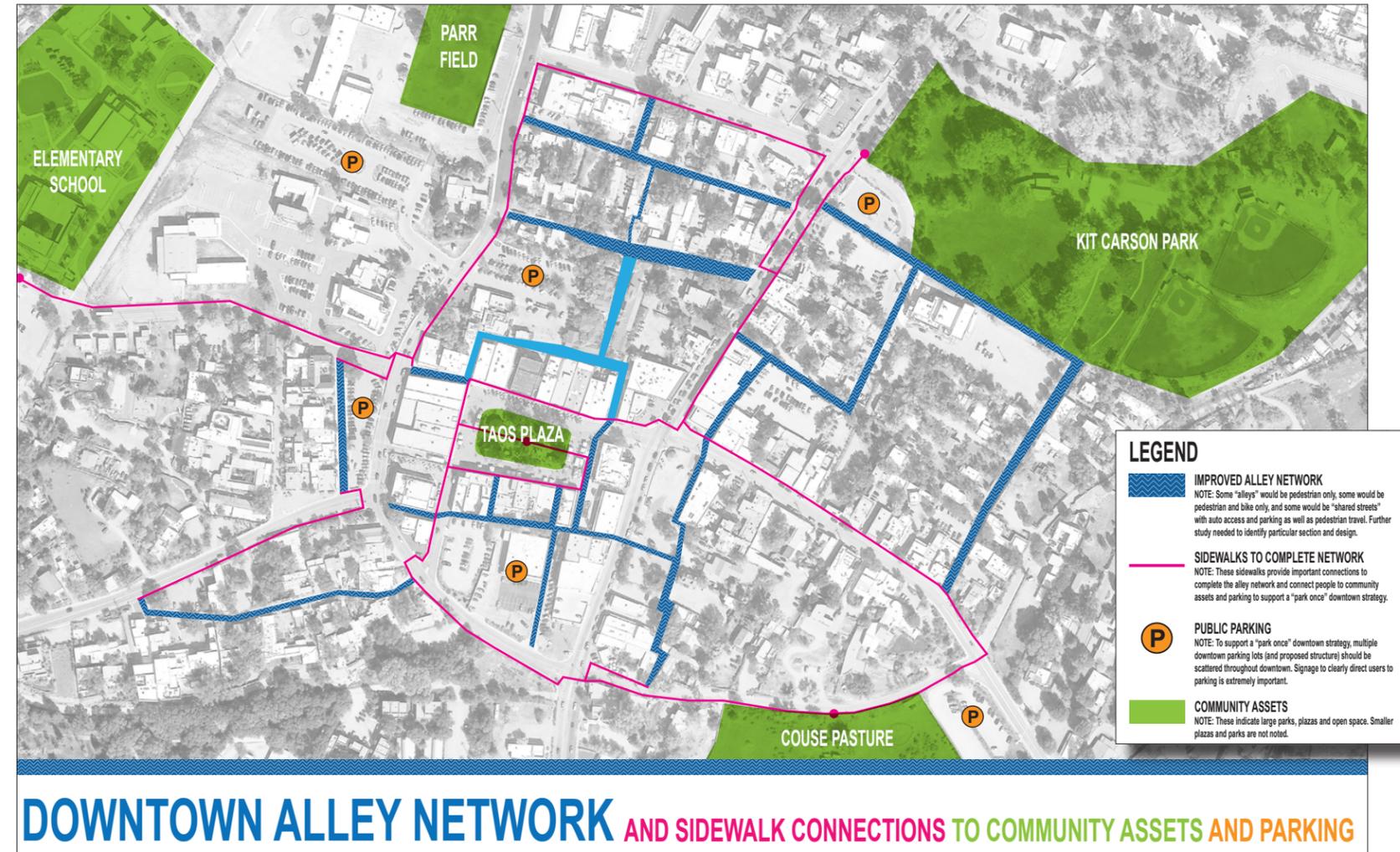
Successful downtowns offer a variety of reasons for people to be there. They also create opportunities to showcase activity. People out and about brings life to a downtown and often serve as a magnet for other people.

The widened sidewalk and permanent outdoor dining space (top) and the temporary parklet (bottom) are examples of how Glenwood Springs, Colorado and Salida, Colorado are working to attract and highlight activity in their downtowns.

2. Enhancing the downtown alley network.

The following concepts for enhancing the downtown alley network were developed in support of these downtown goals:

- A walkable and bikeable downtown.
- Places for people.
- A real place where locals want to be.



i. IMAGINING DOWNTOWN ALLEY ENHANCEMENTS



😍 Yahoo...
74 votes

😐 Meh...
0 votes



😞 No Way...
0 votes

Write-In Comments:

- That looks beautiful.
- Yes but take good care of the Victorian Walter Ufer house and his studio in the building next door.

ii. IMAGINING DOWNTOWN ALLEY ENHANCEMENTS



😍 Yahoo...
48 votes

😐 Meh...
2 votes



😞 No Way...
4 votes

Write-In Comments:

- N/A

BENEFITS OF AN ENHANCED ALLEY NETWORK

Alleys are an important component of a well-connected downtown transportation system. Downtown Taos has a terrific network of alleys that, if enhanced, present a number of opportunities including:

- Improving mobility and walkability in the downtown.
- Creating more places for people to socialize and gather.
- Creating opportunities for local businesses to take advantage of the alleys (ex. outdoor dining on an alley).
- Building on the authenticity of Taos' by enhancing the historic alley network.

INSPIRATION FOR ALLEY ENHANCEMENTS



There are many ways that the alleys in Taos could be modified to make them feel more inviting and vibrant. The photos above depict alley enhancements that have been installed in other places and could serve as inspiration for Taos.

iii. IMAGINING DOWNTOWN ALLEY ENHANCEMENTS



😍 Yahoo...

61 votes

Write-In Comments:

- N/A

😐 Meh...

1 vote



😞 No Way...

2 votes

3. Create a safe and connected downtown bike network.

The following concepts for creating a safe and connected downtown bike network were developed in support of these downtown goals:

- A walkable and bikeable downtown.
- Places for people.
- A real place where locals want to be.

i. VISUALIZING A SAFE AND CONNECTED BIKE NETWORK

😍 Yahoo...

55 votes

Write-In Comments:

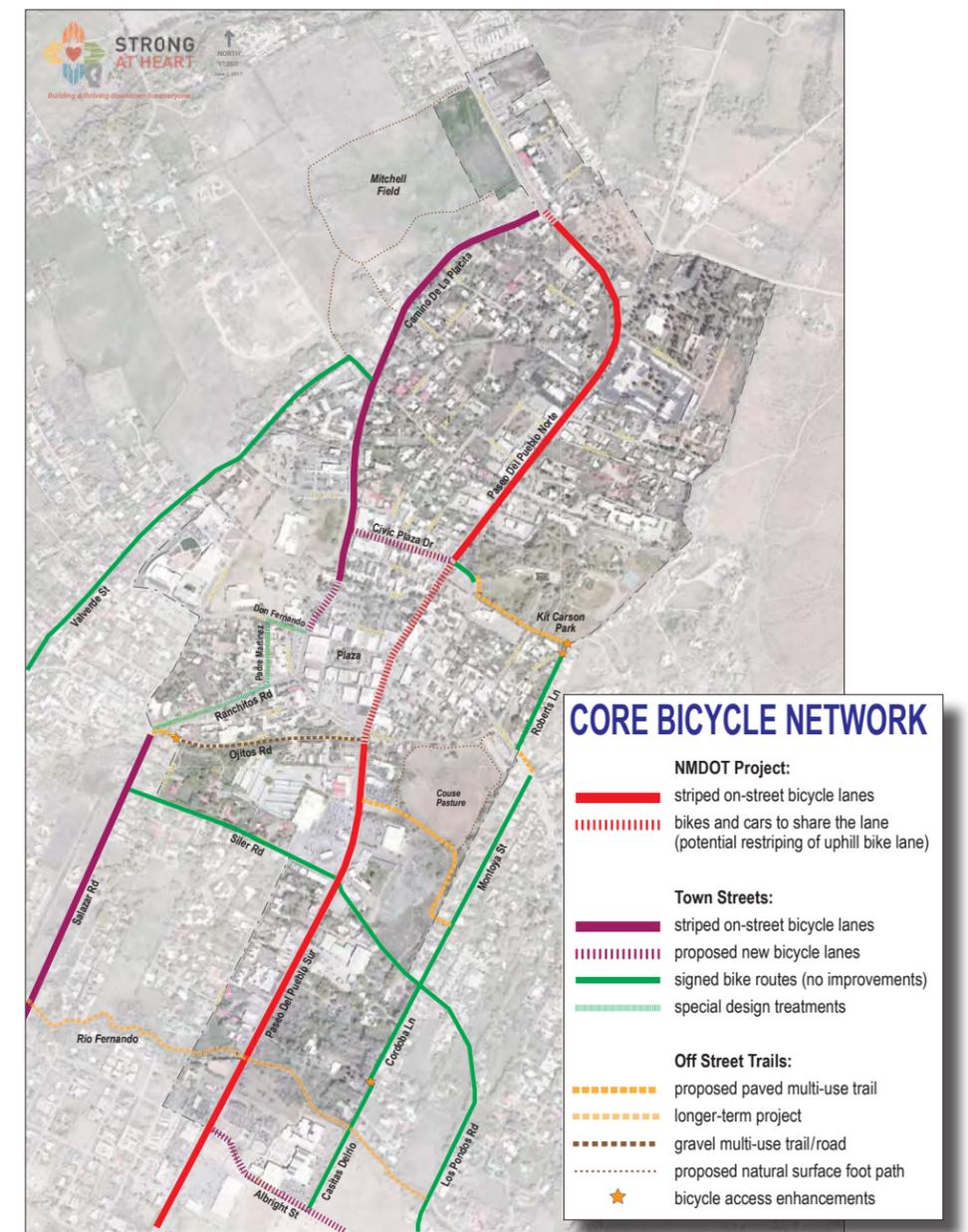
- Stripe a bike lane to high school trail connection.
- Yes, yes, yes, yes.
- Save Couse pasture yes.

😐 Meh...

7 votes

😞 No Way...

9 votes



BENEFITS OF A SAFE AND CONNECTED DOWNTOWN BIKE NETWORK

Creating a downtown that is safe and easy to access on foot and by bike was identified as a top priority by the community. Much time and effort went into creating the network diagram on page 10 that identifies improvements that could be made to the existing walking and biking infrastructure in Taos to create a safe and well-connected downtown walking and biking network.

The benefits of a safe and well-connected walking and biking network in downtown Taos include:

- Provides safe and convenient connections between key places and neighborhoods across town.
- Allows Taoseños to access the historic core without a car.
- Reduces parking demand downtown.
- Can help to reduce emissions from vehicles in Taos.

ii. VISUALIZING NEW MEXICO DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION'S IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PASEO



😍 Yahoo... 68 votes
😐 Meh... 2 votes
😞 No Way... 0 votes

Write-In Comments:

- In Portland, OR 7% of workers bike to work. That's huge!

iii. VISUALIZING NEW MEXICO DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION'S IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PASEO



😍 Yahoo... 60 votes
😐 Meh... 3 votes
😞 No Way... 0 votes

Write-In Comments:

- One-way streets should be considered.
- Love! A dream to bike downtown.

iv. IMAGINING NEW DOWNTOWN TRAIL CONNECTIONS



😍 Yahoo... 69 votes
😐 Meh... 3 vote
😞 No Way... 7 votes

Write-In Comments:

- N/A

BIKES ON CANTU HILL



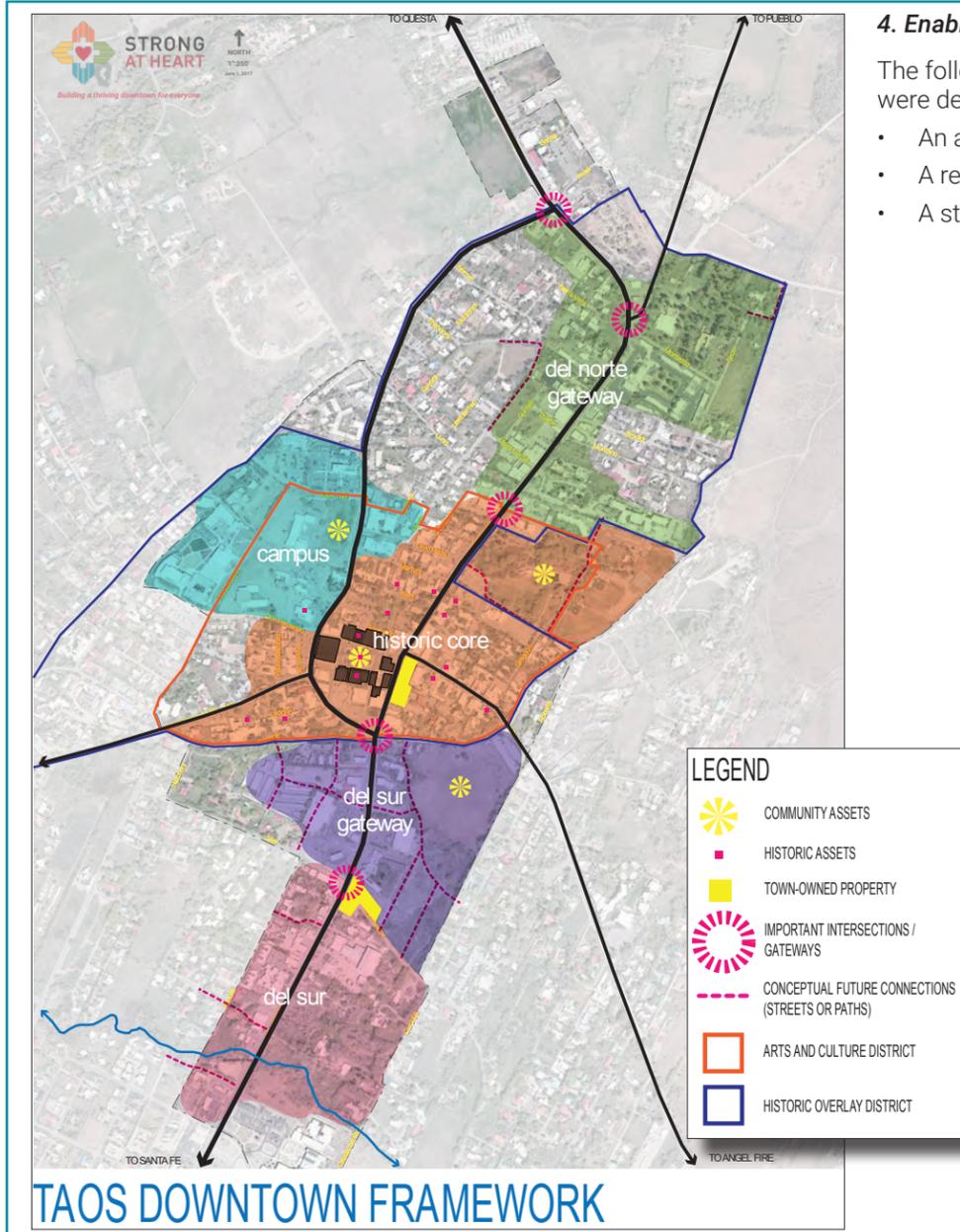
NMDOT Design for Cantu Hill: Shared Lanes (uphill and downhill)



Alternative Design for Cantu Hill: Bike Lane (uphill) and Shared Lane (downhill)

The New Mexico Department of Transportation's (NMDOT) proposed highway improvements include painting shared lane symbols (aka "sharrows") between Quesnel Road and Civic Plaza Drive to accommodate bicyclists traveling along the highway (refer to the top image).

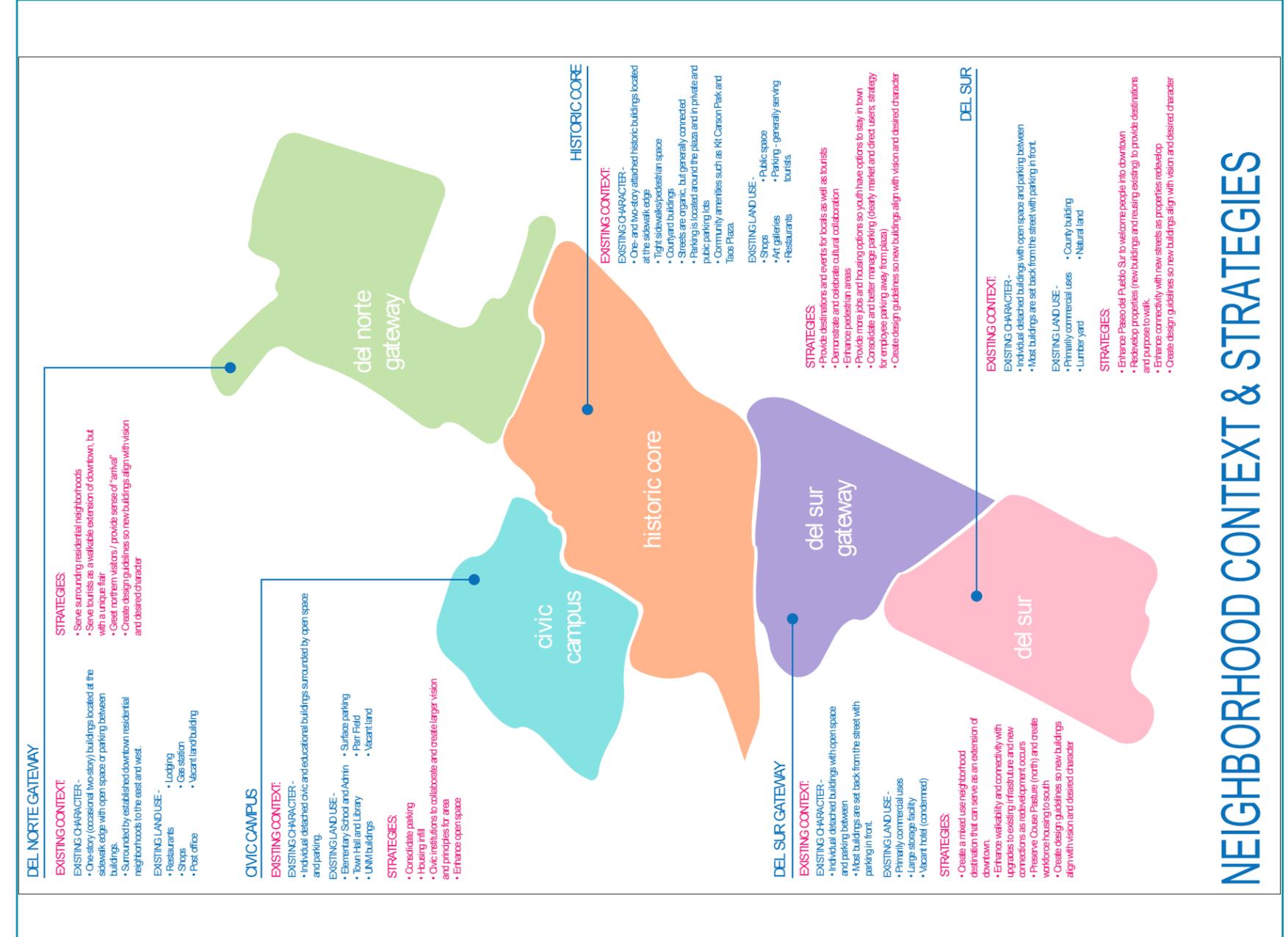
During the Downtown Design Workshop, an alternative design concept was explored that would enable bicyclists to travel in a dedicated bike lane while headed north and allow them to share the southbound lane with vehicles (refer to bottom image). This configuration could be achieved by slightly narrowing the highway travel lanes. The dedicated bike lane would benefit bicyclists traveling up Cantu Hill as they wouldn't have to ride uphill in traffic.

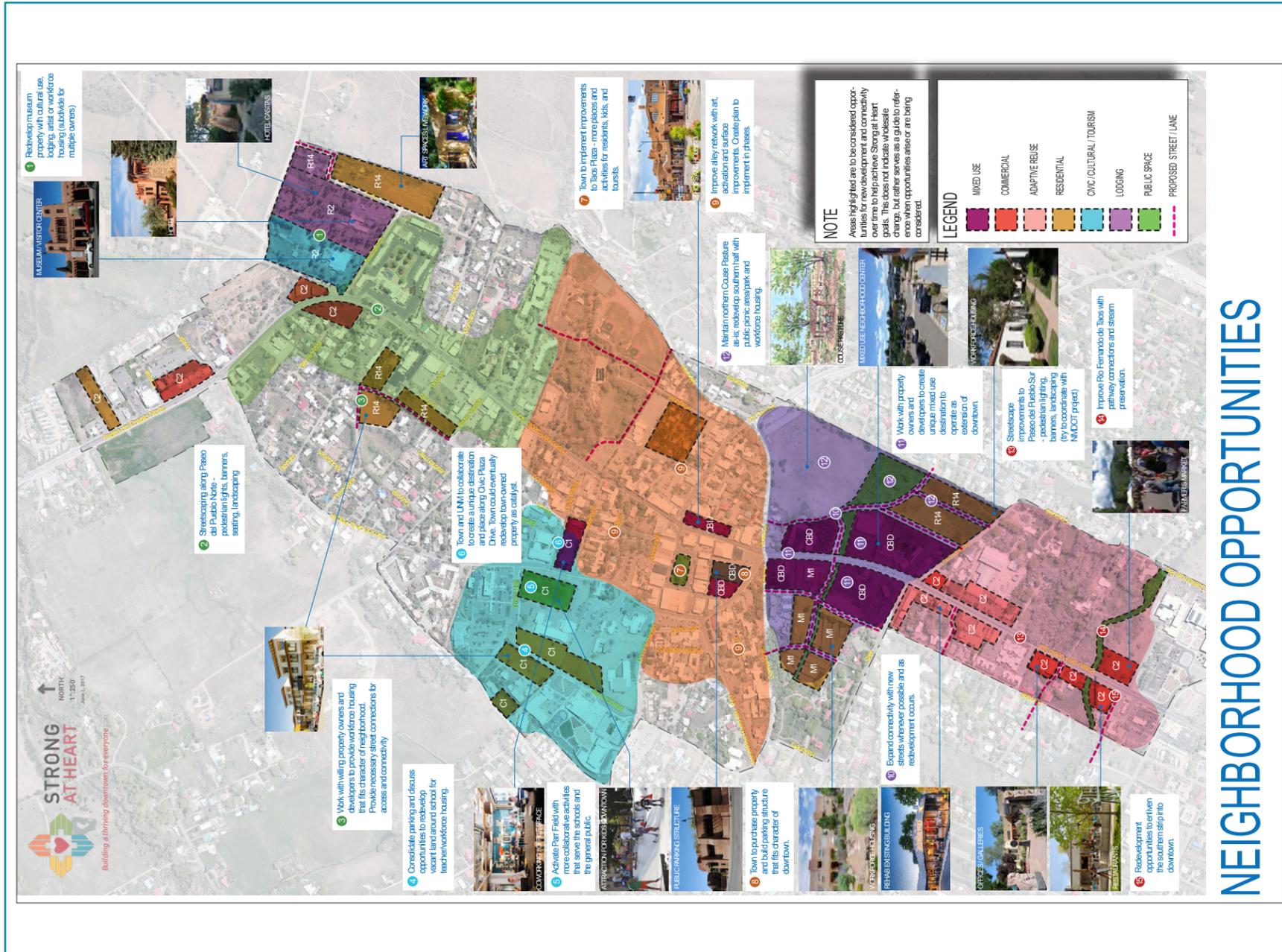


4. Enabling infill housing and mixed-use development.

The following concepts for infill housing and mixed-use development were developed in support of these downtown goals:

- An affordable place to live.
- A real place where locals want to be.
- A strong economy and thriving local businesses.





NEIGHBORHOOD OPPORTUNITIES

Downtown Design Workshop (Phase 4) Meeting Series Summary (Page 15 of 20)

i. IMAGINING MIXED-USE INFILL DEVELOPMENT



😍 Yahoo...
46 votes

😐 Meh...
4 votes

😞 No Way...
7 votes

Write-In Comments:

- N/A



ii. IMAGINING INFILL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT



😍 Yahoo...
43 votes

😐 Meh...
7 votes

😞 No Way...
10 votes

Write-In Comments:

- No 3-stories.
- No, can't see mountains.
- Ditto - keep at 2-stories, especially at heart of historic district.

Downtown Design Workshop (Phase 4) Meeting Series Summary (Page 16 of 20)

BENEFITS OF INFILL DEVELOPMENT

"Infill development" is construction of new buildings on vacant or underutilized properties within previously built areas of a community. The benefits of encouraging infill development in Taos include:

- Providing choices and opportunities for Taosños to live and stay in Taos.
- Locating new housing near existing opportunities and businesses.
- Infusing new life into commercial areas by providing a round-the-clock population of residents.
- Keeping affordable housing from being segregated or pushed towards the edges of town.
- Preventing outward growth of the community (i.e., sprawl) which will help to maintain the rural character of the areas around Taos.
- Locating new buildings in areas already served by public infrastructure (such as transportation, water, wastewater, and other utilities), which can help to reduce financial burdens on the town and local taxpayers.

IDEAS FOR DOWNTOWN HOUSING



Glenwood Springs, Colorado



Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

A vibrant downtown hinges on people being there and the most effective way to get people there, is to have them live there. Downtown housing should come in a wide range of shapes and sizes to enable people of different socioeconomic status to find a suitable home. With that said, introducing more housing to a downtown can be tricky. Adding housing while remaining sensitive to the context of the existing neighborhood is challenging. The images above depict ideas for how other communities are working to integrate housing in their downtown while maintaining the character of the surrounding neighborhood. The top image is a large single-family home in Glenwood Springs, Colorado that has been converted into 12-units. The bottom image is a single-family home in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho that has been converted into 4-units. Although the interior of both buildings have been modified to accommodate more housing units they have maintained the look and feel of a single-family home.

iii. IMAGINING A DOWNTOWN PARKING GARAGE WITH MIXED-USE INFILL DEVELOPMENT



😍 Yahoo...

61 votes

Write-In Comments:

- Great idea!
- No cars on plaza. With parking lot we can create a beautiful walkable plaza.
- How about a restaurant on parking lot roof? Think of the views!

😐 Meh...

1 vote

😞 No Way...

3 votes

5. Encourage entrepreneurship and local business.

The following concepts for encouraging entrepreneurship and local business were developed in support of these downtown goals:

- Places for people.
- A strong economy and thriving local businesses.

i. IMAGINING ADAPTIVE REUSE ALONG PASEO DEL PUEBLO SUR



😍 Yahoo...

56 votes

Write-In Comments:

- N/A

😐 Meh...

7 votes

😞 No Way...

0 votes

BENEFITS OF ADAPTIVE REUSE

"Adaptive Reuse" is the process of taking an existing building and reusing it for a purpose other than it was originally designed for. For example, converting a former gas station into a restaurant. The benefits of enabling and supporting adaptive reuse in Taos include:

- Creates spaces for Taoseños to form new businesses.
- Sparks reinvestment in areas with empty buildings.
- Provides locals and visitors with new and fun things to do.

Additional Write-In Comments

In addition to the feedback on the previous pages, the following written comments were collected over the course of the Design Workshop:

- Colorful crosswalks.
- This is perfect for everyone.
- Be careful about becoming too “chi-chi.”
- No 3-stories.
- Yes garage, no shops, yes pretty.
- Best way to grow – all together, little by little.
- We want it all – bikes and walking 1st.
- Entrance to Pueblo should highlight cultural values.
- Possible West World connections???
- Connect the pieces.
- Yeah I want that for real.
- Paint all crosswalks considering it is an artist town.
- Street performers (visual art, musicians, dancers).
- Some great ideas, the Plaza definitely needs Café street type energy.
- Keep the community engagement going.
- Residential housing/infill near Plaza and historic district shouldn't be more than 2 story.
- I think building out for seating on the Plaza would detract from the existing buildings.
- Do like the idea of making the Plaza and Bent Street more pedestrian.
- Like the parking garage at the Tuesday Morning location.
- One other for bike lanes – creating maps for routes around town so people start biking now – do these exist? Thank you!!!
- Love making the alleys beautiful and social.
- Bottom idea on #4 is so exciting! And all bike lanes.
- Emergency vehicles use this access.
- One level Plaza. Yes, second this.
- Paint the crosswalks colorful because it's an artist town.
- Have local artists paint the crosswalks because it's an artist town.
- Lights!! (street, art designs, Christmas serings, etc.)
- Art (murals, street/sidewalk/crosswalk, etc.)
- Indian land?
- More sidewalks!

- Are natural resources to support more downtown housing being considered?
- How about an office of innovation?
- Continue bike and walking paths.
- Replant trees as the cottonwoods die.
- Make it feel like European café.
- Re-open movie theater.
- Research European business models for their plaza's.
- High-end Pizza Hut with wine.
- What are the choices for light (street).
- Would like to see special attention placed on minimal focused lighting rather than flood lighting you often see in “walkability” developments.
- I really like the idea of more lighting in the plaza. The overall concept is more appealing and brings hope to the future.
- My concern has always been the future of Taos for my children and activities.
- My feedback would be how to get more of the millennial generation involved or able to support this concept because that generation is the future.
- I really like the idea of having apartments downtown.
- Work with the Enchanted Circle Trails Association and other alternative transportation organizations to utilize the community input process that culminated in the Enchanted Circle Trail Plan (<https://web.tplgis.org/taostrails/>)
- Would like to see good brick or flagstone path at Stables Gallery.
- This what we need.
- I'm a huge fan of the downtown goals – how do we start to make it reality? Will that be the next session – how do we do that also with the community behind it? Sorry – more questions than feedback but I love what you've presented!
- Permaculture strategies around town, easy picking for anybody when the fruit/whatever trees and plants are in season.
- Ease of biking routes/paths nearly anywhere would be awesome. Less driving, more nature-oriented activities (It's also a good workout!)
- Remember, this is Taos, not Los Angeles or NYC or SF or Houston. Some folks prefer it simple. Listen to the people.
- Xeriscaping. No water use.
- No overhead strings of lighting but yes!

