


INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

A Framework for Promoting the Sustainable Economic Development of the Greater Taos Community

Prepared for the Town of Taos Community Conversation
September 2006

 New Markets Development
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NEW MARKETS DEVELOPMENT  *advisory services for expanding economic opportunities*

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Introduction
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The Town's Objectives for Tonight's Conversation

- Introduce ongoing initiative of Town of Taos to play a renewed role as a leader in economic development of the region, one part of which is the “Investing in the Future” Report
- Initiate process for regularly incorporating community input into Town's community and economic development efforts
- Incorporate residents' input into definition of goals of economic development
- Present Town's Action Plan for implementing recommendations outlined in “Investing in the Future”
- Set tone for future productive, constructive community dialogue about community and economic development



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The Town Council of Taos is eager to improve the Town's economic development efforts

***INVESTING IN THE FUTURE: A Framework for Promoting Sustainable Economic & Community Development in the Greater Taos Region* was commissioned by the Taos Town Council to provide the Taos community with...**

- an assessment of the socioeconomic health of the region, including the short- and long-term economic development challenges and opportunities of the region,
- an identification of key economic development perspectives and principles to guide the Town's economic development efforts, and
- recommendations as to how the Town of Taos might best work with other community entities to promote the shared and sustainable economic development of the region.



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This study could not have been completed without the help of many organizations and individuals

- County of Taos
 - Pueblo of Taos
 - Village of Questa
 - Town of Taos Ski Valley
 - Taos County Economic Development Corporation
 - Taos County Chamber of Commerce
 - Taos Community Foundation
 - Taos Business Alliance
 - Taos Land Trust
 - Kit Carson Electric Cooperative
 - Taos CARES Coalition
 - UNM-Taos
 - Holy Cross Hospital
 - And many others
-
- Special thanks to Town of Taos staff that provided assistance throughout the study:
 - Town Manager Tomas Benavidez
 - Town Clerk Renee Lucero
 - Town Executive Assistant Cyndee Perez



Introduction



Identification of Community Priorities



Recommendations I: Capacity



Recommendations II: Strategy



Residents' visions of Taos emphasize its rural and agrarian landscape, its inclusiveness, and its culture and history

Taos is...

- “a beautiful, amazing place.”
- “a tight-knit community.”
- “about the people... the families who have lived together and near each other for generations.”
- “the land... agriculture... horse fields...”
- “not just the Town – it’s the County, the Enchanted Circle, the region.”
- “where our children want to raise their children – it’s a place our families never want to leave.”
- “a model community of sustainable development – balancing economic prosperity, environmental protection, and cultural conservation.”
- “a place where we celebrate culture – especially the historic Pueblo, Hispanic and American cultures – where we can share them with each other and learn from each other.”



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Leadership, Culture and Sustainability are all Critical Priorities for Economic Development

Critical issues to improving the economic development efforts of the Town of Taos include:

– Leadership

- **A Common Vision for the Economic Development of the Region**
- **Effective Systems for the Management of Economic Development**

– Culture

- **Celebration and Conservation of the Living Heritage Cultures of the Region**
- **Greater Solidarity among the Social and Geographic Communities of the Region**
- **More Effective Integration of New Residents into Taos**

– Sustainability

- **Responsible Management of the Growth of the Region**
- **Shared and Equitable Prosperity for all Residents**



These priorities suggest an agenda for improving the Town's economic development efforts

Priorities
Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vision• Systems
Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural Conservation• Cultural Solidarity• Cultural Integration
Sustainability <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Growth Management• Shared Prosperity



Actions
Capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Articulate Goals of Economic Development• Establish Economic Development Systems• Emphasize and Expand Regional Cooperation• Reinvigorate Civic Participation
Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage Growth for Long-Range Community Sustainability• Emphasize and Expand Programs for Promoting Affordability and Inclusiveness

Culture needs to be recognized and addressed in a substantial and meaningful way throughout all economic development efforts

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Introduction



Identification of Community Priorities



Recommendations I: Capacity



Recommendations II: Strategy



Actions

Capacity

- **Articulate Goals of Economic Development**

- Establish Economic Development Systems
- Emphasize and Expand Regional Cooperation
- Reinvigorate Civic Participation

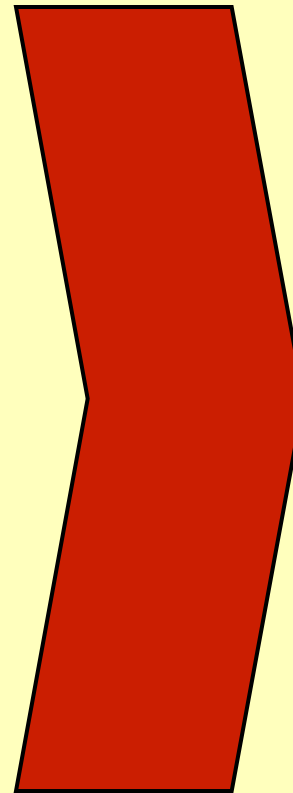
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- Manage Growth for Long-Range Community Sustainability
- Emphasize and Expand Programs for Promoting Affordability and Inclusiveness

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The Town of Taos needs to articulate the goals of economic development

Priorities
<p>Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision • Systems <p>Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Conservation • Cultural Solidarity • Cultural Integration <p>Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth Management • Shared Development



Actions
<p>Capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate Goals of Economic Development • Establish Economic Development Systems • Emphasize and Expand Regional Cooperation • Reinvigorate Civic Participation
<p>Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage Growth for Long-Range Community Sustainability • Emphasize and Expand Programs for Promoting Affordability and Inclusiveness

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• Articulate Goals of Economic Development

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The Town needs to *carefully* define the beneficiaries and desired outcomes of “economic development”

- Two questions about the growth and economic development of the region are of critical concern to the community. These questions are not unique to Taos, but rather are two questions universally recognized as necessary to be asked about all economic development efforts.
 - “Economic development for whom?”
 - “What are we growing for?”
- Economic development is much more than the promotion of the growth of economic activity. Economic growth is a means to an end – the end goal is a community in which its residents have the opportunity and capability to enjoy healthy, fulfilling and mutually supportive lives.

"The basic purpose of development is to enlarge people's choices. In principle, these choices can be infinite and can change over time. People often value achievements that do not show up at all, or not immediately, in income or growth figures: greater access to knowledge, better nutrition and health services, more secure livelihoods, security against crime and physical violence, satisfying leisure hours, political and cultural freedoms and sense of participation in community activities. The objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives."

- Mahbub ul Haq

Founder of the United Nations Human Development Index

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The 2003 National Citizens' Survey highlights the high quality of life of Taos and its development challenges

National Citizens' Survey 2003		
	Good/Excellent	Poor
Taos is a... place to live	71%	5%
	Excellent	Poor
Taos is a... place to raise children	8%	22%
Recreational Opportunities	14%	27%
	Good/Excellent	Poor
Job Opportunities	3%	74%
Jobs Growth	2%	83%
	Not Too Fast	Too Fast (Much)
Population Growth	35%	65% (25%)
	Good/Excellent	Poor
Access to Affordable Housing	7%	63%
	Not a Problem	A Major Problem
Traffic Congestion	2%	65%
	Good/Excellent	Poor
Land Use, Planning & Zoning	16%	30%
Code Enforcement	10%	43%
	Not a Problem	A Major Problem
Drugs	0%	68%

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Aggregate growth and income statistics, common indicators of economic development, suggest that Taos is doing well

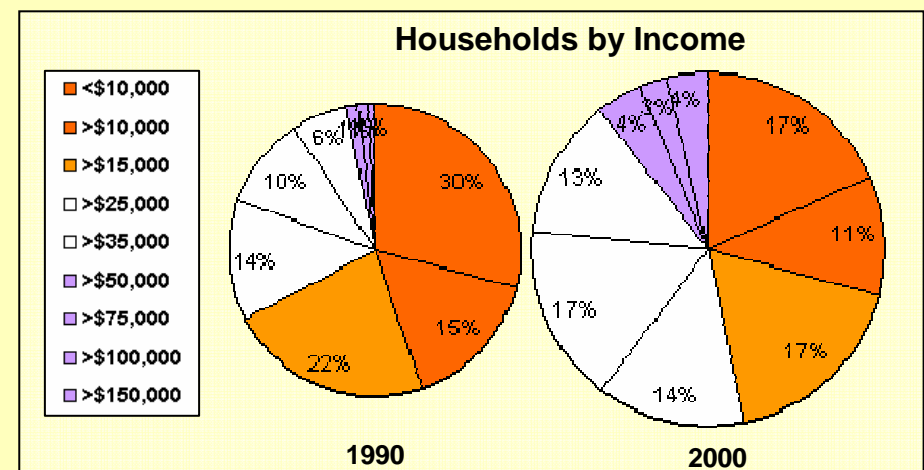
- Aggregate income grew over 7% on average from 2001-2004, and never less than 3% in any year during this period
- Median household income has grown at 2%+ a year.
- The number of poor and low-income households fell below 50%.

Year	Gross Receipts (\$ Million)	Annual Growth Rate		
		Taos	NM	US
2001	636.67	5.0%	1.0%	3.2%
2002	659.84	3.7%	4.9%	3.4%
2003	747.64	13.3%	6.9%	4.8%
2004	799.32	6.9%	6.9%	7.0%
Average	-	7.2%	4.9%	4.6%

Source: Taos Economic Report

Median Income (Year 2000 \$)	Census	Taos	NM	US
Households	2000	\$26,700	\$34,000	\$42,000
	1990		\$22,000 (1990-2000 growth: 2%)	
Families	2000	\$34,000		
	1990		\$26,000 (1990-2000 growth: 2.6%)	

Source: US Census Bureau



Source: US Census Bureau

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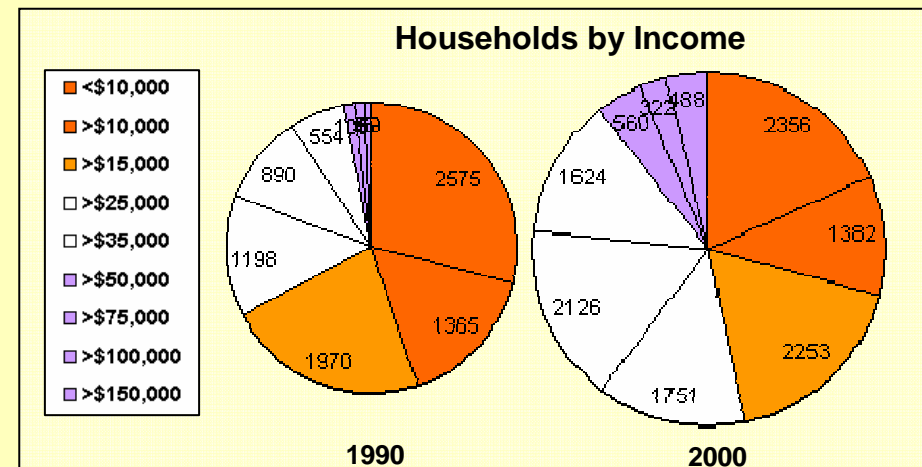
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Accounting for population growth and looking more carefully at the most vulnerable populations, Taos is less well-off

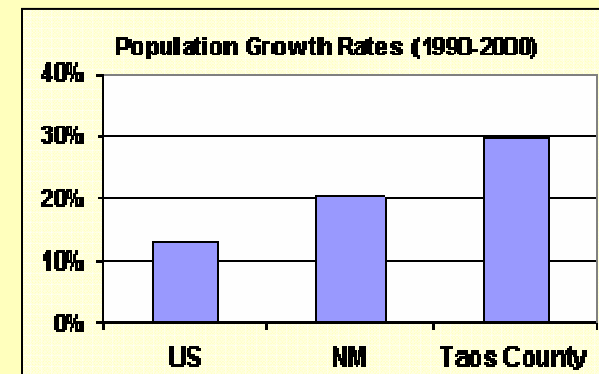
- In 2004, the Taos County poverty rate was 21%, roughly 120% the NM rate and nearly 200% the US rate.
- The proportion of Taos County children in impoverished or low-income families remains one of the highest in the country, with more than 25% of all children in poverty, 43% near poverty, and more than half low-income.
- While the percentage of Taos County households in poverty fell from 44% to 29%, the absolute number decreased by only 202, or 5.1%.
- While the percentage of low-income households fell from 71% to 45%, the number of low-income households actually increased by 283, or 14%.

Poverty Rates, 2004	Taos	NM	US
All Persons	21%	18%	12%
Children in Poverty	25%-29%	23.4%	18%
Children, Low-Income	54%	53%	40%

Source: NM Kids Count



Source: US Census Bureau



Source: US Census Bureau

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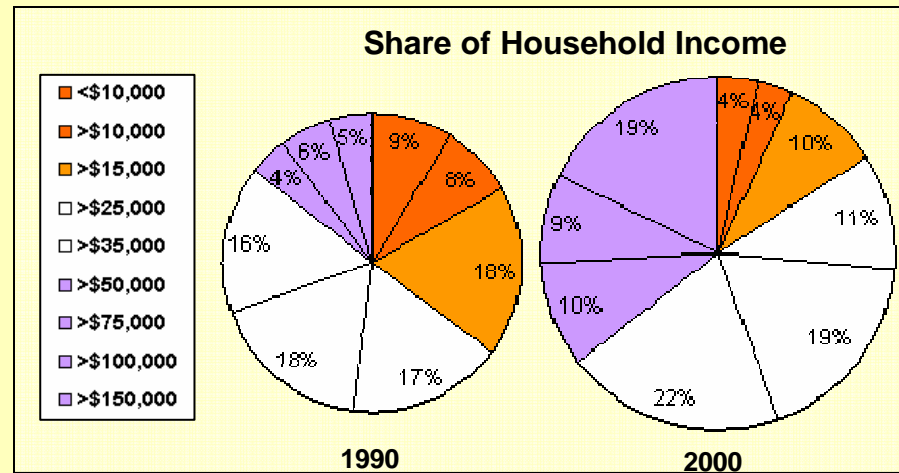
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The distribution of total income and the cost of housing offer insight into growing social and economic anxiety

- “It’s almost as if there are two Taoses.”



- Housing costs are rising rapidly in Taos, influenced by the rise in household inequality. Median home price nearly doubled to \$270,000 in 5 years. The average Price-to-Income ratio for Taos (2000-2005), using family income, is 210,000:28,700, or 7.7. A ratio of 4.0 or higher is considered unaffordable.

Price-to-Income Ratio	Repayment Years		# US Metro Regions (O'Toole 2004)	Affordability Rating
	25% Income	33% Income		
1.50	7.7	5.5	14	Extremely Affordable
1.75	9.4	6.6	65	Very Affordable
2.00	11.2	7.8	126	Affordable
3.00	21.9	13.5	210	Marginally Affordable
4.00	55.2	22.3	25	Unaffordable
5.00	N/A	41.2	8	Very Unaffordable
6.00	N/A	N/A	7	Extremely Unaffordable

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Sources of government revenue and personal income offer insight into job quality and development opportunities

Gross Receipts by Industry, 2004	\$ Million	% Total
Retail Trade	279.9	35.0%
Construction	143.5	18.0%
Accommodations & Food Services	78.1	9.8%
Wholesale Trade	55.4	6.9%
Health Care & Social Assistance	28.8	3.6%
Utilities	24.4	3.0%
Manufacturing	23.1	2.9%
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	17.6	2.2%
Information & Cultural Industries	15.4	1.9%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	5.0	0.6%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	3.4	0.4%
Professional, Scientific, Technical Svcs.	1.8	0.2%
Educational Services	1.0	0.1%

Average Earnings by Industry, 2004	Hourly Earnings	Annual Earnings	% of Average Private Sector Earnings	% Private Sector Employment
Finance & insurance	16.60	33,200	159%	3.3%
Wholesale trade	15.43	30,850	148%	1.2%
Information Management	14.28	28,550	137%	1.5%
Professional & technical services	13.88	27,750	133%	3.3%
Health care & social assistance	13.83	27,650	132%	16.4%
Real estate & rental & leasing	12.40	24,800	119%	4.2%
Educational services	12.33	24,650	118%	5.1%
Construction	11.80	23,600	113%	10.9%
Private Sector Average	10.45	20,900	100%	100.0%
Retail trade	9.60	19,200	92%	16.6%
Arts, entertainment & recreation	8.58	17,150	82%	4.1%
Accommodation & food services	6.10	12,200	58%	24.1%

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2020 Master Plan can offer guidance for defining in a holistic fashion the Town's goals for economic development

The master plan completed in 1999 presents a vision for Taos and goals for the town in the year 2020 that continue to reflect the aspirations of residents of the community.

Town of Taos Vision Statement

Taos is a community that addresses the needs of its residents, first and foremost. By balancing the need for increased opportunities and the need to protect the unique qualities that Taos residents value, Taoseños will flourish in their home community.

Town of Taos Goals for 2020

- **Land Use:** Growth and development protect and enhance the natural resources, unique landscape, historic character, distinct neighborhoods, and economic opportunities of the Taos Valley.
- **Agricultural and Open Space Preservation:** Taos' quality of life is maintained by preserving and enhancing our cherished open spaces and agricultural lands.
- **Economic Development:** The Taos economy is diverse, self-sustaining, and provides rewarding jobs that pay well.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Community Facilities:** Community facilities are of high quality and available to all, allowing residents to enjoy life-long quality education and recreation.

Actions

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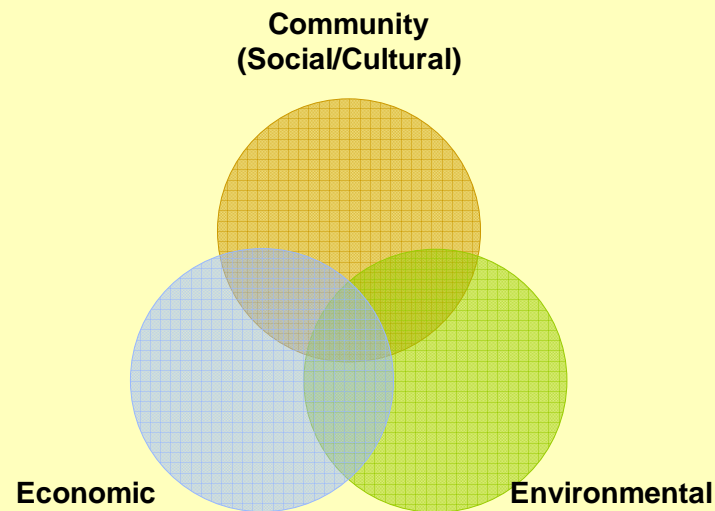
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The Town's definition of development needs to take into account economics, environment and especially community

A simple framework for defining the goals and objectives of economic development can be depicted as incorporating three different and complementary dimensions – Social/Cultural, Economic and Environmental.



In order to articulate its goals for economic development, the Town of Taos should:

- Incorporate community input into a clear and carefully articulated definition of economic development that reflects the aspirations of residents.
- Communicate this vision with community members.
- Encourage other government, business, nonprofit and philanthropic institutions to adopt a similar framework for economic development and cooperate together in promoting these goals to secure the support from state, federal and nonprofit institutions for these goals

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- Articulate Goals of Economic Development
- **Establish Economic Development Systems**
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The Town of Taos needs to establish formal systems to more effectively manage its economic development efforts

Priorities

Leadership

- Vision
- Systems

Culture

- Cultural Conservation
- Cultural Solidarity
- Cultural Integration

Sustainability

- Growth Management
- Shared Development

Actions

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- Articulate Goals of Economic Development
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Five major systems improvements are required to improve the economic development efforts of the Town

Systems (Structures / Processes)

1. Department of Community and Economic Development

Establish a Department of Community and Economic Development

2. Land-use Master Plan

Refocus, update and consistently enforce the land-use master plan to prioritize the health and sustainable growth of the community

3. Community Development Steering Committee

Create a community development steering committee, comprised of representatives from lead agencies representing the various dimensions of community development

4. Community and Economic Development Training Programs

Implement regular training and development programs on community and economic development for elected officials, government staff, and nonprofit staff

5. Formal Commitments to Children and Youth

Institute formal commitments to prioritize children and youth as a primary focus of economic development efforts

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A department of community and economic development would implement additional systems improvements

Systems (Structures / Processes)

1. Department of Community and Economic Development

In addition to being responsible for the other major systems improvements recommended, the CED would also be responsible for:

- a. Strategic planning for the Town's community development efforts
- b. Monitoring of community and economic development indicators
- c. Research to guide the Town's development efforts
- d. Coordination of Town's economic development efforts and partnerships
- e. Evaluation of community impact of large-scale development efforts

2. Land-use Master Plan

3. Community Development Steering Committee

4. Community and Economic Development Training Programs

5. Formal Commitments to Children and Youth

Actions

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The Town should improve its formal systems to more effectively manage its economic development efforts

Systems (Structures / Processes)

1. Department of Community and Economic Development
2. Land-use Master Plan
3. Community Development Steering Committee
4. Community and Economic Development Training Programs
5. Formal Commitments to Children and Youth

- Only one-third of Taos residents rate Taos good or excellent as a place to raise children. Nearly one-quarter of respondents suggested that it is a bad place in which to raise children.
- The proportion of Taos County children in impoverished or low-income families remains one of the highest in the country, with more than a quarter of all children in poverty, 43% near poverty (in households with incomes less than 150% the federal poverty line), and more than half in low-income households.
- Nearly all interview subjects identified the welfare of children and youth as one of the highest priorities, if not the highest priority, for economic development in the region.

The Town of Taos needs to emphasize and expand regional cooperation to promote economic development

Actions

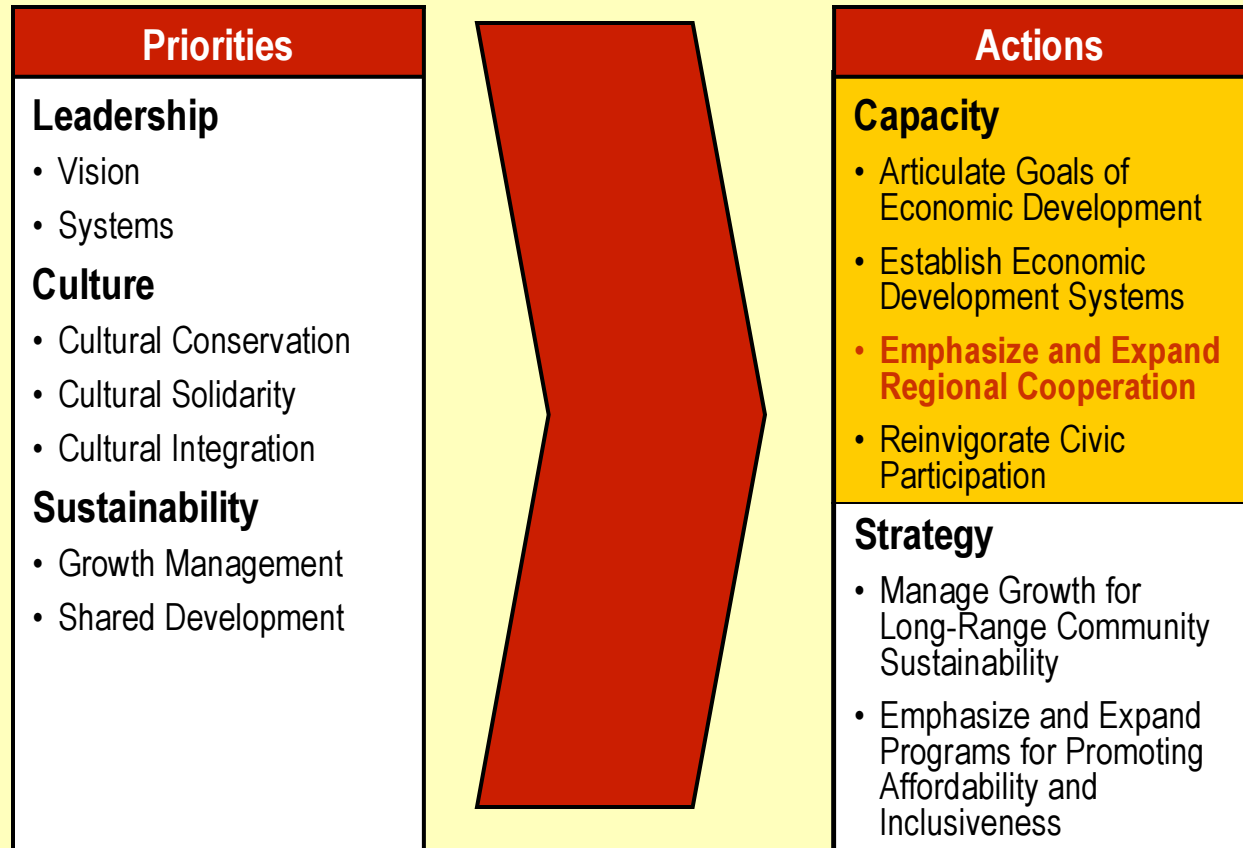
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The Town of Taos should reinvigorate the meaningful and constructive participation of residents in its policy-making

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- Systems

Culture

- Cultural Conservation
- Cultural Solidarity
- Cultural Integration

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- Growth Management
- Shared Development

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Identification of Community Priorities



Recommendations I: Capacity



Recommendations II: Strategy

The Town needs to craft and follow a comprehensive strategy for economic development

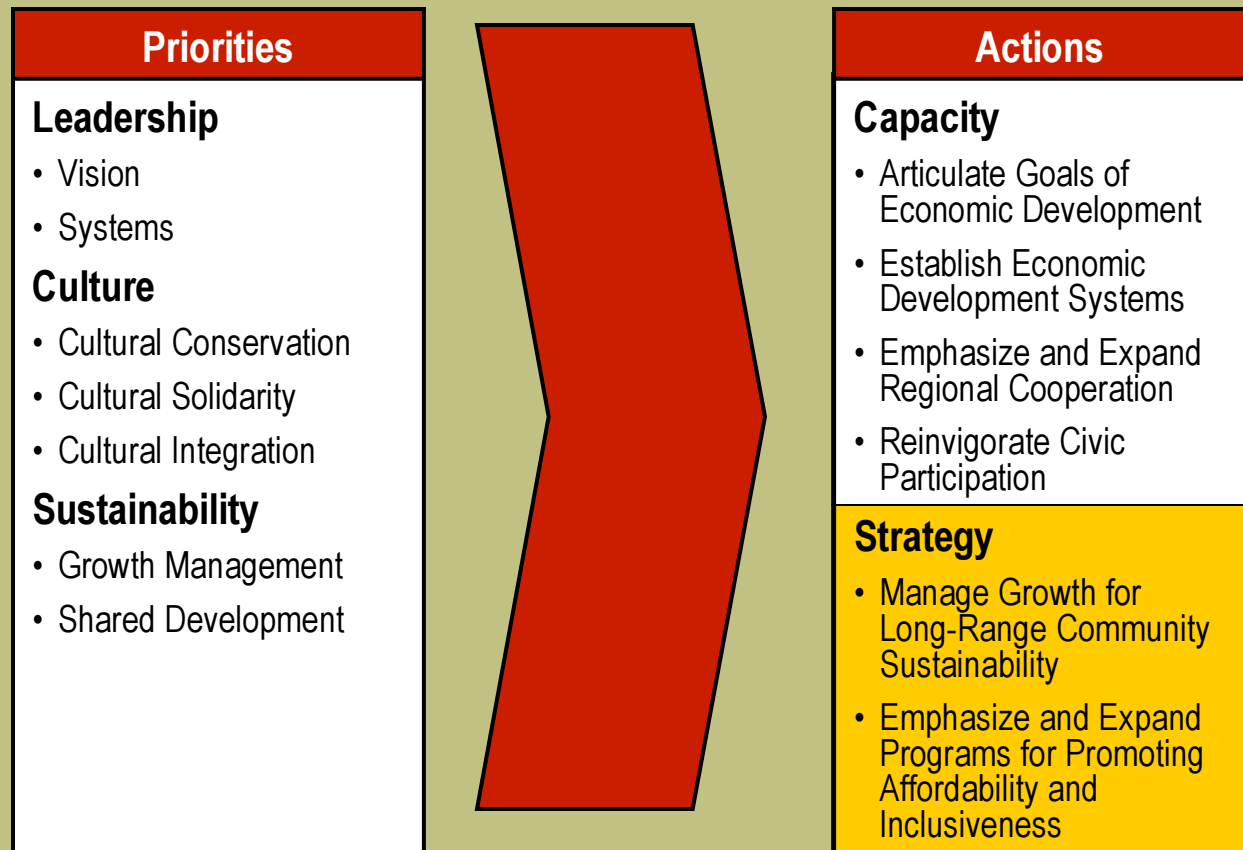
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This vision and these goals suggest primary objectives for economic development in Taos

- Immediate Strategy:
 - Growth Management
 - Long-Range Planning
- Near-Term Strategy
 - Inclusive Housing
 - Community-Based Minimum Wage and Health Insurance Programs
 - Dual-Purpose Public Investments
 - Tourism
 - Family-Oriented Tourism
 - Regional Tourism
 - Event-Driven Tourism
 - Quality of the Tourist Experience
- Long-Term Strategy
 - Growth of extra-regionally competitive and larger local enterprises
 - Growth of Appropriate Industry Clusters
 - Health Care
 - Retirement Support
 - Agriculture
 - Affordable Housing
 - Technology-Enabled Outsourcing
 - Event-based Recreation
 - Responsible Destination Management Training
 - Cultural Training and Youth Development
 - Growth of Regional Productivity through Education and Training

Proposed Action Plan for Town of Taos Economic Development Agenda

Action	2006				2007							
	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	
Community Conversations on Economic Development												
Community and Economic Development Mission Statement												
Community and Economic Development Department												
Community Development Steering Committee												
Formal Commitments to Children and Youth												
Community Development Advisory Board												
Land-Use Master Plan (process underway)												
Monitoring, Annual												
Coordination, Establish Processes												
Project Evaluation and Improvement, Establish Processes												
Training for Officials, Staff and Stakeholders, Establish												
Strategy Planning and Implementation, inc. Inter-Jurisdictional Efforts												

-  Advance Preparation
-  Advance Preparation and Initial Implementation
-  Implementation



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- Introduce ongoing initiative of Town of Taos to play a renewed role as a leader in economic development of the region, one part of which is the “Investing in the Future” Report
- Initiate process for regularly incorporating community input into Town's community and economic development efforts
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