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.

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

PROJECT FUNDING
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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 can 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.

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.

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.
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 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
• Ag & Trails (Taos Land Trust) - 9

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.
INTRODUCTION:
Taoseños want their kids to have a chance at building a future for a greater number of Taoseños. At the most basic level, more and better jobs, and increased pathways to opportunity and on our unique sense of place. They desire an economy with tenuous jobs. For these reasons, much of the community While Taoseños acknowledge the value of the tourism economy, Our regional dependence on tourism is part of the challenge. other non-wage incomes. 
At the same time, overall income is going up, reflecting an increasing. Wages have been decreasing for decades, which means working people are having a harder time getting by. Almost a quarter of our community (and 38% of all Taoseño Taoseños recognize the need to build a stronger economy. 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 more sustainable future tomorrow.

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 development policies. These provide the foundational policy framework for local development. It is the creation (and later revision) of that high 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 even 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 unproductive 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 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. Too often, only the loudest are heard because 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. Too often, only the loudest are heard because 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. Too often, only the loudest are heard because 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. Too often, only the loudest are heard because 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. Too often, only the loudest are heard because
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 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.

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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 a community 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 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.

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 Taoseños. 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.

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.
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.

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.
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.

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.
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:**

**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:**

**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.

**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.

**Create a Safe and Connected Downtown Bike Network**

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

**Expand & Enhance the Downtown Alley Network**

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

**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.

**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 Alhambra, Los Pandos, Cordoba, and Siler.
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.
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
- **Ledoux St.**
  - Placemaking & Streetscaping
- **Spot-Improvements**
  - To Enhance Walkability
- **Park-Once District**
  - In the Historic Core
- **Civic Plaza Dr.**
  - Placemaking & Programming

**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.
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.

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:

1. CONTEXT Streets should be designed with an awareness of surrounding neighborhoods and adjacent land uses.
2. CONNECTIVITY Good connectivity decreases travel distances and increases route options for all modes of travel, allowing more direct travel between destinations.
3. PLACEMAKING Streets play a huge role in community life and should be designed as public spaces as well as areas for mobility.
4. COLLABORATION Street design should be inclusive of all users.
5. SAFETY Streets should be designed so that people walking, parking, bicycling and driving can all interact safely.
6. MOBILITY All modes should be able to easily move along the street.
7. ACCESSIBILITY Streets should provide comfortable access to destinations for all modes of travel and all types of people.
**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 controversial. While Taoseños broadly support the idea of improving pedestrian access and vibrancy and creating more street life, closing off the Plaza to cars is contentious.

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.
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 it’s 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.

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.
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 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 access and more 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 already available in the Historic Core. Concentrating parking in this area would allow for a more walkable and bikeable downtown, enabling businesses to thrive. Too much parking can eat up valuable public space.

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
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 lower demand should be carefully considered 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 space-saving opportunities for shared parking—such as 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, it is also potentially more productive to pursue a project like building a public parking garage, 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 and walkability. Concentrating parking in this area would allow for surface parking in areas of less demand to gradually transition into uses that are 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.

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 streets: 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 75 diagonal parking spaces. Although parking 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 already available in the Historic Core.

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.

Elements of a Parking Audit include:
- 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.

THE HISTORIC CORE IN TANDEM WITH PARKING STRATEGIES

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  - 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 historic roots of Taos. Ledoux is a short street segment that is benefiting from improvements. Ledoux is another street where there is interest in walking, wandering, and mingling.

**MEETING DOWNTOWN GOALS**

- **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.

**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. It is especially appropriate for areas that have a large draw for pedestrians 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. Festival streets are reminiscent of historic, pre-automobile streets, where pedestrians and cars used to be the norm before streets were designed around vehicles or needs. They are especially appropriate for areas that have a large draw for pedestrians 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.

**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—while 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.
Home to a number of key community organizations, Civic Plaza Drive is uniquely positioned to become an active and vibrant downtown street for Taoseños. 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 Taoseños 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 Taoseños 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 Taoseños.
- **Sense of Place.** Create a unique and authentic place, where the function of providing opportunities for Taoseños 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 basis 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 transformations 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 businesses. 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.

Improving street life and walkability

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 through 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 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 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.
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.

**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**
- **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.

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<th>Action Item</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Widen sidewalks and enhance pedestrian crossings on Paseo del Pueblo Norte as part of the NM 68/US 64 resurfacing project.</td>
<td>NMDOT</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-paint all crosswalks in the downtown core and by schools.</td>
<td>Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trim shrubbery that is encroaching on sidewalks and roads.</td>
<td>Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put up flashing crosswalk signs near the schools to alert drivers of crossings: Explore Safe Routes to School resources.</td>
<td>Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routinely review/coordinate/integrate pedestrian spot improvements with the construction of other projects (street repairs, utility work, building retrofits, infill development, etc.)</td>
<td>Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Town of Taos, Taos Main Street Accelerator Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Taos Main Street Accelerator Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street Name</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quesnel</td>
<td>Replace bike lane on Quesnel with sidewalk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quesnel</td>
<td>Move Quesnel on-street parking to same side as bike lane/sidewalk to create buffer between pedestrians and motorists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quesnel</td>
<td>Paint/paint crosswalks at Quesnel and Paseo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quesnel</td>
<td>Bring sidewalks at Quesnel and Paseo into compliance with ADA. 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Hall Dr./ Enos Garcia Elementary School</td>
<td>Paint or re-paint all crosswalks around the school. Install or repair flashing crosswalk signs near school to alert drivers of crossings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranchitos Rd.</td>
<td>Install sidewalk on one side of Ranchitos Road. Trim bushes and vegetation along both sides of Ranchitos Rd. to improve walkability along shoulders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Posta Rd.</td>
<td>Install speed radar sign to help control speed. Set speed limit signs on Siler Rd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siler Rd./Los Pandos Rd.</td>
<td>Repave Siler Rd. and, if possible, remove some of the storm drains.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siler Rd./Los Pandos Rd.</td>
<td>Re-time crosswalk signal at Paseo del Pueblo and Los Pandos intersection to increase crossing time and accommodate those with mobility challenges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siler Rd./Los Pandos Rd.</td>
<td>Signage on Los Pandos to warn of upcoming blind curve and to share the road with bicyclists.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 Transportation (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**

• **ADAAG**

• **AASHTO**

• **MUTCD**

• **NMDOT**
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.

**EXPAND AND ENHANCE THE DOWNTOWN ALLEY NETWORK**

**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.
EXPAND AND ENHANCE THE DOWNTOWN ALLEY NETWORK

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

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

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

  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. 

  https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/22213/Hammerschmidt-2009.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y

  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
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.

**CREATE A SAFE AND CONNECTED DOWNTOWN BIKE NETWORK**

**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 oulying 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 60. 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.

THE STRATEGY
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1. 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.

2. Follow guidance for best practices. Follow established guidance (AASHTO, MUTCD, NACTO, NMDOT) for facility design, signing and pavement markings.

3. 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.

4. Prioritize safety. Don’t build substandard facilities or stop bicycle facilities at random points. Strive for connectivity. Incorporate bicyclists’ needs into intersection designs.

5. 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.

6. Remember the parking. Add bicycle parking throughout downtown to make it easier to visit downtown businesses and events on bike.

7. 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).

8. 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.
**ACTION PLAN**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide on-street bicycle lanes as part of the NM 68/US 64 resurfacing project along Paseo del Pueblo Norte/Paseo del Pueblo Sur.</td>
<td>NMDOT</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request NMDOT make minor restriping changes to include an uphill bicycle lane, northbound on Cantu Hill.</td>
<td>Town of Taos, NMDOT</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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 Ranchito Road, Padre Martinez Lane, Don Fernando Street, Camino de la Placita, and Civic Plaza Drive.</td>
<td>Town of Taos</td>
<td>2019-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Town of Taos</td>
<td>2019-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide secure bicycle parking (designs where users can lock bike frame to rack). Disperse parking racks throughout downtown, locate convenience to businesses; select locations that do not interfere with pedestrian travel. Encourage local artists to design unique, artistic bicycle racks for Taos.</td>
<td>Town of Taos, local businesses</td>
<td>2019-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate open space planning with opportunities for new trail development along Mitchell Field, Couse Pasture, Kit Carson Park and the Rio Fernando.</td>
<td>Town of Taos, Taos Land Trust, private property owners</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue progress and look for outside funding opportunities to move forward Taos projects included in the regional Enchanted Circle Trails Plan.</td>
<td>Taos Land Trust, Enchanted Circle Trails Association</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**LONG-TERM GUIDANCE MATRIX**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street Name</th>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civic Plaza Drive</td>
<td>Bicycle lanes and traffic calming</td>
<td>Quick Wins: Upgrade on-street bicycle lanes with pavement stencils and signing to create a highly visible east/west connection through the downtown core.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberts Ln./Montoya St./Cordoba Ln./Casitas del Rio</td>
<td>Bike route with spot improvements</td>
<td>Mid- to Long-Term Projects: Formalize linkage between Roberts Lane and Kit Carson Park trial, and linkage between Cordoba Lane and Casitas del Rio. Provide a block of widened sidewalk/ sidewalk linkage on north side of Kit Carson Street. Add signage; Repave Cordoba Lane segment for smoother riding surface.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siler Rd./Los Pandos Rd./Gusdorf Rd.</td>
<td>Bike route</td>
<td>Quick Wins: Add directional signage to link with outlying Enchanted Circle bike routes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albright Street</td>
<td>Bike route</td>
<td>Quick Wins: Add directional signage to link with outlying Enchanted Circle bike routes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valverde Street</td>
<td>Bike route</td>
<td>Quick Wins: Add directional signage to link with outlying Enchanted Circle bike routes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitchell Field</td>
<td>Natural surface footpath system</td>
<td>Mid- to Long-Term Projects: Explore opportunities for trails with Not Forgotten Outreach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kit Carson Park Trail</td>
<td>Paved multi-use trail</td>
<td>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 sidewalk segment to Roberts/Morada Lane and Civic Plaza Drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio Fernando Trail</td>
<td>Proposed paved multi-use trail</td>
<td>Mid- to Long-Term Projects: Explore opportunities to complete an off street trail from Fred Raca Park to Los Pandos Road, potentially extending to Taos High School.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couse Pasture Trail</td>
<td>Natural surface footpath system</td>
<td>Mid- to Long-Term Projects: Explore opportunities for trails along edges of Couse Pasture.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**LONG-TERM GUIDANCE MATRIX**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street Name</th>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camino de la Placita</td>
<td>On-street bicycle lanes (existing)</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Fernando Street</td>
<td>Special design treatment</td>
<td>Quick Wins: Restrripe lane configuration at intersection to add pocket 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 Loreto/parking lot entrance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padre Martinez Lane</td>
<td>Special design treatment</td>
<td>Quick Wins: Sign one-way alley as two-way bike traffic permitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranchitos Road</td>
<td>Special design treatment</td>
<td>Quick Wins: Restrripe 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salazar Road</td>
<td>’On-street bicycle lanes (existing)’</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paseo del Pueblo Norte/Paseo del Pueblo Sur</td>
<td>On-street bicycle lanes</td>
<td>Quick Wins: NMDOT will be providing bicycle lanes throughout upcoming project, with the exception of the narrow cross-section between Civic Plaza Drive and Osuna/Camino de la Placita; consider providing a 5’ minimum bike lane in uphill direction and shared lane for downhill travel through this segment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ojitos Road</td>
<td>Gravel multi-use trail/road</td>
<td>Quick Wins: Provide bike/ped-only access and a short segment of paved trail between Ojitos Road/Hatchery Road and Ranchitos Road/Salazar Road.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

• NACTO

• MUTCD

• IMBA

• APBP

• NMDOT
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 Taoseños. 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 downtown 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 Taoseños.
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 when. 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 a building, its relationship to surrounding 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.

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.

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 because they 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; ends create a more vibrant downtown. The need for housing choices 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 an ideal place to expand housing choices while creating a more vibrant, locally-oriented downtown.

Housing in the Downtown

EXPANDING HOUSING CHOICES AND AFFORDABILITY

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 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.

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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 an ideal place to expand housing choices while creating a more vibrant, locally-oriented downtown.
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 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.

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 (MDA). An MDA 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.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a public financing tool that an community uses to support 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.

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.
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.

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 Smith’s 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 area immediately adjacent to the grocer, priming the area for a more walkable and mixed-use growth pattern.

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 townhouse 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.

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.
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 these may be selected 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 Manzanares 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 complement 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.

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 Public Library, Taos Municipal Schools Administration, Taos 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.

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

Strategic Direction
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✓ Analyze areas that are best suited for strategic infill.
ENABLE QUALITY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

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 is 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.
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, county, town, or city law. A form-based code offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning regulation.”

Form-based codes address the relationships 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, sometimes, 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 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 clearly drawn diagrams and other visuals. They are keyed to a regulating plan that designates the appropriate form and scale (and, sometimes, character) of development, rather than only distinctions in land-use types.

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, it is hoped that by considering the unintended consequences of other provisions—such as parking or height requirements—make projects infeasible.

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

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 very low per 100 square feet, which makes sense 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 development can be a tool that helps build the 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 architectural style are crucial for a successful downtown. While mixed-use development adds to lot density, mass and form are critical to the success of these downtowns, as the Town should not be misconstrued as an approval of these specific code changes.

TOWN PLANNING STAFF COMMENTS

The Planning and Community Development Department (PCDD) was not consulted on the code recommendations in this section. The recommendations in this section are not intended to guide projects or provide specific design standards. Instead, these recommendations should be considered as part of a larger conversation about downtown revitalization. As such, this section provides a framework for future discussions and decision-making.

In summary, the recommendations in this section are intended to guide future development in downtown Taos, with the goal of creating walkable, vibrant communities. These recommendations are not intended to dictate specific design solutions, but rather to provide a foundation for future discussions and decision-making. The Town Planning and Community Development Department looks forward to engaging with the community to further refine and implement these recommendations in the future.
It is especially important that buildings in the Central Business District Zone (largely a similar area to the Historic Core) 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.

**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.
  - Recommendation: 60 DU/Acre

**Lot Coverage**
- 100% building lot coverage allowed

**Max Height**
- 27 feet - PC may approve up to 40 feet
  - Recommendation: 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/dodging. Residential allowed by right. Prohibited Uses: Industrial uses, including small scale manufacturing, are prohibited.

**Recommendation:** 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 Taosinos.

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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.

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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 3 units. This would enable a much more feasible project with more affordable units—$1,086 for a 600 sf unit, 29% more affordable than the building allowed under current standards.
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Max Density (DU/Acre)</th>
<th>14 units per acre. This may be exceeded for dedicated affordable housing through a Special Use permit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lot Coverage</td>
<td>50% building lot coverage maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min Lot Size</td>
<td>7,000 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Ratio</td>
<td>Residential: 2 spaces per unit; except 2 bedroom apt: 1.5 sp/unit; and 1 bedroom or studio apt: 1.5 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Setback</td>
<td>20 feet - Recommendation: 10 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear Setback</td>
<td>10 feet - Recommendation: 0 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Side Setbacks</td>
<td>7 feet - Recommendation: 5 feet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Uses:
- Permitted Uses: Multi-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.

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 Taosinos—$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, Tassos identified 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 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses</th>
<th>Lot Size</th>
<th>Parking Ratios</th>
<th>Front Setback</th>
<th>Rear Setback</th>
<th>Max Height</th>
<th>Min Lot Size</th>
<th>Min Lot Width</th>
<th>Landscaping Coverage</th>
<th>Building Lot Coverage</th>
<th>Residential Density</th>
<th>Required Monthly Rent per Unit</th>
<th>Rent per Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial; Office</td>
<td>7,000 sf</td>
<td>Commercial, 1 space/300 sq ft; Hotel: 1 space per room; Restaurant: 1 sp/250 sq ft; Retail: 1 sp/250 sq ft</td>
<td>Residential: 2 spaces per unit; except 2 bedroom apt: 1.5 sp/unit; and 1 bedroom or studio apt: 1.1 sp/unit</td>
<td>10 ft</td>
<td>27 feet - PC may approve up to 40 feet</td>
<td>7,000 sq ft</td>
<td>70 feet</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>14 units per acre (but Conditional Use Permit and PUD required)</td>
<td>$1,476/mo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0 ft</td>
<td>2 ft</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,000 sf</td>
<td>7000 sq ft</td>
<td>70 feet - PC may approve up to 40 feet</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>14 units per acre (but Conditional Use Permit and PUD required)</td>
<td>$1,050/mo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-Use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0 ft</td>
<td>2 ft</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,000 sf</td>
<td>7000 sq ft</td>
<td>70 feet - PC may approve up to 40 feet</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>14 units per acre (but Conditional Use Permit and PUD required)</td>
<td>$1,050/mo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

### Mixed-Use Building Example:

- **Lot Size:** 7,000 sf
- **Stories:** 2
- **Building Size:** 2,341 sf
- **Parking Lot Coverage:** 74%
- **Landscaping Coverage:** 10%
- **Residential Density:** 1 unit (10 DU/A)
- **Required Monthly Rent per Unit:** $1,476/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).

**C1 ZONING STANDARDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Max Density (DU/Acre)</th>
<th>14 units per acre. This may be exceeded for dedicated affordable housing through a Special Use permit. Recommendation: 45</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lot Coverage</td>
<td>50% building lot coverage maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max Height</td>
<td>27 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min Lot Size</td>
<td>7000 sq ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min Lot Width</td>
<td>70 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Ratio</td>
<td>Office: 1 space/100 sq ft; Hotel: 1 space per room; Restaurant: 1 sp/100 sq ft; Retail: 1 sp/250 sq ft. Residential: see R:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recommendation: 1/1000 sq ft; 0.8 per unit on average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Setback</td>
<td>10 feet - Recommendation: 0 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear Setback</td>
<td>0 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Side Setbacks</td>
<td>0 feet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 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: 2,341 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 as a result of 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: 47%
- 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 72%. 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, mixed-use zoning can be made more efficient and affordable for both the developer and the community. The front setback 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.
Our Challenges

Because our economic diversity supports Taos, our urban economy is not immune to the economic challenges the region has experienced in recent years. The economic downturn set the stage for a significant challenge to the future. The economy has sputtered in the wake of the Great Recession. Unfortunatel...

Public Involvement Plan

The Project

The Taos Town Council 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 saw the intention of engaging the Town residents in the process. The Town then partnered with Community Builders, a collaborative organization, to provide the Town with additional expertise in public engagement and community planning. The public involvement dialog is to provide open opportunities for Taosenos to come together to offer strategy about how we can build a thriving downtown for everyone. This is an exciting opportunity to both develop a framework to support our downtown and, ultimately, enable the transition to a successful downtown.

The outcome of this community dolgality will be the Taos Downtown Strategy which will:

1. Identify what Taosenos love about their community and why that matters.
2. Develop a vision for our downtown and the development of the downtown is l
3. Identify for ongoing strategies to address community challenges of pedestrian and cyclist safety, traffic congestion, and parking along the main street.
4. Develop an implementation action plan.

Following the completion of the Community Strategy, the Downtown Task Force will work to incorporate the outcome of the community strategy into the downtown plan for 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 open and inclusive public participation in local decision making, for this project; the Town is committed to an inclusive and participatory planning approach that will follow the following guidelines:

Be Authentic: The purpose of this project is to generate greater community ideas and solutions about the future of Taos’ downtown.

Be Inclusive: Public engagement opportunities are open to all and are designed to re

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

Engagement Strategies

To follow each of these approaches the community will have ongoing strategies to work further into making the process and outcomes effective.

Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups: To understand the values, issues, and challenges of the community, stakeholders will be interviewed and will have the opportunity to provide input.

Community Presentations: To engage the community, public presentations will be made.

Community Discussions: To solicit community opinion on community values and the quality of the recommendations and priorities for action.

Leveraging the Good Work: We will continue to develop best practices and provide for informed decision making.

Public Engagement Summary
APPENDIX:

The project will also have a Citizens Advisory Committee.

- Project Website: will include information about the project, online interactive platforms, a project calendar, and project documents.
- Project newsletters will enhance communication, meeting agendas, and announcements.
- E-mails will be sent to interested parties to be involved and provide project updates.
- Flyers and Posters will be distributed around the Town to notify residents of events and activities and direct them to the project website.
- Community Outreach Events will reach out to residents at popular locations in Town.
- Media Announcements on Facebook, Instagram, radio, and the newspaper will provide announcements of progress and upcoming events.
- Community Presentations to civic groups, organizations, community groups, and other leaders.

Project Leadership

The project is being led by a project team comprising of the following staff, elected officials, and citizen advisors:

- Ben Berdoo, Mayor
- Nathanael Tours, Councilman
- Rick Beth, Town Manager
- Louis Finkler, Planning Director
- John Adler, Senior Planner
- Karen Armenta, Marketing & Tourism Director
- Jon Poling, Planning Commission Chair
- French Espinosa, Public Works Director
- Jake Caldwell, LOF Foundation
- J.R. Largent, LOF Foundation

The project will also have a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to provide input on the design and implementation of public engagement activities. This committee includes:

- James Delisi, Rio Grande Neighborhood Association
- Steven Garcia, Taos Bank Foundation
- David Ingersoll, City of Taos
- Lisa O'Brien, Taos Community Foundation
- Nicole Sosa-Castilla, Community Activist
- Polly Raye, John Duren Trust/Alumni Relations Director
- Nicole Scotto, Taos Historical Society
- Joleen Montoya, Bridge Project

Participants

We will reach out to stakeholders and sectors within the Town of Taos and greater Taos community including, but not limited to:

- Civic groups
- Arts & cultural organizations
- Health & education
- Business community
- Associations
- Protection & cycling advocates
- Neighborhoods
- Aranias associations

Real estate & developers
- Regional governments
- Tourism sector
- Downstream business & property owners
- Faith community
- Nonprofit sector
- Other underrepresented stakeholders who do not typically participate.

Public Input Documentation

All comments will be collected and summarized. These summaries will be posted regularly to the project website.
Phase 1 Public Input Summary

Phase 1 Public Input Summary

Phase 2 Public Input Summary

Phase 2 Public Input Summary

Phase 3 Public Input Summary

Phase 3 Public Input Summary

Phase 4 Public Input Summary

Phase 4 Public Input Summary

Phase 5 Public Input Summary

Phase 5 Public Input Summary

WHAT WE LOVE ABOUT TAOS

Phase 1 Public Input Summary (Page 2 of 34)

WHAT ARE OUR CONCERNS?

Phase 2 Public Input Summary (Page 3 of 34)

WHAT ARE OUR CONCERNS?

Phase 3 Public Input Summary (Page 4 of 34)

WHAT ARE OUR CONCERNS?

Phase 4 Public Input Summary (Page 5 of 34)

WHAT ARE OUR CONCERNS?
Phase 1 Public Input Summary

**APPENDIX:**

**Phase 1 Public Input Summary** (Page 6 of 34)

**Phase 1 Public Input Summary** (Page 7 of 34)

**Phase 1 Public Input Summary** (Page 8 of 34)

**Phase 1 Public Input Summary** (Page 9 of 34)
Phase 1 Public Input Summary (Page 10 of 34)

Economic Development and Community Development. A more caring community overlapped with stronger social and economic development. Community Safety overlaps with reducing 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 primarily having a government that “listens” and is transparent. While there were a few specific comments about wanting changes in the current form of government, this was not a major concern.

Conserve Open Land, and a Caring Community

Living & Housing, Protecting the Region’s Natural Resources

AND

Crosscutting interests included a desire for a more diverse and united community across all ages and ethnicity. There was a desire for a more engaged and respectful community. While there were comments about wanting more frequent overviews of the plans and social change, democracy, and timeliness. This concern was both about more community safety in as well as more youth camps giving kids and older of other types.

Youth in Taos love Taos for all the same reasons adults do. The beauty of the sunsets and sunrises, the music, the art and community in heritage, family, and the safety of a small town. These attitudes are available to listen to the AVL, political candidates, members, and others on the Plata. However, youth, particularly those expressing and embracing something should only have enough social change, democracy, and timeliness. This concern was both about more community safety in as well as more youth camps giving kids and older of other types.

Young people in Taos love Taos for all the same reasons adults do. The beauty of the sunsets and sunrises, the music, the art and community in heritage, family, and the safety of a small town. These attitudes are available to listen to the AVL, political candidates, members, and others on the Plata. However, youth, particularly those expressing and embracing something should only have enough social change, democracy, and timeliness. This concern was both about more community safety in as well as more youth camps giving kids and older of other types.

Phase 1 Public Input Summary (Page 11 of 34)

Appendix: Community Comments

What We Love about Taos

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

APPENDIX: COMMUNITY COMMENTS

What We Love about Taos

APPENDIX: PHASE 1 PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARIES

APPENDIX: PHASE 1 PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY (Page 12 of 13)

What We Love about Taos

APPENDIX: PHASE 1 PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY (Page 13 of 34)
I love Taos because it is a place in which someone can work and live without violence. ~Immigrant 

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

We are a very small community and we know who our neighbors are, we know their children and we know their parents. ~Taos Plaza 

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

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

I love Taos because it is quirky, funky, authentic. It still retains some local flavor rather than being dominated by corporate chains, etc. ~Taos Alive 

I love Taos because it is a community that really respects the history and doesn’t corrupt to large tall buildings that matter where you are. Acknowledge their presence as another human being. ~Survey 

I love that people wave on the road, and that you make eye contact and smile at people no matter where you are. Acknowledge them as another person and be friendly. ~Survey 

I love the way the cool air feels against my skin. I love the quiet. I love the dark skies. I love the beauty is everywhere, and I appreciate it. ~Immigrant Meeting 

I love being able to see the mountains and horizons of great distance. ~Survey 

I love living in Taos because of the access to our beautiful outdoors. I enjoy skiing, hiking, 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 the things I love. ~Survey 

The thing I love about Taos is the community is a family oriented community and am wistful about its passing. ~Survey 

The natural beauty of the air and mountains that surround it is exceptional. The ever changing mountain landscapes never fail to amaze and inspire me. ~Survey 

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

I love the way the cool air feels against my skin. I love the quiet. I love the dark skies. I love the beauty is everywhere, and I appreciate it. ~Immigrant Meeting 

I feel safe here. It is a small community that really respects the history and doesn’t corrupt to large tall buildings that matter where you are. Acknowledge their presence as another human being. ~Survey
Phase 1 Public Input Summary (Page 18 of 34)

The image contains text from a document, seemingly part of a larger report or study. The content appears to be a collection of public input gathered during Phase 1 of a specific initiative, likely related to planning or development in a community setting. The text includes various points of view and suggestions from different contributors, each marked by a survey or community meeting context.

Here are some excerpts to illustrate the content:

- "We need to find a way to lift people out of poverty." ~Survey
- "Wages don't support workers. There's constant pressure to cave in and become just another generic place." ~Survey
- "I don't want to see factories here. We live here because it's small and beautiful." ~Survey
- "There is no Masterplan anticipating the Town's growth." ~Survey
- "We need a new economic development department with action items, goals, targets, and the means of developing the local economy." ~Survey
- "I'm concerned that we are not looking at the cultural issues of our and the surrounding region and that's why I'm supporting the arts." ~Survey

The document is structured into sections, possibly indicating different themes or areas of focus within the public input. It also touches upon the importance of maintaining the unique identity of the town while also considering economic development and community well-being.

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Phase 1 Public Input Summary (Page 20 of 34)

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Phase 1 Public Input Summary (Page 21 of 34)

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**APPENDIX: Phase 1 Public Input Summary**

**Public Input Summary**

**Phase 1 Public Input Summary**

*I'm concerned that the only people that seem concerned are the old white people. The balance of the informed voices of reason rather than emotional outbursts of accusation that fall back on tattered misunderstanding emerges from a failure to embrace (and try to understand) the history of other cultures. One way to leave this tortured path would be to dedicate several years celebrating the diversity of Hispanic and Anglo communities that is difficult to bridge.*

*Another concern is a divide in Taos between Hispanic and Anglo communities that is difficult to bridge due to the cultural chasm of generations of education, tradition and availability of housing available to those who do not make as much as others. It appears that the older residents are more concerned than the younger people and other groups of typically non-English speaking residents. I worry about health care and keeping good doctors and nurses.*

*My concerns about Taos would start with acknowledgement of the history of this community to include all voices in conversations regarding our past.*

*My biggest concern is that groups do not communicate with each other and do not share their concerns.*

*More respectful openness of information and process will lead to collaboration at all levels.*

*My wish is that the community can work together to increase the quality of life and the involvement of hosts, residents, and tourists.*

*That those three concepts all work in harmony and work for the greater cause.*

*One wish I have for the future of this community is to include all voices in conversations regarding our past.*

*Knowing the real costs, but it has not been in our budget to put aside a part of the solutions to decrease these issues in Taos.*

*My concerns about Taos would start with acknowledgement of the history.*

*Political leaders don't listen, why do people vote at all? It's a waste of time, energy and money.*

*I wonder about how changes will be planned, implemented and permanently maintained. You show that many of these issues will change.*

*The upper aquifer will be recharged; Ag land’s tax status will be addressed.*

*Support Agriculture*
Phase 1 Public Input Summary (Page 26 of 34)

Phase 1 Public Input Summary (Page 27 of 34)

Phase 1 Public Input Summary (Page 28 of 34)

Phase 1 Public Input Summary (Page 29 of 34)
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 whereas the American Community Survey (ACS) is conducted every year. Gathering perfectly representative community input is nearly impossible without conducting statistically relevant data collection processes such as for example a randomized survey. These types of surveys are difficult to conduct due to cost and time requirements. Strong At Heart participation by all sectors of the Taos community, but as expected, will need to continue to work diligently to hear from all sectors of the Taos community, but as expected, will need to continue to work diligently to hear from various demographic groups. Strong At Heart participation by youth under 18, a stakeholder group that was identified as critically important to this effort. Representation from the age group of 25 and older, including the most accurate count and demographic profile of people living in a community. However, the US Census is only updated every 10 years whereas the American Community Survey (ACS) is conducted every year. Gathering perfectly representative community input is nearly impossible without conducting statistically relevant data collection processes such as for example a randomized survey. These types of surveys are difficult to conduct due to cost and time requirements. Strong At Heart participation by all sectors of the Taos community, but as expected, will need to continue to work diligently to hear from all sectors of the Taos community, but as expected, will need to continue to work diligently to hear from various demographic groups. Strong At Heart participation by youth under 18, a stakeholder group that was identified as critically important to this effort. Representation from the age group of 25 and older, including the

PERCENT PARTICIPATION BY INCOME RANGE – COMPARISON TO CENSUS

Phase 1 Public Input Summary

Phase 1 Public Input Summary (Page 30 of 34)
On Taos Time: Our Past, Present, and Future.

MEETING SUMMARY

Monday, October 24, 2017
Mescalero of the Taos County Government

Community Values Review

The meeting began with a space holder where participants reviewed the shared values developed in Phase 1. Participants had the option to write their own thoughts for the community and/or list items not covered in the list above.

1. A Caring Community
   - The community is a place where we feel safe and secure, where we can trust one another, and where there is a sense of security for our children, our elderly, and our neighbors.
   - The community is committed to caring for the environment and addressing environmental issues.

2. A Growing Community
   - The community is a place where we can grow and thrive, where we can develop our skills and talents, and where we can contribute to the community.
   - We value Taos for being a small town with strong social ties and a sense of community.

3. A Creative Community
   - We value Taos for being a place where we can express ourselves creatively, where we can participate in the arts, and where we can appreciate the creative spirit.
   - We value the spiritual, mental and physical health of our community.

4. A Community Conversation: Are We Living Our Values?
   - We value Taos for being a community rooted in centuries of tradition and culture.
   - We value Taos as a place where we can connect with the land and its resources.

5. A Commitment to Consensus
   - We value Taos for being a community where we can make decisions in a consensus-based manner.
   - We value Taos for being a community where we can work together to solve problems.

6. A Community of Development
   - We value Taos for being a place where we can develop our skills and talents, and where we can contribute to the community.
   - We value Taos for being a place where we can express ourselves creatively, where we can participate in the arts, and where we can appreciate the creative spirit.

7. A Living Our Values?
   - We value Taos for being a community rooted in centuries of tradition and culture.
   - We value Taos as a place where we can connect with the land and its resources.

8. A Resilient Community
   - We value Taos for being a community that is resilient, that can adapt to change, and that can recover from adversity.
   - We value Taos for being a community that is resilient, that can adapt to change, and that can recover from adversity.

9. A Recreational & Outdoors
   - We value Taos for being a community where we can enjoy the outdoors, where we can engage in physical activities, and where we can connect with nature.
   - We value Taos for being a community where we can enjoy the outdoors, where we can engage in physical activities, and where we can connect with nature.

10. A Strong At Heart
    - We value Taos for being a community that is strong, that can withstand challenges, and that can thrive.
    - We value Taos for being a community that is strong, that can withstand challenges, and that can thrive.

Appendix: Phase 1 Public Input Summary (Page 34 of 34)
A Caring Community
We value being a friendly community where diversity of all ages, backgrounds, and interests is respected fostering a sense of belonging and caring for one another.

Commitment to Stewardship
Less is inseparable from the best, water, and air that is the source of health and spiritual and mental well-being.

On Taos Time (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary
(Page 6 of 14)

On Taos Time (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary
(Page 7 of 14)
If this value is strong…

- 5.5 Commitment to Stewardship
- 5.0 Agriculture and acequias are healthy
- 5.0 If this value is strong…

- 4.0 Renewable energy is a reality.
- 4.0 A spectacular increase in small farms.
- 4.0 Dramatic increase in small farms.
- 4.0 Industry can percolate: Taos Herb Co
- 4.0 Buying acequia revitalization.

- 3.0 Economically challenged.
- 3.0 Poorly paid jobs for most people here.
- 3.0 Demographics shifting and not keeping young people.
- 3.0 Catastrophic fire season

- 2.0 Regional culture is under threat.
- 2.0 National business negatively impacting local businesses.
- 2.0 Poorly paid jobs for most people here.

- 1.0 Youth don’t embrace traditions.
- 1.0 Sense of unity and respect in community
- 1.0 Community aware of Taos Pueblo culture
- 1.0 Sense of humor – I’ve learned to lighten up

If this value is weak…

- 9.5 Sense of unity and respect in community
- 9.5 Community aware of Taos Pueblo culture
- 9.5 Sense of humor – I’ve learned to lighten up

How accurately does this value reflect our community?

1. How accurately does this value reflect our community?

5. Community values natural environment.

6. Sense of unity and respect in community

9.5 Sense of unity and respect in community

10. How accurately does this value reflect our community?

- 5.0 Protect land for the future
- 5.0 Strong councils
- 5.0 Better education
- 5.0 Greater respect for land needs

- 4.0 More discrimination
- 4.0 More discrimination
- 4.0 Education not culturally relevant
- 4.0 Youth are learning

- 3.0 Casino impact on education
- 3.0 Casino impact on education
- 3.0 Money
- 3.0 Schools

- 2.0 Butterfly impact on education
- 2.0 Butterfly impact on education
- 2.0 Education not culturally relevant

- 1.0 More and more obstacles that I don’t have an actual way to communicate
- 1.0 Lack of native language
- 1.0 Lack of native language

- 6.5 Commitment to Stewardship
- 6.5 Agriculture and acequias are healthy
- 6.5 If this value is strong…

- 5.0 Renewable energy is a reality.
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1. How accurately does this value reflect our community?
APPENDIX:

On Taos Time (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary

On Taos Time (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary (Page 10 of 14)

APPENDIX:

On Taos Time (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary

On Taos Time (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary (Page 11 of 14)
A Creative Community

We value our creative culture which contributes to the economy, fosters community and cultural activities that contributes to a fun and interesting life.

1) What constitutes luxury.

Creativity can be a rich tradition of fun and interesting life. We have a long and contemporary creativity.

(Continued...)

Appendix: On Taos Time (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary

On Taos Time (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary
(Page 12 of 14)

On Taos Time (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary
(Page 13 of 14)
11

We value the spiritual, mental and physical well-being we get from hiking, recreation, plentiful recreation and outdoor activities.

On Taos Time (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary

Recreation & Outdoors

Healthier community
Youth sports strong
Recreation based tourism grows
Can walk and bike safely
Education system is not adequate
Less vehicles on road/less congestion
Farm to fork
Herbalists, etc.
More of a market for firewood and youth groups.
More involvement with schools and less violence and drugs.
Less diabetes.
Increased bike ownership.
Increased visitors county.

If this value is weak...

Factors making things better than in the past:
- Miscommunication with owner over right of way.
- Motorcycling in national monument, bicycling activities – where are boundaries?
- Lack of clarity for locations for appropriate trails “Rx trails”
- Unfinished projects
- Secondary rated facilities
- Why is everything paved? Well managed dirt priorities
- Regular mismanagement of budgetary responsibilities/jurisdiction, coordinating different public and private entities.

Factors that will make things worse in the future:
- Accept or continue a poverty mentality.
- Corrupt oversight
- Not implementing the Enchanted Circle Trails
- Not committing to this process.
- Continued protection of recreation on public lands.
- Broadening awareness of existing plans, trails, specifications.
- Better management of existing buildings and budgeting process and expenditures. (walking and biking, enchanted circle) Enchanted Circle Trails master plan through regular funding.
- Vast improvement to roads
- Work is getting out about what is available
- Increased visitors county.

Does this value represent what your community cares about?

1. How accurately does this value reflect our community.

2. How does this value show up in our community?

3. How was things 20 years ago? 20 years from now?

4. If this value is weak...

Factors making things worse than in the past:
- Miscommunication with owner over right of way.
- Lack of clarity for locations for appropriate trails “Rx trails”
- Unfinished projects
- Secondary rated facilities
- Why is everything paved? Well managed dirt priorities
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Does this value represent what your community cares about?

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2. How does this value show up in our community?

3. How was things 20 years ago? 20 years from now?

4. If this value is weak...
HONORING OUR PAST... MEETING SERIES SUMMARY

COMMUNITY VALUES SUPPORTED BY THIS: [Page 2.1 of 10]

COMMUNITY VALUES SUPPORTED BY THIS:

COMMUNITY VALUES SUPPORTED BY THIS:

COMMUNITY VALUES SUPPORTED BY THIS:

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE’VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE’VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE’VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE’VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:

WHAT PLANS/ACTIVITIES DO WE HAVE RELATED TO THIS:

WHAT PLANS/ACTIVITIES DO WE HAVE RELATED TO THIS:

WHAT PLANS/ACTIVITIES DO WE HAVE RELATED TO THIS:

WHAT PLANS/ACTIVITIES DO WE HAVE RELATED TO THIS:

B WE ARE A MORE AFFORDABLE COMMUNITY WITH HOUSING OPTIONS FOR EVERYONE.

B WE ARE A MORE AFFORDABLE COMMUNITY WITH HOUSING OPTIONS FOR EVERYONE.

B WE ARE A MORE AFFORDABLE COMMUNITY WITH HOUSING OPTIONS FOR EVERYONE.

B WE ARE A MORE AFFORDABLE COMMUNITY WITH HOUSING OPTIONS FOR EVERYONE.
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.

WHAT PLANS/ACTIVITIES DO WE HAVE RELATED TO THIS:
1. Rio Fernando Revitalization Group and Project
3. Better regulations that allow for traditional building patterns.
4. Work with the Taos Land Trust on walking paths.
5. Change building codes to allow owner-builders to make their own homes and share sustainable building practices.
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.
8. More places for locals to shop.
9. Change building codes to allow owner-builders to make their own homes and share sustainable building practices.
10. More pedestrian and bike friendly.
11. We need to change the social fabric and make it more accessible.
12. Support a more open and transparent local government.
13. Protect agricultural lands and acequias.
14. Enhance recreational and infrastructure that creates value for Taoseños and visitors.
15. More affordable housing choices.
17. Support a more open and transparent local government.
18. Allow multi-unit dwellings, like several small homes on one acre with alternative energy systems.
20. We need to attract high-tech entrepreneurs plus established and recognized sustainable businesses. Must lower crime and beautify and use unoccupied businesses.

COMMUNITY VALUES SUPPORTED BY THIS:
1. Balance growth with keeping what we love about Taos.
2. Redevelop areas in decline.
3. Thoughtful growth management plan.
5. Sustainable building practices.
7. Sustainable building practices.
10. Strong at Heart process to build community dialogue and consensus (2016-2018)
11. Support a more open and transparent local government.
13. Protect agricultural lands and acequias.
15. More pedestrian and bike friendly.
17. More pedestrian and bike friendly.
18. More pedestrian and bike friendly.

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE’VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:
2. Sustainable building practices.
5. Sustainable building practices.
7. Sustainable building practices.
11. Sustainable building practices.
15. Sustainable building practices.
17. Sustainable building practices.

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE’VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:
1. Sustainable building practices.
5. Sustainable building practices.
7. Sustainable building practices.
11. Sustainable building practices.
15. Sustainable building practices.
17. Sustainable building practices.

COMMUNITY VALUES SUPPORTED BY THIS:
1. Bohemian energy and innovation.
2. Bohemian energy and innovation.
3. Bohemian energy and innovation.
4. Bohemian energy and innovation.
5. Bohemian energy and innovation.
6. Bohemian energy and innovation.
7. Bohemian energy and innovation.
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10. Bohemian energy and innovation.
11. Bohemian energy and innovation.
12. Bohemian energy and innovation.
13. Bohemian energy and innovation.
14. Bohemian energy and innovation.

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE’VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:
1. Bohemian energy and innovation.
2. Bohemian energy and innovation.
3. Bohemian energy and innovation.
4. Bohemian energy and innovation.
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6. Bohemian energy and innovation.
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9. Bohemian energy and innovation.
10. Bohemian energy and innovation.
11. Bohemian energy and innovation.
12. Bohemian energy and innovation.
13. Bohemian energy and innovation.
14. Bohemian energy and innovation.
We are a healthy community where residents have the support services they need to thrive.

COMMUNITY VALUES SUPPORTED BY THIS:
- A healthy community
- A community where residents are supported

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE’VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:
1. Expand access to affordable housing.
2. Expand programs to support veterans.
3. Provide access to mental health services.
4. Develop a comprehensive health and wellness program.
5. Support community gardens and urban agriculture.

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:
- Address community substance abuse.
- Establish a comprehensive health and wellness program.
- Develop a comprehensive mental health program.

COMMUNITY VALUES SUPPORTED BY THIS:
- A healthy community
- A community where residents are supported

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE’VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:
1. Access to culturally appropriate education.
2. Access to healthcare services.
3. Address community substance abuse.
4. Develop a comprehensive health and wellness program.
5. Support community gardens and urban agriculture.

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:
- Address community substance abuse.
- Establish a comprehensive health and wellness program.
- Develop a comprehensive mental health program.

WHAT PLANS/ACTIVITIES DO WE HAVE RELATED TO THIS:
1. New Mexico Department of Transportation roadway safety measures (2017) that include speed bumps and crosswalks.
2. Taos Arts and Cultural District Resource Team Assessment (2010) which helps to activate downtown streets.
3. Taos Historic Plaza: Cultural Landscape Report (2016) which helps to activate downtown streets.
4. Taos Arts and Cultural District Resource Team Assessment (2009) which helps to activate downtown streets.

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:
- Improve signage and wayfinding.
- Develop a comprehensive health and wellness program.
- Develop a comprehensive mental health program.

Honoring Our Past, Creating Our Future (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary (Page 2.5 of 10)
We have recreational and transportation infrastructure that creates value for Taoseños and visitors.

COMMUNITY VALUES SUPPORTED:

LIVABILITY: Is there an emphasis on quality of life and services that make our area an ideal place to live?

COMMUNITY TO STRENGTH:

IS THIS THE RIGHT DIRECTION FOR US TO MOVE IN?

STRONGLY AGREE

1. 2

STRONGLY DISAGREE

1. 2

IDEAS FOR ACTION WE’VE HEARD RELATED TO THIS:

1. Implement the Enchanted Circle Trails Plan.
2. Create more walking and biking paths for people to get around safely.
3. Engage with health community to encourage outdoor activity.
5. Build awareness of existing recreation and outdoor plans and resources.
6. Thistle management (elimination).
7. A more pedestrian friendly downtown: Close down streets, clean up the parks and walking paths all over and parking areas connected to bus routes & rental handling trash or sitting on a needle in grass.
8. Clean up parks, take care of trees and landscaping.
9. Bicycle Plan needs to cooperate with NM 64 redesign as it happens.
10. Street lighting and dark skies
11. Engage with health community to encourage outdoor activity.
12. Build awareness of existing recreation and outdoor plans and resources.

YOUR THOUGHTS FOR HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS IN TAOS:

1. Bicycles for Everyone: incorporate with NM 64 redesign on Chapters, et al.
2. Enhance management (including CE credits)
3. Need walking paths in downtown: more, more, more.
4. More pedestrian walk-ins in our city centers.
5. More pedestrian walk-ins in our city centers.
6. Open discussion of what community values supported.
8. We are all in it together.
9. Need more good jobs.
10. Affordable housing: certified, market ready, what will it take.
11. Sense of community/support network of businesses in the downtown
12. Improved vote turnout

WHAT PLANNING ACTIVITIES DO WE HAVE RELATED TO THIS:

1. New Master Plan/Development of economic indicators that will move us from a bedroom community to a destination community
2. Economic growth:
3. bike plan - smart growth and infill development
4. Sustainable tourism
5. Bike initiatives
6. Aesthetics: attractive, vibrant, inviting
7. Enchanted Circle Trails Plan
8. Thistle management
9. Street lighting and dark skies
10. Improve public transit/RTD weekends and TSV and late night

1. Ideas for increasing walkability.
2. Ideas for increasing bikeability.
3. Ideas for increasing network.
4. Ideas for increasing outdoor recreation.
5. Ideas for increasing green spaces.
6. Ideas for increasing city centers.

Honor Our Past, Creating Our Future (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary (Page 2 of 10)

Honor Our Past, Creating Our Future (Phase 1) Meeting Series Summary (Page 3 of 10)
HONORING OUR PAST... MEETING SERIES SUMMARY

1. What type of development do we want?
   - Development that is sensitive to its context
   - Community involvement throughout the process
   - Green footprint
   - Economic opportunities while protecting what we love about Taos
   - How do we... how do groups begin to talk to each other?
   - Sensitivity training for new city employees
   - How do we not preach to the choir?
   - Airbnbs
   - Teacher Associations for all schools, church
   - Economy, political will for this

2. Where should this development be located?
   - Based on feedback and input
   - Neighbors to the south
   - More collaborative regionally
   - We are all in this together.

3. What are our key recommendations?
   - Update regulations to ensure our community values
   - Build community support and political will for this
   - Increase code enforcement/improve existing properties
   - Explore opportunities to grow spaces to preserve the places that are important to us

4. What are our economic opportunities?
   - Green footprint
   - Economic opportunities while protecting what we love about Taos
   - How do we... how do groups begin to talk to each other?
   - Sensitivity training for new city employees
   - How do we not preach to the choir?
   - Airbnbs
   - Teacher Associations for all schools, church
   - Economy, political will for this

5. How do we feel heard but also need to understand the processes for dialogue with our
   - How do we feel heard but also need to understand the processes for dialogue with our
   - How do we feel heard but also need to understand the processes for dialogue with our

6. Shortening Our Capcity
   - We work with others with whom respect and civility
   - We need more collaborative relationships. We are all in this together.
   - We need to be far more collaborative relationships. We are all in this together.
   - We need to be far more collaborative relationships. We are all in this together.
   - We need to be far more collaborative relationships. We are all in this together.
   - We need to be far more collaborative relationships. We are all in this together.
   - We need to be far more collaborative relationships. We are all in this together.

7. Viewpoint
   - Education, learning series
   - Education, learning series
   - Education, learning series
   - Education, learning series
   - Education, learning series
   - Education, learning series
   - Education, learning series
What are ideas for how Taos could strengthen its civic capacity?

- Better promote existing monthly development planning review meetings with staff or come up with a formal online comment process where you know it was received, read, and there is follow through to engage people?
- Create a civility checklist with a proposed schedule. This would work for policy discussions. For development proposals it is planned to apply all we have learned to a specific strategy for our downtown.
- Celebrate successes more often.
- Strengthen intergovernmental relationships to create more effective regionalism.
- Reintroduce civics education for youth to learn about how different strategies might achieve different goals. In late January 2018 for instance were discussed examples of how different strategies might achieve different goals. In late January 2018 examples were discussed from other communities like Mountain Manners, a public marketing education and training program, and Clusters. These draft guiding principles, goals and strategies will correspond to the 7 types of clusters in our community.
- The Town has an economic development plan that incorporates more alternative strategies to create a better transportation network and alternative livelihoods planning. Employment and training programs will be: a) craft, agriculture, and training programs; b) community garden; c) support creative community expressions and collaborations with community centers, culture centers, and: d) senior citizens. This planning will be completed in early February 2018 for Honoring Our Past... Meeting Series Summary.
- Economic gardening seeks to focus on growing and nurturing local businesses rather than hunting for “big game” outside the area.
- Disincentivize agricultural land conversion.
- Promote community gardens.
- Support high value agricultural operations.
- Develop more alternative education and workforce training programs in partnership with schools and local workforce training programs.
- Build awareness of existing recreation and outdoor plans and resources.
- Maintain access to public lands for recreation purposes.
- Create more walking and biking paths for youth to get around safely.
- Create a more walkable downtown.

What can I do to build a stronger and more diverse economy?

- Engage in collaborative projects such as community gardens, economic gardening and training programs.
- Identify innovation sectors in Taos to build upon local strengths.
- Market community for it being a unique place, not just a tourist destination.
- Create pathways of opportunity for Taoseños.
- Create more walking and biking paths for youth to get around safely.
- Create a more walkable downtown.
- Build awareness of existing recreation and outdoor plans and resources.
- Maintain access to public lands for recreation purposes.
- Create more walking and biking paths for youth to get around safely.
- Create a more walkable downtown.

Cluster Based Strategy
- Cluster-based economic development focuses on a community’s natural environmental, social, and cultural assets and how they fit together to create a strong and distinctive place.
- It’s about how we want to work together.
- Economic gardening seeks to focus on growing and nurturing local businesses rather than hunting for “big game” outside the area.
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- Create a more walkable downtown.

Asset Based Strategy
- Asset-based economic development focuses on a community’s natural environmental, social, and cultural assets and how they fit together to create a strong and distinctive place.
- It’s about how we want to work together.
- Economic gardening seeks to focus on growing and nurturing local businesses rather than hunting for “big game” outside the area.
- Disincentivize agricultural land conversion.
- Promote community gardens.
- Support high value agricultural operations.
- Develop more alternative education and workforce training programs in partnership with schools and local workforce training programs.
- Build awareness of existing recreation and outdoor plans and resources.
- Maintain access to public lands for recreation purposes.
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- Create a more walkable downtown.
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- Maintain access to public lands for recreation purposes.
- Create more walking and biking paths for youth to get around safely.
- Create a more walkable downtown.
Honoring Our Past... Discussion Materials

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

2. Moving from the Economy We Have to the Economy We Want: Choices and Tradeoffs

2.1. Strengthening Sustaining and/or Expanding Tourism

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 strong or principles do we want to begin the longer process of fostering new prosperity for our community?

2.2. Other Existing Sectors/Industries

What are some of the tensions that exist as we have to the economy we want?

3. Attracting New Sectors/Industries

Investing in Place

Discussion Handouts and Summary

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GROUP A:

Honoring Our Past, Creating Our Future (Phase 1)

Discussion Handouts and Summary

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GROUP B:

Developing Principles for Managing Growth Consistent with Our Values

WHAT CONSTITUTES MIDDLE GROWTH IN THE TaOS REGION AT HEART?

1. Build a stronger sense of place and culture.
2. Develop and implement a corridor design plan that promotes affordable living, creates better transportation network and mixed-use buildings and social environments (e.g., transit oriented).
3. Reduce environmental and transportation infrastructure that cause stress for Taos and visitors.
4. Support a high-quality industry in Taos and protect the environment.
5. Build new or renovate housing.

STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES FOR MANAGING GROWTH

1. Economic prosperity: Enhancing land use decisions that support civil-sector economy and future employment growth, competitiveness, and equality; adjusted for local market development.
2. Human health: Enhancing land use decisions that create sustainable health impacts and improve opportunities for population health, active living.
3. Environmental health: Enhancing land use decisions that respond to ecosystem and sensitive wildlife areas.
4. Equity: Enhancing land use decisions that reflect existing diversity, minority income, social benefits, and improve costs, access, and opportunities for all; and urban environmental/landscaping.
5. Resilience: Enhancing land use decisions that improve the ability of individuals, communities, economic systems, and the natural systems to recover from and minimize losses from natural hazards, climate change, and other environmental change.

EXAMPLES OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES

• Economic prosperity: Enhancing land use decisions that support civil-sector economy and future employment growth, competitiveness, and equality; adjusted for local market development.
• Human health: Enhancing land use decisions that create sustainable health impacts and improve opportunities for population health, active living.
• Environmental health: Enhancing land use decisions that respond to ecosystem and sensitive wildlife areas.
• Equity: Enhancing land use decisions that reflect existing diversity, minority income, social benefits, and improve costs, access, and opportunities for all; and urban environmental/landscaping.
• Resilience: Enhancing land use decisions that improve the ability of individuals, communities, economic systems, and the natural systems to recover from and minimize losses from natural hazards, climate change, and other environmental change.

Examples of Not Balanced

4. Developmental and transportation infrastructure that may cause stress for Taos and visitors.
2. Discussion Handouts and Summary

The character/look of a town can be used to scale of buildings, existing streets, water, sewer. 

3. Let’s commit our ideas. What can we agree on that we want to recommend to Living At Heart and the Town of Taos going forward about how to grow solutions with our values?


d. STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES FOR FOSTERING A MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

We value being a community rooted in centuries of evolving traditions that welcomes individual expression. The Taos Pueblo A Caring Community

- social, economic, or community participation sectors.

- there is a deep appreciation of multiculturalism, there is also a recognition that Taos is not living up to the value of in

- The desire for a more inclusive community was identified as a key issue and a wish for the future during Phase 1 Public Input

- how can Taos commit to community training on cultural competency and diversity, celebrating community multicultural programs, responding to negative events, advising departments on sensitivity, building relationships between local stewards, ensuring an inclusive approach in the decision-making processes that affect their lives.

- Does everything that it can to respect all its citizens, gives them full access to resources, and promotes equal treatment and opportunities.

- Responds quickly to racist and other discriminating incidents.

- Values diversity.

- Participation in institutions.

- INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY.

- City of Riverside Principles for Inclusive Community from Mayor’s Forum

- City of Westminster Building Inclusive Communities: An Easy First Step for All Local Governments

- City of Boulder

- Gunnison County, CO Multicultural Coordinator: 

- City of Boulder, CO Department of Community Engagement

- City of Seattle Guide for Inclusion and Engagement

- Everyday Democracy resources for addressing racism:

- Immigrant Integration Toolkit

- Diversity Board/Diverse Ontario Project

- Inclusivity Project One Boulder

- City of Boulder

- Gunnison County, CO Multicultural Coordinator:

- Everyday Democracy resources for addressing racism:

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

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

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION GROUP D: HOW CAN TAOS STRENGTHEN ITS CIVIC CULTURE?

Ideas for Improving Local Participation, Collaborative Problem Solving, and Governance Transparency.

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

STRATEGIES AND TOOLS FOR STRENGTHENING CIVIC CULTURE

1. Shorter Term

Honoring Our Past, Creating Our Future (Phase 1)

1. What should next steps be?

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

Where could the Taos community start? What could be a first step?

1. What should next steps be?

Communities are often community driven efforts intended to build relationships necessary for working together.

Networks, collaboration, and stakeholder impact models are all examples of how community representatives work together to create new programs, machine collaborative strategies, and implement ideas in a certain entity challenges.

1. What should next steps be?

COMMUNITY BUILDING INITIATIVES

1. Empower those in the community who are a common source of purpose, concern, and, if can be around the community. Those are often community leaders who are interested in building relationships necessary for working together.
**Agriculture Snapshots of Taos**

**Socioeconomics Snapshots of Taos**

**Strong at Heart Demographic Summary**

**Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2)**

**Community Meetings**

- **MEETING SUMMARY**
  - **DOWNTOWN TAOS:**
  - **MOVING FORWARD**
  - **SUMMARY**

- **Strong at Heart**
  - **Strong at Heart**
  - **DEMOGRAPHIC**
  - **SUMMARY**

- **Phases 1-3 Demographic Summary**

- **Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary**

**Online Focus Area Feedback Form**

- **Honoring our Past, Creating our Future**

**Community Meetings**

- **300**

- **500**

- **700**

- **900**

**Race & Ethnicity**

- **Anglo**

- **Hispanic**

- **American**

- **Native**

- **Multi**

**Age**

- **< 18 years**

- **18 - 44**

- **45 - 65**

- **> 65 years**

**Income**

- **Less than 35k**

- **Between 35k - 49k**

- **Between 50k - 75k**

- **Greater than 75k**

**Gender**

- **Male**

- **Female**

**Years in the Community**

- **3 - 5 years**

- **6 - 9 years**

- **10 - 14 years**

- **15 - 19 years**

- **20 + years**

**Strengths**

- **Taos, a place where people can be themselves**

- **Taos, a place where the arts and culture are celebrated**

- **Taos, a place that is safe and welcoming**

**Challenges**

- **Taos, a place that needs more affordable housing**

- **Taos, a place that needs more public transportation options**

- **Taos, a place that needs more public open space**

**Future Goals**

- **Taos, a place where everyone is represented**

- **Taos, a place with a diverse economy**

- **Taos, a place with a strong sense of community**

**Meetings and Engagement Counts to Date**

- **55**

- **94**

- **115**

- **721**

- **99**

**Taos: Moving Forward**

- **300**

- **200**

- **500**

**Taos: Moving Forward**

- **55**

- **94**

- **115**

- **721**

- **99**

- **242**

- **51**
DOWNTOWN TAOS: MOVING FORWARD (Phase 2) Meeting Series Input

Public Meeting Input on Draft Goals:
- Authentic, cultural, historical, traditional
- downtown = “affordable” housing don’t snatch. Get people to downtown with cities.
- no or few streets on Piano and La Placita
- Is the sidewalk in front of Taos Inn?*
- bike lanes, sidewalks, safe sidewalks, one way street, place more lively with events, music, food, drink, farmers market, parking garage needed Tuesday Morning, bar terraces, little alley and pathways that are accessible!
- How do you prioritize these goals? How do you put them into practice?
- Leave Taos alone!
- Safe access to downtown by bike don’t like the way we do things, there’s the door.
- Traffic control San Luis CO has done an excellent job of a new “front face” on downtown.
- Stop try to change things, everything is fine!
- Leave Taos alone! What brought you here?
- More protection.
- For each neighborhood, participants had the opportunity to vote on twelve different types of goals.
- More community events.
- More housing should be on existing beautiful landscapes.
- Things that reflect on animals.
- More protection.
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APPENDIX: PHASE 2 MEETINGS SUMMARY

DOWNTOWN TAO: MOVING FORWARD MEETINGS SERIES INPUT

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 6 of 23)

DOWNTOWN TAO: MOVING FORWARD MEETINGS SERIES SUMMARY

1. Sidewalk cafe*
2. We ask the Trick Plaza series to make it more visible to people and traffic. It is essential to traffic and is essential to the success of the Trick Plaza series to ensure the presence of the culture and heritage that visitors seek.
3. Keep it historic as possible.
4. Keep it historic.
5. Save the Trick Plaza.
6. Save the Trick Plaza. Site is perfect as it is. It has been hands for hundred of years and it is the common usage among events.
7. It’s important for the Trick Plaza to change it.
8. Municipal sustainability resources seems.
9. Looks authentic, respecting history of culture.
10. Lots of people and activity.
11. A particular celebratory historic and current diversity—multicultural, spirituality, race & cultures.
12. I would love to see the plaza to have more life. Music, food carts, etc., pedestrian only, part of the art of plazas is to happen in the street.
13. I’d love to see the Trick Plaza have more color.
14. Food carts, music, bodegas, unique shops, attractions for locals to visit.
15. Make it welcoming, kids get shout out.
16. Related to our identity of indigenous restaurants, water technologies, art-education, the place where music, food, events and more diverse shape. Should be a walking cafe there should be a parking garage and any street stores with line boxes. Workable fences, and food stores. Sidewalks need to be fixed, in ones center should be a walking path. Streets should illuminate all downtown streets or entry. Food trucks too.
17. Historic district in central heart of Trick Plaza public space led abandoned. I vision is simple.
18. Find a way to convert existing buildings into sustainable businesses.

What does this mean?

19. Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Expectation: is that every business which you do there is for the good of society.

20. What do you want to achieve?

21. One of the most essential neighborhoods in Trick Plaza eat, drink, sleep, work, dance, perform, travel, education
22. Turn spaces into love and friends there’s know about & make Trick Plaza culture & heritage—relax and meet friends and sight.
23. Care of Trick Plaza use well.
24. Trick Plaza is great, we don’t need parking problems to change what we’ve been doing for over 100 years, if you don’t like it get out.

DOWNTOWN TAO: MOVING FORWARD MEETINGS SERIES SUMMARY

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 7 of 23)

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APPENDIX: PHASE 2 MEETINGS SUMMARY

DOWNTOWN TAO: MOVING FORWARD MEETINGS SERIES INPUT

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 8 of 23)

DOWNTOWN TAO: MOVING FORWARD MEETINGS SERIES SUMMARY

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APPENDIX: PHASE 2 MEETINGS SUMMARY

DOWNTOWN TAO: MOVING FORWARD MEETINGS SERIES INPUT

Downtown Taos: Moving Forward (Phase 2) Meeting Series Summary (Page 9 of 23)

DOWNTOWN TAO: MOVING FORWARD MEETINGS SERIES SUMMARY

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DOWNTOWN TAOS: MOVING FORWARD

MEETING SERIES INPUT:

- Would like to see off-street regulation & zoning for structures to keep in sync with Taos culture
- I wish Taos would remain a quant little town without extreme outside influence
- New commerce for franchise & chain stores
- Map the local walk way stores
- Limit bus lanes
- Keep pedestrian land so there is open space
- Sur - higher density housing with safe walk to downtown, plaza, grocery
- Might be a good plan for near by techy creative business folks to live near & commute: A place to live to go for tech & arts. A place that caters to individuals, a creative experience
- This is a more commercial area with beauty. More car oriented with bike paths that are safe.

Other feedback:

- On: On-street Bike lane: Absolutely not! Streets are narrow enough
- On: On-street Bike lane: Needs good separation from traffic
- On: On-street Parking: Leave everything the way it is!
- On: On-street Bicycle lane: Absolutely not! Streets are narrow enough
- On: On-street Parking: Needs good separation from traffic
- On: Surface parking lot: landscape parking lots with mature trees & plants
- On: Parking garage: Parking garage needs to be on plaza area

DOWNTOWN TAOS: MOVING FORWARD

MEETING SERIES SUMMARY (Page 10 of 23)
### Streets and Mobility Ideas

- **On-Street Bike Lanes**
- **Dirt Side-Paths / Single-Track Sidewalks**
- **Traffic Calming**
- **Hardpacked Dirt Trails**
- **Paved Trails**
- **On-Street Parking**
- **Narrow Streets**
- **Wide Streets**
- **Surface Parking Lots**
- **Grid-Style Street Network**
- **Suburban-Style Street Network**
- **Parking Garage**

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

### Businesses Ideas

- **Drive-Thru**
- **Big Box**
- **Medium Box**
- **Strip Mall**
- **Local Boutique Shops**
- **Locally-Stylized Franchises**
- **Creative Spaces** (e.g., Coworking, Makerspace, Incubators)
- **Office Buildings**
- **Repurposed Space** (e.g., Gas Station to Cafe)
- **Big Hotels / Motels**
- **Small / Boutique Hotels**
- **Downtown-Style Mixed Use**

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

### Housing Ideas

- **Large-Lot Single Family Home**
- **Small-Lot Single Family Home**
- **Accessory Dwelling Units / Mother-In-Law Apartment**
- **Duplex**
- **Triplex / Fourplex**
- **Bungalow Court**
- **Townhomes**
- **Apartments Above Shops / Mixed-Use**
- **1-2 Story Apartment Building**
- **3-4 Story Apartment Building**
- **Large Apartment / Condo Complex**
- **Small-Scale Apartment Building** (5-10 Apartments)

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

### Public Space Ideas

- **Outdoor Seating**
- **Sidewalk Dining**
- **Mobile Vendors, Food Trucks, Pop-up Businesses**
- **Farmers / Art Markets**
- **Public Art / Street Decor**
- **Play Features**
- **Music, Festivals, and Cultural Events**
- **Festival Lighting**
- **Parks / Pocket Parks**
- **Recreation / Sports Facilities**
- **Open Space**
- **Community Gardens**

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.
What kinds of Streets and Mobility ideas would you like to see in the Historic Core & Plaza neighborhood?

- On-Street Bike Lanes
- Dirt Side-Paths / Single-Track Sidewalks
- Traffic Calming
- Hardpacked Dirt Trails
- Paved Trails
- On-Street Parking
- Narrow Streets
- Wide Streets
- Surface Parking Lots
- Grid-Style Street Network
- Suburban-Style Street Network
- Parking Garage

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

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What kinds of Businesses spaces ideas would you like to see in the Historic Core & Plaza neighborhood?

- Drive-Thru
- Big Box
- Medium Box
- Strip Mall
- Local Boutique Shops
- Locally-Stylized Franchises
- Creative Spaces (eg. Coworking, Makerspace, Incubators)
- Office Buildings
- Repurposed Space (eg. Gas Station to Cafe)
- Big Hotels / Motels
- Small / Boutique Hotels
- Downtown-Style Mixed Use

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

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What kinds of Housing ideas would you like to see in the Paseo Del pueblo Sur neighborhood?

- Large-Lot Single Family Home
- Small-Lot Single Family Home
- Accessory Dwelling Units / Mother-In-Law Apartment
- Duplex
- Triplex / Fourplex
- Small-Scale Apartment Building (5-10 Apartments)
- Townhomes
- Apartments Above Shops / Mixed-Use
- 1-2 Story Apartment Building
- 3-4 Story Apartment Building
- Large Apartment / Condo Complex
- Bungalow Court

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

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What kinds of Public space ideas would you like to see in the Paseo Del pueblo Sur neighborhood?

- Outdoor Seating
- Sidewalk Dining
- Mobile Vendors, Food Trucks, Pop-up Businesses
- Farmers / Art Markets
- Public Art / Street Decor
- Play Features
- Music, Festivals, and Cultural Events
- Festival Lighting
- Parks / Pocket Parks
- Recreation / Sports Facilities
- Open Space
- Community Gardens

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.
APPENDIX: PHASE 3 MEETINGS SUMMARY

What kinds of Streets and Mobility ideas would you like to see in the Paseo Del Pueblo Sur neighborhood?

- On-Street Bike Lanes
- Dirt Side-Paths / Single-Track Sidewalks
- Traffic Calming
- Hardpacked Dirt Trails
- Paved Trails
- On-Street Parking
- Narrow Streets
- Wide Streets
- Surface Parking Lots
- Grid-Style Street Network
- Suburban-Style Street Network
- Parking Garage

Grab some sticky-dots and place them by the ideas you think would best fit in this area.

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 opportunities for the discussion of the different needs and interests of different interest groups.

The goals of these conversations were to discuss the key themes that have emerged from public input 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.

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

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
- Agriculture & Trails Session (Taos Land Trust)
- ESL Students (TECC)

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
  - 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

Draft Goals for the Downtown were 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.

Downtown Taos: Strategy Sessions (Phase 3) Meeting Series Summary (Page 1 of 1)
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 Taosinos 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.

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 Taosinos 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 Taosinos.
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.

BENEFITS OF A “PARK-ONCE-AND-WALK” DISTRICT

A “Park-Once-and-Walk” district enables people to park their vehicle in a convenient location and then walk to various destinations within the district (i.e., neighborhoods). 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 congestion 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:
1. Provides places for the community to come together.
2. Supports local businesses by creating an active street.
3. Increases the quality of life for Taoseños by providing fun things to do.

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 bring life to a downtown and often serve as a magnet for other people.

This 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.

Glenwood Springs, Colorado
Salida, Colorado

Downtown Design Workshop (Phase 4) Meeting Series Summary (Page 5 of 20)
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.

PARR FIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
TAOS PLAZA
KIT CARSON PARK
P
P
P
P
P

DOWNTOWN ALLEY NETWORK AND SIDEWALK CONNECTIONS TO COMMUNITY ASSETS AND PARKING

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.

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.

DOWNTOWN ALLEY NETWORK AND SIDEWALK CONNECTIONS TO COMMUNITY ASSETS AND PARKING

Downtown Design Workshop (Phase 4) Meeting Series Summary (Page 7 of 20)

Downtown Design Workshop (Phase 4) Meeting Series Summary (Page 8 of 20)
i. VISUALIZING A SAFE AND CONNECTED BIKE NETWORK

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.

INSPIRATION FOR ALLEY ENHANCEMENTS

There are many ways that the alleys in Taos could be modified to make them more inviting and vibrant. The photos above depict alley enhancements that have been installed in other places and could serve as inspiration for Taos.

ii. IMAGINING DOWNTOWN ALLEY ENHANCEMENTS

There are many ways that the alleys in Taos could be modified to make them more inviting and vibrant. The photos above depict alley enhancements that have been installed in other places and could serve as inspiration for Taos.
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

The New Mexico Department of Transportation (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.

APPENDIX: PHASE 4 MEETINGS SUMMARY

Downtown Design Workshop (Phase 4) Meeting Series Summary (Page 11 of 20)

BENEFITS OF A SAFE AND CONNECTED DOWNTOWN BIKE NETWORK

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APPENDIX: PHASE 4 MEETINGS SUMMARY

Downtown Design Workshop (Phase 4) Meeting Series Summary (Page 11 of 20)
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.
1. IMAGINING MIXED-USE 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 Taxpayers to live and stay in Taos.
- Locating new housing near existing opportunities and walkability.
- Infusing new life into commercial areas by providing a range of walkable opportunities for 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 area 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.

Write-In Comments:
- N/A

2. IMAGINING INFILL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Locating new housing near existing opportunities and walkability.

Write-In Comments:
- No 3-stories.
- No, can’t see mountains.
- 2nd - keep at 2-stories, especially at heart of historic district.
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17

Yahoo... 61 votes
Meh... 1 vote
No Way... 3 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!

3. IMAGINING A DOWNTOWN PARKING GARAGE WITH MIXED-USE INFILL DEVELOPMENT

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 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.

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18

Yahoo... 56 votes
Meh... 7 votes
No Way... 0 votes

Write-In Comments:
• N/A

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

4. IMAGINING ADAPTIVE REUSE ALONG PASEO DEL PUEBLO SUR

“Adaptive Reuse” is the process of taking an existing building and repurposing it for a new purpose other than what 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:

• Creative 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

BENEFITS OF ADAPTIVE REUSE

• 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

APPENDIX: PHASE 4 MEETINGS SUMMARY
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.
- Connect the pieces.
- Yeah I want that for real.
- Colorful 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.
- Light!!! (street, art designs, Christmas savings, 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.
- Re-open movie theater.
- Research European business models for their plazas.
- High-end Pizza Hut with wine.
- 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 to 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 (I’m 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!