

Taos Historic Plaza

Cultural Landscape Report



September 2016

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Executive Summary

Project Overview and Purpose

This Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for the historic Taos Plaza in Taos, New Mexico includes a summary of existing conditions, review of historic development, and treatment guidance for the future of the Plaza and the immediate surroundings. The study area is approximately 16 acres, located within the Taos Downtown Historic District (NRHP) and Taos Historic Overlay Zone (HOZ). Many buildings are either of national, state, or local significance and often all three designations apply. The historic Plaza is approximately one-half acre, and is the center and heart of the Town of Taos.

This project includes review of historical background on Taos Plaza. This research includes a recommendation for a revision to the period of significance for the Taos Downtown Historic District to reflect modifications that have occurred since the designation was written. Included in the document is a description of existing conditions of the Plaza and study area, including an analysis of integrity for the Plaza. This is followed by treatment guidance for the cultural landscape of study area generally, and the Plaza specifically.

The purpose of this CLR is to provide appropriate treatment guidance and strategies for the preservation and enhancement of cultural landscape resources of the study area and Plaza. This document presents a vision for the desired condition, guidance for the long-term management of cultural resources, and rehabilitation of the Plaza to reflect its historic design.

Report Overview

This document includes four chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Site History

Chapter 3: Existing Conditions and Analysis

Chapter 4: Treatment

Chapter 1 is a summary of the study area and context of Taos Plaza. It includes the purpose and need of the project, and the methodology undertaken. The chapter summarizes management issues that relate to the Plaza, including descriptions of applicable laws and regulations that apply to cultural properties within the study area.

Chapter 2 is a statement of significance for the cultural landscape, an overview of the development of Taos Plaza, a historical overview providing contextual information, and a detailed chronology.

Chapter 3 is an assessment of the Plaza's integrity, and physical descriptions of the study area and the Plaza. The contributing landscape features and patterns are identified for each, including national, state, and local designations. This information is provided in a series of matrices that describe each feature.



Figure 1. Taos Plaza, with Hotel la Fonda at right, looking east. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)



Figure 2. The Old County Courthouse on the north side of the Plaza. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Chapter 4 is the treatment guidance for the cultural landscape. It identifies a treatment approach and vision, followed by detailed guidance for the study area and the Plaza. Recommendations are organized by landscape characteristic (e.g. “Circulation,” “Vegetation”). Chapter 4 contains plans and sketches illustrating the recommendations. Four treatment options are illustrated, which may be implemented based upon further development and community consultation.

Appendices provide bibliographic information, historic photographs of the Plaza organized chronologically, and graphics and feedback from community workshops and open houses.

Key Findings of the CLR

Key findings of this document include relevant management issues; recommendations for further work; primary treatment approach; and key treatment guidance.

Revision is needed to the NRHP

The entire study area is located within the Taos Downtown Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The NRHP listing states that the period of significance as circa 1790 to present. Further research completed as part of this project has provided additional information that informs the period of significance. It is recommended the period of significance be revised and the NRHP listing updated to reflect a more accurate period of significance of circa 1790 to 1950.

Management Issues Related to Multiple Designations

Taos Plaza occurs within the Taos Downtown Historic District (NRHP) and within the Taos Historic Overlay Zone (HOZ). There are multiple boundaries that overlap within these designations. This is a complication for management and there is difficulty discerning between the different levels of historic designation. Taos has individual buildings and historic districts in one, two or all three designations: Historic Overlay Zone, State Register, and National Register. This is difficult to easily explain to the general public.

Plaza Lacks Historic Integrity

The Plaza has been modified extensively since 1950. These modifications have diminished the integrity of the Plaza. Interior walls, statues, structures, and extensive brick paving and grade changes altered the historic appearance of the space. Existing features are in poor condition and are in need of replacement in order to meet needs.

Community Members Recognize Change is Needed

A series of oral history interviews, public work sessions and open houses informed the direction of the treatment of the Plaza and study area. Generally, the people of Taos value the role of the Plaza as the center and heart of the community. There is a desire to improve its condition by improving access, seating, green space, and availability for large, social events. (A summary of the public process and meeting notes is included in the appendices).

Treatment Guidance

The overall landscape treatment for the Taos Historic Plaza is rehabilitation. In accordance with the Secretary of Interior Standards, rehabilitation is a holistic approach that preserves those features that convey the historical, cultural, and architectural values of the study area, including extant cultural resources, contributing features, and relationships between these. It allows removal of non-contributing features, compatible repairs, alterations, and additions needed for the continued of the Plaza and study area, and adaptive reuse of buildings and structures.

Key Recommendations

Study Area Treatment Guidance

The study area will be preserved and rehabilitated to protect contributing features and allow for compatible alterations and additions to continue its use as a vibrant community center. Preservation of extant features, spatial relationships, views, circulation patterns, cluster arrangements, buildings and structures that remain from the period of significance is a primary goal. Equally important are compatible additions and adaptive reuse to continue the evolution of the study area to meet the needs of the community.

- Protect contributing buildings, structures, features, and archeological resources.
- Allow for new additions that are compatible to the urban form and style of the study area.
- Complete further research to better understand specific resources.
- Improve pedestrian circulation routes within the study area.

Plaza Treatment Guidance

Taos Plaza will be rehabilitated to reestablish the qualities of the Plaza's physical form of its pre-1950s character when it was one open space enclosed by a low adobe wall, and characterized by a simple pattern of walks, trees, with a central focus. The rehabilitation of the Plaza will preserve its extant historic form and scale, repair contributing features including portions of the original adobe wall and surrounding buildings,

reestablish its historic open character, and provide compatible additions for continuation of its traditional use.

- Preserve and repair extant contributing features.
- Remove non-contributing features that diminish the integrity of the Plaza (interior walls, kiosk, existing gazebo, extensive brick paving).
- Reestablish the Plaza as a level, open space, with interior green space.
- Allow for casual use as well as large festivals and regular community events.
- Maintain existing shade trees, and replace as-need to reestablish the historic grid of trees.
- Provide a small shade structure at the west edge of the Plaza.
- Reestablish a central focus (terrace, fountain, plantings, flagpole).
- **Preserve compatible features (War Memorial, Padre Martinez Statue) unless the community deems them appropriate for removal.**
- Provide universally accessible access to and within the Plaza.
- Reestablish a low, perimeter adobe wall surrounding the Plaza.

Implementation

The treatment guidance is accompanied by graphic illustrations that depict a range of treatment options for the Plaza. Each of the four options explores a different way to rehabilitate the Plaza and its historic form, while meeting contemporary needs. They are intended to be a guide and starting point for future work.



Figure 3. The War Memorial within the Plaza, looking west, bottom right. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Chapter 1. Introduction

Introduction

This document presents the Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) for Taos Plaza in Taos, New Mexico. This CLR presents detailed documentation of the Plaza's historical development, evaluation of existing conditions, analysis of landscape characteristics, and determination of contributing features.

The CLR establishes a treatment philosophy and a framework to guide treatment to preserve, maintain, and ensure the sensitive development of the Plaza for future generations. The CLR provides general treatment guidance for the Town of Taos and Taos County staff to use when developing plans for future improvements in Taos Plaza.

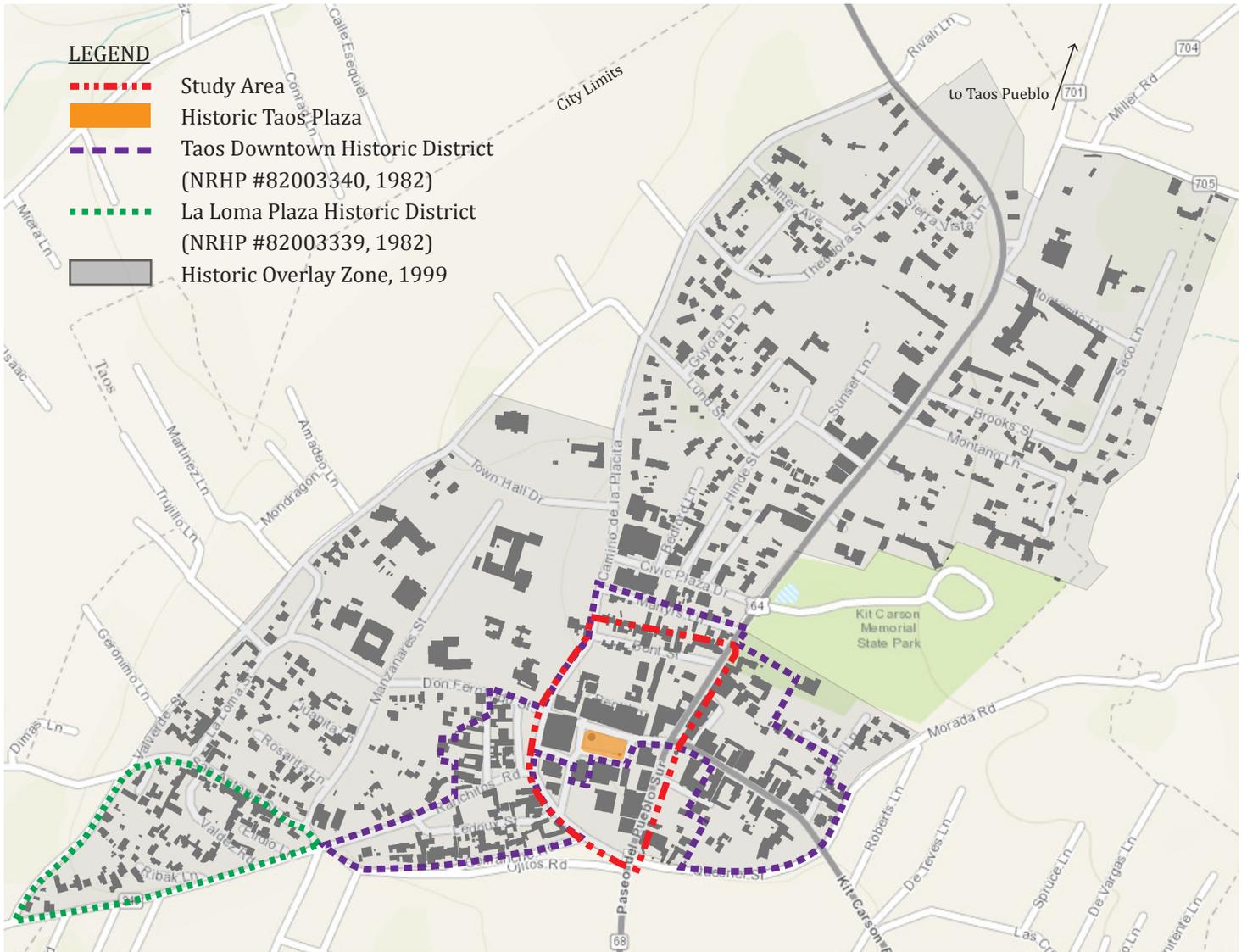
This work builds upon the numerous studies, investigations and documents that already exist for Taos Plaza. These include the 2005 Taos Plaza Landscape Report, 2013 Historic Taos County Courthouse Condition Assessment and Preservation Plan, Town of Taos Vision 2020 Master Plan, 1981 nomination for listing the Taos Downtown Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places, the 2012 Taos Arts and Cultural District Plan, and the 2010 DPAC (Design and Planning Assistance Center) Report completed by the University of New Mexico. Taos Plaza is within the nationally significant Taos Downtown Historic District (NRHP), and locally significant 1999 Taos Historic Overlay Zone (HOZ) and Taos Arts and Cultural District (both established by the Town of Taos). (Figure 1-1)

Study Area

The study area (Figure 1-1) encompasses approximately 16 acres, which is the central portion of the Taos Downtown Historic District (NRHP) and within the Taos Historic Overlay Zone (HOZ). The boundaries of the study area are generally Martyr's Lane to Camino de la Placita to Paseo Pueblo Sur, including both sides of Paseo Pueblo Norte/Sur, and the alleys extending from the Plaza. The Dunn Street shops and the alley behind Hotel La Fonda are within the study area. When established in the late 1700s, the open Plaza and surrounding buildings were the center and starting point for the town. This developed into a complex network of alleys, placitas, and low buildings that stand shoulder to shoulder. Streets are narrow, winding, and are very close to building façades. These are essential characteristics of the town's character and urban fabric.

Context

The Taos Historic Overlay Zone forms the context for the study area, encompassing two historic districts, the La Loma Plaza and the Taos Downtown Historic District, both listed in the NRHP. The overlay zone includes a variety of historic architectural styles. Buildings are typically low-profile and rambling in mass and form. Roadways are narrow and follow the topography, streetscapes include buildings, yard walls, and fences creating a narrow field of view. Numerous nationally



significant properties occur within the overlay zone, including the Fechin House, Mabel Dodge Luhan House, and Victor Higgins House. The overlay zone is not studied in detail in this report, but consideration is given to how treatment recommendations for the Plaza influence the larger context.

Regional Context

Taos, New Mexico is in northern New Mexico, approximately 70 miles north of Santa Fe, the state capitol. U.S. Highway 64 and State Routes 68 and 518 access the town, which is situated adjacent to the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. The mountains form a high barrier to the east and south in contrast to the open high desert/grassland east of town. The landscape is dominated by the adjacent mountains at 12 to 13,000 feet and plunge gracefully down to the Taos Valley. The natural environment is a semi-arid plain of mixed grasses, sagebrush, pinon-juniper forest and oak chaparral. The Rio Grande is west of Taos and is fed by several streams through the Taos Valley.

The region was permanently settled by the Pueblo people in approximately 1350 AD, who built Taos Pueblo, a multistory adobe complex situated along the Rio Pueblo de Taos. Taos Pueblo, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, borders the town of Taos on its north side. The town of Taos was established 1796 as Don Fernando de Taos, although the Spanish had settled in the valley many years prior to that date. The town was erected around the central Plaza, as an enclosed and fortified space to protect citizens from repeated raids by the Comanche and Ute tribes. The center of the fortified town was the open Plaza. Typified as an open space with a central element (well or gazebo), surrounded by a wall of buildings on four sides. As the town grew, it witnessed several revolts, rose in prominence as a center of trade, became a renowned artist colony, and eventually became a tourist destination.

Numerous famous figures in history are associated with Taos including Padre Jose Antonio Martinez, Kit Carson, Ceran St. Vrain, Charles Bent, and later well-known artists such as E. Irving Couse and Ernest Blumenschein, amongst others. Each successive wave of people brought new ideas and architectural designs to the town and Plaza. Several changes have occurred to the Plaza over time, yet it remains the spiritual and community center of Taos. The study area's numerous resources include natural and archeological features, historic buildings, structures, roads and alleys.

Taos Plaza's national significance is recognized by its listing as a contributing property within the Taos Downtown Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). It is nationally significant for its architecture which reflects its importance as a meeting place of many cultures and famous people. Spanish Colonial Style buildings stand by Territorial, Mission Revival and Spanish Pueblo Revival buildings. The architectural fabric of Don Fernando de Taos reflects the many cultural influences of the Spanish, American Indians, Anglos and artists upon the growth of the town. The period of significance for the Historic District is circa 1790 to present. This CLR report recommends modifying the period of

Figure 1-1 Context plan of the Study Area, left. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

significance for Taos Plaza to circa 1790 to 1950, this would end the period of significance before the Plaza was extensively modified from its historic condition. (See Chapter 2 for further explanation.)

The cultural landscape is organized into two landscape character areas: Study Area and Taos Plaza, for analysis and treatment recommendations. The study area as a whole will be presented first, followed by more detailed information for the Plaza.

Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is to provide a landscape and cultural resource history to serve as a baseline of information. **The project will document and evaluate landscape significance, integrity, and conditions; and identify and describe cultural landscape characteristics including contributing, compatible, and non-contributing features.**

The project is needed to develop an overall treatment strategy for the long-term management and care of the cultural landscape, including its archaeological components. The CLR will establish a treatment philosophy and a framework to guide treatment to preserve, maintain, and ensure the sensitive development of the Plaza for future generations. The CLR will provide general treatment recommendations and design criteria for future rehabilitation projects for the Town of Taos and Taos County staff to use when developing plans for Taos Plaza.

Methodology

This document was prepared in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes. The CLR was conducted at a thorough level of investigation, documentation for historical research, existing conditions assessment, and landscape analysis. The thorough level research methodology focused on the use of select documentation of known and presumed relevance, including primary and secondary sources that are readily available.^{1.1}

The existing conditions investigation was conducted according to best practices. A review of readily available documentation was undertaken. It included information from the Town of Taos, the New Mexico State Library and Archives, and the University of New Mexico-Taos Southwest Research Center.

This review included planning documents, technical reports, and drawings of the Plaza. Review of historical documentation included the nomination for listing the Taos Downtown Historic District in the NRHP in 1981, the 2013 Historic Taos County Courthouse Condition Assessment and Preservation Plan, and historic drawings and photographs available from primary and secondary sources. Background data provided by the Town of Taos was used to prepare CLR drawings and illustrations. This data included

1.1 Robert R. Page, Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan. 1998. *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Processes and Techniques*. Washington D.C.: National Park Service.

GIS information and line drawings from recent design work, supplemented with field observations and measurements. Site investigations in autumn of 2015 documented existing conditions.

Archeological research focused on review of previous archeological investigations. The project team did not conduct any additional archeological investigations.

Treatment guidance was informed by background research, and consultation with the Town of Taos, New Mexico Historic Preservation Division (HPD), and the community. Oral history interviews, public work sessions and community meetings guided treatment recommendations to create a vision for the Plaza's future. (See Appendix C, Summary of Public Meetings).

Management Summary and Administrative Context

The study area is composed of public and private property. The Plaza is owned by the County of Taos, and the town streets are property of the Taos Pueblo on long-term lease by the town.^{1,2}

The Town of Taos Vision 2020 Master Plan provides a vision, goals, and a long-range guide for the development of the community including implementation policies.^{1,3} The 2020 Master Plan addresses five major themes.

- Growth and development that protects Taos' landscape and natural resources.
- Diversification and improvement of the economy.

Figure 1-2. The Plaza in 1915, below. (George L. Beam, courtesy Palace of the Governors Photo Archives)

Figure 1-3. The Plaza in 1982, below right. (Michael Heller, courtesy Palace of the Governors Photo Archives)



1.2 Wilson, "Center Place, Plaza, Square," 20.

1.3 Town of Taos, Vision 2020 Master Plan, adopted 1999.

- Preservation of open space and agricultural lands.
- Enhancement of quality of life, small town character, and sense of community through the use of history and traditions, appropriate technologies, and design.
- Provision of community facilities, infrastructure, housing, and other opportunities that allow a diverse community of various cultures, classes, and ages to flourish.

Other plans that influence the study area include the 2012 Arts & Cultural District Plan (not approved), and the Taos Greenprint currently underway. The Greenprint is being undertaken by the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the Taos Land Trust, who are working with the County and Town of Taos to highlight priority areas for conservation. The objectives of the Greenprint are to help the community plan for a future that balances development pressures with protection of important resources; and help foster a strong foundation for economic growth by setting priorities for preserving natural and recreational resources that are critical to local quality of life.

In 2010, the University of New Mexico completed a study for the Taos Arts and Cultural District, assisting the community in identifying the design and planning issues facing the town. The study identified overall improvements needed to circulation including parking and pedestrian safety, legibility/wayfinding, and increased amenities for residents and visitors. Suggestions were provided for paving, street furniture, and vegetation types.

Issues

The following summarizes management issues identified by town staff, stakeholders, and from evaluation of existing conditions.

Protection of Cultural Resources

Preservation of building types, materials (especially adobe) and building massing, form, and spatial organization is essential. Modifications have been made to the Plaza, compromising its historic integrity. Guidance are needed to address protection of cultural landscape elements and to address future rehabilitation and coordination of implementation.

Applicable local and state regulations protecting cultural resources include Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), guided by the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes.^{1.4} Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties.

Section 7 of the New Mexico Prehistoric and Historic Sites Preservation Act states “No public funds of the state or any of its agencies or political subdivisions shall be spent on any program or project that requires the

1.4 Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes, online: <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments/landscapeguidelines>

use of any portion of or any land from a significant prehistoric or historic site unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative to such use, and unless the program or project includes all possible planning to preserve and protect and to minimize harm to the significant prehistoric or historic site resulting from such use. The provisions of this section may be enforced by an action for injunction or other appropriate relief in a court of competent jurisdiction.”

The New Mexico Prehistoric and Historic Sites Preservation Act (Sections 19-8-1 through 18-8-8) establishes central principles of preservation in New Mexico. The Act requires state agencies provide the SHPO with an opportunity to participate in planning for activities that will affect properties on the State Register of Cultural Properties (SRCP) or the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The Cultural Properties Protection Act (18-6A-5) states “The officer shall, in cooperation with the heads of state agencies, establish a system of professional surveys of cultural properties on state lands. State agencies shall cooperate with the officer and exercise due caution to ensure cultural properties are not inadvertently damaged or destroyed.”

The Town of Taos should consult with New Mexico Historic Preservation Division (HPD) whenever they are proposing a project that might affect a cultural property. If historic properties are included in the National Register of Historic Places or meet national register criteria, the Town is required to consult with HPD during the process.

The State of New Mexico Cultural Properties Preservation Easement Act provides for donation, holding, and assignment of cultural properties preservation easements. This state Act allows a private landowner to give the historic aspect of real estate or other property to a non-profit organization to hold and maintain, while keeping the right to use the other aspects of the property, including the right of sale. In some cases, the IRS view this as a charitable donation, which gains the landowner a federal tax deduction. The State of New Mexico 2003 Land Conservation Incentives Act provides additional financial incentives and tax credits to preserving cultural properties.

Taos became a Certified Local Government in 1988 after enacting a preservation ordinance and establishing a preservation commission. This enables the town to apply for an annual grants program specifically for Certified Local Governments. The Taos Historic Overlay Zone (1999) protects, enhances, and perpetuates areas of historical, cultural, architectural, artistic, or geographical significance located within the Town of Taos. Protection of these areas enhances the Town’s economic base by continuing to draw tourists to the area, and fosters civic pride by protecting the Town’s unique cultural heritage and architectural design. Town code identifies standards that apply to the Historic Overlay Zone including streetscape standards, preservation of environmental features, preservation and maintenance of contributing buildings and structures, and standards for new construction. Cultural properties within the Taos Historic Overlay Zone are administered by the Town and Town code. Properties listed as contributing to the Historic Overlay Zone require

review by the Taos Historic Preservation Commission, utilizing Secretary of the Interior Standards, prior to any projects that may alter the exterior. If a building is solely a part of the national or state register and not contributing to the Historic Overlay Zone, then no review is required for private property owners seeking to make improvements.

Use of the Plaza

The Plaza is utilized in various ways, ranging from formally organized events to casual everyday use. Numerous events occur in Taos Plaza. Existing regular events include the farmer's market, flea market, Thursday concerts, and movie nights. Large community gatherings include the Fiestas de Taos and seasonal events. Programs such as the farmer's market are good additions to the use of Taos Plaza but not all residents agree. Closing the area to vehicular traffic causes conflicts, and shop owners are concerned about loss of sales.

Everyday uses of the Plaza include unorganized passive uses. The Plaza is used as an informal gathering area, a meeting place for friends and neighbors, a place to rest, and for visitors to gather information, amongst other casual uses.

Integration of New Materials

There is concern that new materials, e.g. stucco, is seen as an acceptable replacement material for adobe. This is a concern as adobe is a primary characteristic of Taos and especially of Taos Plaza. The use of stucco differs dramatically from adobe due to its physical appearance, based on the difference in construction technology. Guidance is needed to address what is acceptable change and what materials should be used for repair and new construction.

Overlapping Management Zones

Taos Plaza occurs within the Taos Downtown Historic District (NRHP), and within the Taos Historic Overlay Zone (HOZ). There are multiple boundaries overlapping within these designations, which can be a complication for management. The Historic District was identified by the 1981 NRHP nomination. The Historic Overlay Zone is administered by the Town and Town code, established in 1999.

There is difficulty discerning between the different levels of historic designation. Taos has both individual buildings and historic districts in one, two or all three designations: National Register, State Register, and Historic Overlay Zone. This is difficult to explain to the general public. In hopes of clarifying, the Town of Taos may be updating surveys and clarifying district boundaries in the future. This document identifies buildings that have the following designations: NRHP for National Register of Historic Places, SRCP for State Register of Cultural Properties, and HOZ for Historic Overlay Zone. When referring to contributing buildings, a suffix has been added to identify to which designation a feature contributes.

Chapter 2. Site History

Introduction

The site history presents the physical evolution of Taos Plaza from its inception as the starting point for the town of Don Fernando de Taos established in 1796, through present day. The site history is documented as a series of periods of development that describe changes over time, and presented in narrative and graphic form.

The site history begins with a statement of significance for Taos Plaza, including a description and rationale for its recommended period of significance of c. 1790 to 1950.^{2.1} This is followed by a landscape chronology including early settlement of the area by American Indians, settlement by the Spanish and through present day, noting major changes and influencing factors. Historic photographs, historic plans and documents, and illustrative graphic drawings assist in telling the full story of the evolution of Taos Plaza.



Figure 2-1. Taos Pueblo, c. 1900.
(Denver Public Library, X-30006)

2.1 The recommended period of significance is c. 1790 to 1950. This differs from the National Register listing, which states the period of significance is c. 1790 to present. The recommended period of significance should be used to update the existing Taos Historic District National Register listing.

Statement of Significance

Taos Plaza is significant as an outstanding example of a Spanish fortified Plaza. The town of Don Fernando de Taos is one of the three oldest continuous settlements in the Taos Valley, established sometime between 1780 and 1800. The Plaza was the starting point for the town, which was organized around the Plaza. The town grew with the influx of natives and foreigners attracted by its position as a center of trade linking St. Louis and Bent's Fort with Santa Fe along the Santa Fe Trail.

Taos was home to such great New Mexican leaders as Padre Jose Antonio Martinez, Kit Carson, Ceran St. Vrain, and Charles Bent. The Plaza has been witness to and starting place of a series of rebellions: the Pueblo Revolt of 1680; the Revolt of 1837; the 1847 insurrection; and the Spanish-American War disturbances in 1898. After its phase as a trade center, Taos was discovered by artists, and underwent a cultural revival from the turn of the twentieth century through the 1930s.^{2,2}

Each successive wave of people brought new ideas and architectural designs to the town and Plaza. Spanish Colonial style residences stand by Territorial, Mission Revival and Spanish-Pueblo Revival buildings. The architectural fabric of Don Fernando de Taos reflects the many cultural influences of the Spanish, Indians, Anglos and artists upon the growth of the town. The architecture is significant because it incorporates these varied lifestyles and cultural patterns, and reveals the history of Don Fernando de Taos for what it is: the crossroads of many cultures and eras. Throughout the history of Taos, the Plaza has remained the center and heart of the town. While details of its original appearance are unknown, the evolution of its design is documented. In general, Taos Plaza has retained its original form and has consistently been modified to reflect the changing styles over time.^{2,3}

A recommended period of significance from c. 1790 to 1950 captures the timeframe in which the Plaza and study area evolved concurrently in style and function. Based on the research of this report, it was determined that the existing period of significance as identified in the National Register for the Taos Downtown Historic District is in need of revision. The existing National Register listing states the period of significance as c. 1790 to present. It is recommended that the end date be revised to exclude modifications that were undertaken to the Plaza after 1950. These modifications greatly diminished the integrity of the Plaza. The revised period of significance includes features remaining from the historical evolution of the Plaza and study area, including the addition of the county courthouse in 1933, revision of the Plaza in keeping with the re-development in a Pueblo Revival style, and the incorporation of the Town of Taos, but excludes later additions.

2.2 National Register of Historic Places, "Taos Downtown Historic District Nomination Form", 10.

2.3 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 10.



Figure 2-2. Taos Plaza c.1875-1900. (Denver Public Library)

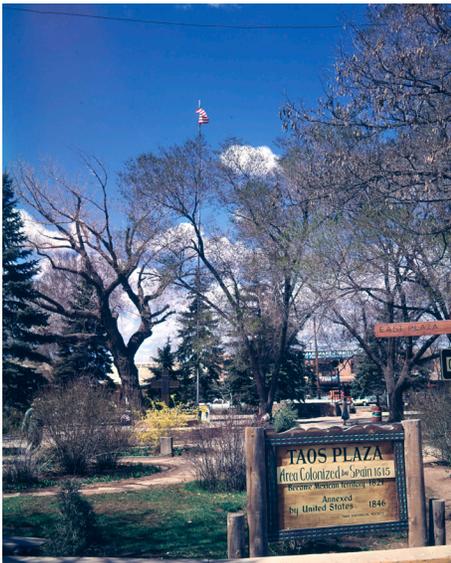


Figure 2-3. Taos Plaza c.1968. (NM Archives #64823)

Development of Taos Plaza*^{2.4}

c. 1790 The early Taos Plaza was an open square, surrounded by a continuous residential block, similar to a very large hacienda. It is unknown how the Plaza first appeared, but the surface was likely a combination of grass and dirt, and possibly it had a few shade trees. An acequia fed the Plaza from a board flume from Kit Carson Park.

c. 1880s/1897 The Plaza was developed in the Territorial Style, planted with grass and a grid of shade trees, surrounded by picket fence with gates at Plaza corners. A central flagpole marked the center of the Plaza, and dirt paths radiated out from the center.

1908 A wooden octagonal gazebo was added to the center of the Plaza. The Plaza interior was planted in grass with shade trees.

1915 The picket fence was replaced with a post and wire mesh fence with top rail / hitching post. Interior of Plaza was grass and shade trees.

1929 The street was widened for automobiles and the Plaza shrunk in size. The wire fence was replaced by a low stone wall. The Plaza interior was covered with grass and shade trees. The acequia was replaced with barrels that were filled from a well located in the center of the Plaza.

1933 The gazebo was replaced with a Spanish-Pueblo Revival style gazebo with a stucco parapet and wood vigas, lintels, posts and corbels, matching the surrounding Spanish-Pueblo Revival buildings. Four paths led to the center gazebo and modern flagpole. Evergreen trees were added to the existing cottonwood trees, in an informal pattern. A low stucco wall surrounded the edge which enclosed lawn edged with flowers.

1950s Flagstone walks were added.

1960s The stucco gazebo was torn down, and an open gazebo was erected in the northwest corner. A large cross commemorating Taos's World War II Bataan soldiers was erected.

1970s The Plaza was extensively remodeled. Grass, exposed dirt, and flagstones were replaced by brick paving, stucco walls, and the existing, large, copper-roofed gazebo.

1995 Information kiosk added to Plaza's east side. Flagpoles were relocated adjacent the cross. Portions of the 1930s stucco wall were replaced by ramped sidewalks and new perimeter sidewalk at 6-feet wide. An evergreen tree was planted as a 'permanent Christmas tree' adjacent a small grassed area.

2006 Padre Antonio Jose Martinez statue was added.

2.4 Information on the development of the Plaza was obtained from historic maps and photographs. Refer to Appendix B for a compendium of historic images consulted.

Historical Overview and Context

Taos Valley was permanently settled by the Pueblo people in approximately 1400 AD, who built Taos Pueblo, a multistory adobe complex, situated along the Rio Pueblo de Taos. Flat-roofed adobe buildings were organized around a central Plaza, called the *bupingeh*: literally, the middle-heart-place in the Tewa language.^{2.5} The Plaza was, and remains the physical and social center of the village, alive with a sacred life force.

The first Europeans in New Mexico were led by Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, who led a Spanish expedition into the Southwest in 1539 to 1541 searching for mineral wealth. He found none. Years later, in 1598 Juan de Oñate led a company more than 600, north into New Mexico where he established a capital north of present-day Santa Fe. The next governor, Pedro de Peralta, moved the capital and established the town of Santa Fe in 1610. New Mexico grew modestly, with a few Spanish settlers establishing *ranchos* (small agricultural ranches with a few livestock) along the Rio Grande.

The Spanish introduced metal tools, writing, the wheel, and new foods to the Pueblo people; they developed farms and a network of irrigation ditches (*acequias*) to irrigate their farmland. The Franciscans erected mission complexes at the edges of existing Pueblo villages and urged conversions to Catholicism. They extracted goods and labor from the pueblos and suppressed native religion. During this time the native population declined drastically due to famine, warfare and new diseases. These pressures led to a unified Pueblo Revolt in 1680, instigated from within Taos Pueblo under the leadership of Popé, which drove the Spanish out of New Mexico for nearly 15 years.

In 1692 Diego de Vargas attempted to retake Santa Fe, however the Pueblo resistance continued for several years before the Spanish were able to retake the territory. The Spanish law of the land was modified afterwards, allowing for more religious freedom and tolerance of native customs. This helped with relations, however new conflicts emerged with other native tribes.

The Spanish brought the horse to America, which changed the lifestyles of American Indians. The horse allowed for greater mobility across the wide open West. Combined with firearms, the Comanche, Kiowa, Apache, and other tribes began raiding Pueblo and Spanish settlements, taking livestock and captives, and destroying property.

The situation became dire, with 15% of the Spanish population taken as captives, while a third of the colony's population was *genizaros* – Hispanicized Indians, themselves taken through raids and slave trade.^{2.6} The Spanish government responded with plans calling for reorganization of existing presidios and creation of new fortified Plazas. Don Fernando de Taos was established as one of these new fortified Plazas in 1796.

2.5 Rina Swentzell, "Bupingeh: The Middle-Heart-Place," in *The Plazas of New Mexico* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 2014), 63.

2.6 Chris Wilson, "Center Place, Plaza, Square," in *The Plazas of New Mexico* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 2014), 26.

Previously, in 1573, Felipe II of Spain codified the practices of new-town construction in the New World, today referred to as the Laws of the Indies. The Laws stipulated placement of new towns, and instructed leaders to lay out new towns on a grid of streets organized around a central Plaza as “the starting point for the town.”^{2.7} The church was to be allocated one full block of the Plaza and government buildings were to face the Plaza as well. Settlement was organized by groups of families rather than individuals, and included common pasture as well as individual allotments of farmland. New towns were to be created on elevated locations, adjacent good farmland and water.

The establishment of Don Fernando de Taos did not follow the Laws of the Indies to the letter, but rather organized the town to meet the needs of its citizens. The layout of the town of Taos was a combination of the Laws of the Indies and a small presidio. The land grant to establish the town was given to 63 families, located within the San Geronimo de Taos (Pueblo) grant. The name has varied throughout the years from “Don Fernando de Taos,” “Don Ferandez de Taos,” “San Fernando de Taos,” and “San Fernandez de Taos.” The “Don Fernando” referred to was likely a settler Don Fernando de Chavez, a captain in the Spanish military.^{2.8} The exact date or appearance of the Don Fernando Plaza is unknown. It is generally assumed that these 63 families built the town as a fortified and gated space, as a Plaza-centered community. The buildings were likely one-story, flat-roofed adobe, facing the Plaza and each immediately adjacent to the next. All doors and windows would have faced inwards, with one or two wooden gates, and possibly towers at the corners, creating an enclosure providing refuge from raids. The church was not placed within the enclosure but was located just outside of the fortified perimeter, and a secondary Plaza developed in front. The acequias were dug along the edges of the valley surrounding the town and fed a common well at the Plaza center. The land was divided into rectangular fields extending perpendicular to the acequia so each family field had access to water.

The Mexican war for independence was fought in 1810, ending in 1821. In 1837 Taos was declared an official port of entry into the new nation, and became an important trade center on the Santa Fe Trail.^{2.9} The increase in trade brought new goods and people who had an impact upon the architecture of Taos.^{2.10} New building materials of milled lumber and glass for windows began to be used. Buildings were constructed in the Greek Revival style, then popular at the time in the eastern United States. These architectural details mixed with the already present hybrid style of Spanish and Pueblo architecture of Taos.

2.7 Wilson, “Center Place, Plaza, Square,” 20.

2.8 NRHP, “Taos Downtown Historic District,” 8.

2.9 NRHP, “Taos Downtown Historic District,” 2.

2.10 NRHP, “Taos Downtown Historic District,” 2.

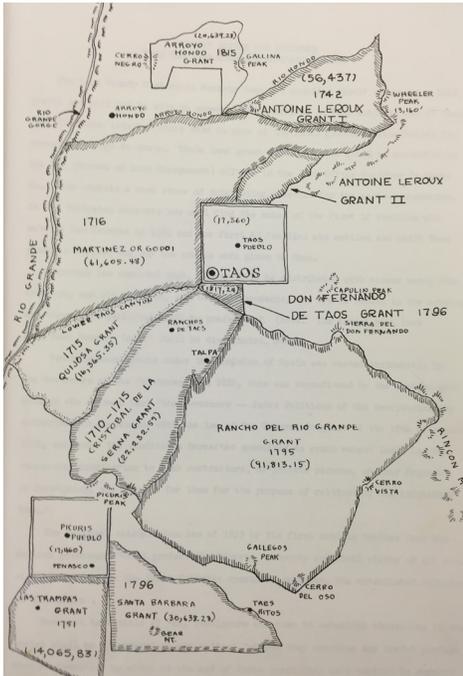


Figure 2-4. Boundaries of the Don Fernando de Taos Grant, top. (Town of Taos)

Figure 2-5. Coming Up From The Rio Grande, bottom. (Town of Taos)

Taxes and government corruption led to the Revolt of 1837 against the Mexican government. It was led by Jose Gonzales, a Pueblo Indian from Taos, who led local forces against the governor Albino Perez. Perez was executed, and Gonzales appointed governor. Soon after, the former governor Manuel Armijo rallied troops and marched from Albuquerque, and capturing the rebels in Taos and executing Jose Gonzales.^{2.11}

Taos would see violence again in 1846 when the Mexican-American War began. General Kearney marched unimpeded into Santa Fe, declaring New Mexico for the United States. He appointed Charles Bent as the Territorial governor, who built a home in Taos. Mexican nationalists plotted their resistance and when Bent visited his family in Taos they took revenge. They assassinated Bent and several other U.S. citizens. The United States government retaliated and marched on Taos. The rebels took refuge in the Franciscan mission at Taos Pueblo, which the army then leveled to the ground. Others were taken prisoner and survivors hung north of Taos Plaza.^{2.12}

After New Mexico became part of the United States, the United States government surveyed and disbursed farm and ranch lands. The Spanish and Mexican land patents were typically transferred to the original recipients, however due to the communal nature of many of these grants, land grant speculators from the U.S. used devious tactics to acquire land grant lands around Taos during the transition period.^{2.13}

In the 1860s the discovery of gold at Red River brought newcomers and prosperity to Taos.^{2.14} With the arrival of the first railroad in New Mexico in 1879 the availability of new construction materials increased, including brick, rolled metal and corrugated iron. Merchants from the eastern United States purchased property on Plazas throughout New Mexico, including Taos, and remodeled or rebuilt the buildings to suit their needs.^{2.15} Log post portales were replaced with porches of milled lumber trimmed with capitols. The new buildings were occasionally two-story structures, with stores below and lodging above. These new buildings sometimes included a boardwalk at the front. The new building materials and architectural details became known as the Territorial Style.^{2.16} Business boomed in New Mexico in the late nineteenth century and many Plazas were developed into Plaza parks, symmetrical spaces with evenly spaced shade trees, benches, and an open continuous ground plan. Typically a perimeter fence surrounded the Plaza and paths converged on a central focal point such as a fountain, gazebo or monument. The designs for these Plazas reflected the contemporary civic squares in the eastern United States.^{2.17}

2.11 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District," 8.

2.12 Chris Wilson, "Town of Taos," in *The Plazas of New Mexico* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 2014,) 286.

2.13 F.R. Bob Romero, *History of Taos* (Taos, NM, 2015), 96.

2.14 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District," 9.

2.15 Wilson, "Center Place, Plaza, Square," 36.

2.16 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District," 2.

2.17 Wilson, "Center Place, Plaza, Square," 37.



Figure 2-6. Old Guadalupe church, west of Taos Plaza, prior to 1911. (Town of Taos)



Figure 2-7. Artist Herb Dutton painting outside Taos, c. 1915. (Palace of the Governors Archive LS.0966)



Figure 2-8. Dancers at the Fiestas de Taos, 1940. (Town of Taos)

In 1898 the Spanish-American War precipitated violence again in Taos, where local Hispanics threatened to chase Anglos from the United States out of town. The local sheriff was accidentally killed in the fray.^{2.18} That same year, Earnest Blumenschein and Bert Phillips started the Taos Art Colony when they were traveling through and brought a broken wheel to Taos to be repaired. They stayed for several months, with Phillips deciding to make Taos his permanent home. This began the transformation of Taos into an artistic mecca.

In the early 1900s, an influx of other artists came to Taos, attracted by the light and scenery. They influenced the architecture of the town, by introducing a rambling, asymmetrical and picturesque style. At the same time, the Bungalow Style on the West Coast combined with the new Spanish-Pueblo Revival style began to create a new style of residential architecture within Taos.^{2.19}

In 1915 the Taos Society of Artists was formed. It included painters Joseph Henry Sharp, E. I. Couse, Bert G. Phillips, Ernest L. Blumenschein, Herbert Dunton, Walter Ufer, E. Martin Hennings, Victor Higgins, and others. Due to the Society's nation-wide touring exhibitions, Taos became recognized as an art destination.

As the number of artists increased, the economic base of Taos shifted from an agrarian economy to one of tourism and recreation.^{2.20} With the influx of new visitors came a need for hotels and restaurants. This started to change the architecture of the business district again.^{2.21}

In the 1920s and 1930s a series of fires destroyed many of the original buildings that surrounded the Plaza.^{2.22} The fires led to a major remodel with new buildings built in the popular Spanish-Pueblo Revival style. This style imitates the appearance of traditional Pueblo adobe with stepped massing, flat roofs and projecting wood vigas and carved corbels.

To attract more shoppers downtown, the Fiestas de Taos were conceived by Plaza merchants in the 1930s.^{2.23} In Taos and other towns in New Mexico in the 1930s, community celebrations became about the reenactment of romantic history, rather than based on a community's patron saint, and were held to attract more tourists.

2.18 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District," 9.

2.19 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District," 3.

2.20 Romero, *History of Taos*, 137.

2.21 Henry Architects, Archinia, and Hands Engineering Inc., "Historic Taos County Courthouse Condition Assessment and Preservation Plan," (New Mexico Historic Preservation Division, 2013), 6.

2.22 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District," 2.

2.23 Henry Architects, Archinia, and Hands Engineering Inc., "Historic Taos County Courthouse," 7.

The buildings surrounding the Plaza had taken on their current appearance by 1940, and the majority of these buildings remain. The opening of Taos Ski Valley in 1956 extended the tourist season. A wave of hippie communes were established in New Mexico in the 1960s, which reinforced Taos's image as an idyllic destination. In the 1960s, the main highway and other roads in the study area were paved. The old church in Guadalupe Plaza burned down in 1961 and was rebuilt to the north.^{2.24} In 1968 the County Courthouse moved to a new location south of town, signaling the beginning of the end of everyday public use of the Plaza, which became more and more dominated by tourist-oriented businesses.

The Taos Plaza was extensively modified in the 1970s. The design reflected modernist sensibilities popular at the time. However, the asymmetrical arrangement and organization of the Plaza into small spaces did not reflect Taos' character. The design added stucco walls, steps and paving, which created smaller spaces, distinct from the original large open space that existed for years. Since the 1970s, features have been added to the Plaza including a kiosk, lighting, and benches. New construction in the historic district continued to mimic the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style, but incorporated modern construction techniques of concrete block and stucco. The new construction lacks the thoughtful architectural details of earlier buildings.

Since the 1970s, the population demographic of Taos has shifted. Many Hispanics have left in search of work and more Anglo Americans have migrated into the area establishing second homes.^{2.25} Along with this demographic shift, usage of the Plaza and surrounding downtown has changed into nearly exclusively a tourist zone, where locals venture only for special events.^{2.26}



Figure 2-9. Taos Valley
c.1915-1920. (George L.
Beam, Denver Public Library)

2.24 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District," 10.

2.25 Wilson, "Town of Taos," 288.

2.26 Sylvia Rodriguez, "What Tunnels under Taos Plaza?" in *The Plazas of New Mexico* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 2014), 84.

Chronology

The following narrative, photographs and drawings describe how the landscape of the study area has changed over time. It is broken into periods of landscape development that describe the physical evolution of Taos Plaza. Introductory paragraphs provide an overview of how the cultural landscape appeared during that period of development.

Pre-Puebloan And Puebloan Period (Pre 1540)

Taos was settled by Native Americans in the early 1100s, who built pit-house shelters for their seasonal hunting and gathering trips to the area. The first Pueblos settled in the area in approximately 1320, and Taos Pueblo, as it exists today, was established in the 1400s. Taos Pueblo was a regional trade center and community civic functions occurred in the main Plaza of the Pueblo until the Hispanic community of Don Fernando de Taos was established in 1796.^{2.27}

C. 1000 By ca. A.D. 1000 the Taos region was characterized by small sedentary communities represented by dispersed pit house clusters consisting of one to four structures. Small circular kivas and storage structures above ground appear in the area by about A.D. 1150.^{2.28}

1200 to 1250 Around A.D. 1200 the first ‘unit pueblos’ appear. These were settlements formed by a limited number of masonry room placed end-to-end to form a linear block or L-shaped arrangement. These first pueblo structures had a maximum of 18 single-story rooms formed in ‘U’-shaped room blocks surrounding courtyards with or without small kivas (subterranean structures). By A.D. 1250 nearly all communities within in the region had aggregated into two major settlements Pot Creek and Picuris.^{2.29}

1350 By the mid-fourteenth century, Picuris Pueblo was abandoned in favor of the two remaining major settlements in the area – Pot Creek and Taos pueblos. Both northern Tiwa towns were essentially isolated centers with little daily interaction with neighboring communities. Taos Pueblo was built as multi-storied adobe structures, representing one of the largest pueblos in the Rio Grande Valley. These early agricultural communities of the Taos Valley had a diet based largely on corn, beans, and squash, as well as small game.^{2.30}

2.27 Patricia L. Crown, Jane D. Orcutt, and Timothy A. Kohler “Pueblo Cultures in Transition: The Northern Rio Grande” in *The Prehistoric Pueblo World A.D. 1150-1350*, edited by Michael A. Adler (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2008), 188-204.

2.28 Romero, *History of Taos*, 21.

2.29 Crown et al. “Pueblo Cultures in Transition: The Northern Rio Grande”, 191.

2.30 Crown et al. “Pueblo Cultures in Transition: The Northern Rio Grande”, 191.

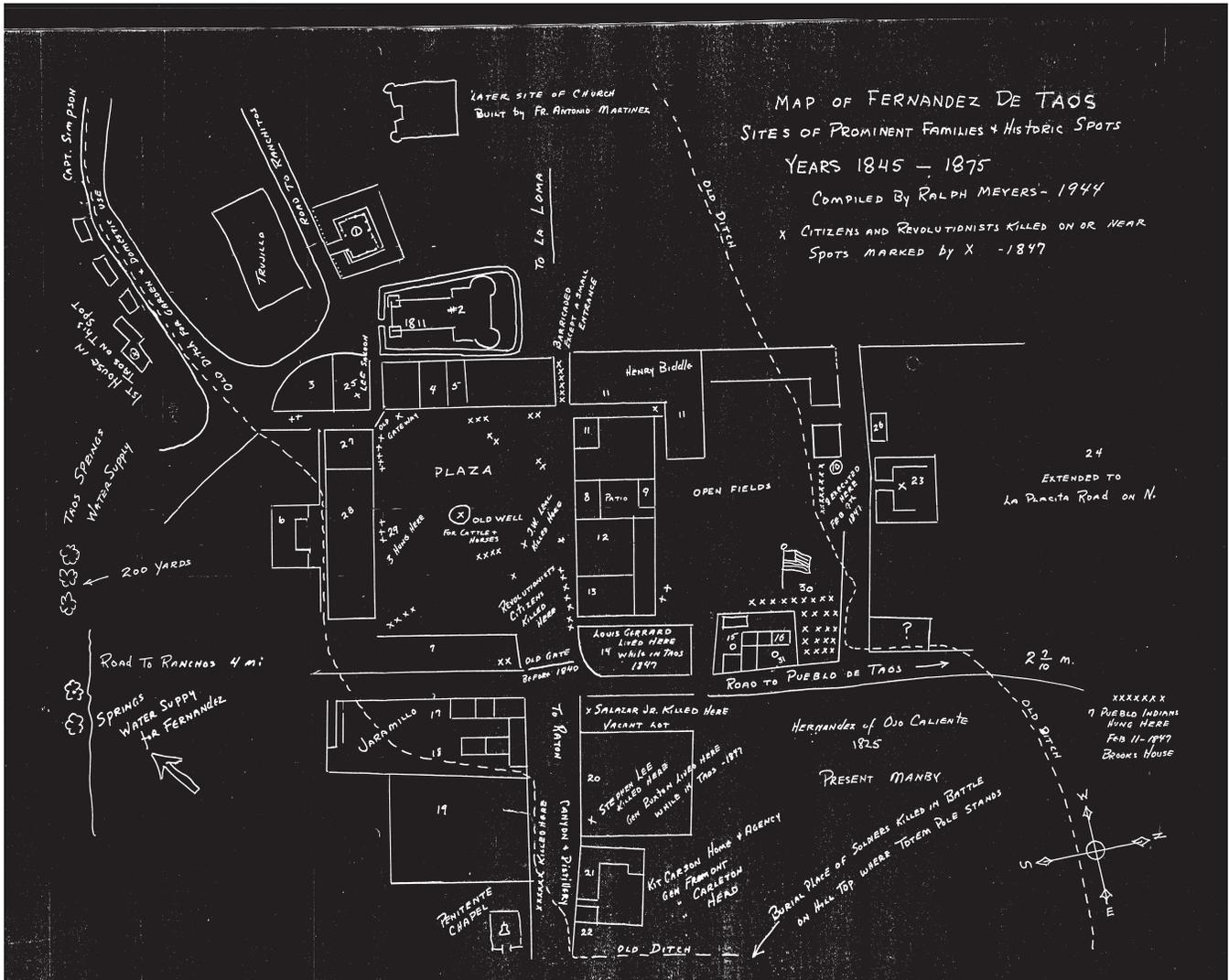


Figure 2-10. Fernandez de Taos, Years 1845-75. (Town of Taos)

Early Spanish Colonial Period (1540 To 1795)

The first Spanish explorers arrived in the Taos Valley in the mid-sixteenth century as part of a larger campaign of exploration and reconnaissance undertaken by elements of the Spanish-led expedition of Francisco Vázquez de Coronado. From their base camp at the Ancestral Zuni Pueblo of Hawikku, small groups of local native guides, Mexican auxiliaries, and Spaniards explored areas throughout Arizona and New Mexico. Traveling widely from the Hopi Mesas and Grand Canyon in the west and north, to Piro settlements and Pecos Pueblo in the south and east, these groups spent several months gathering details about Native settlements, local landscapes, and resources across the northern Pueblo world.^{2.31}

1540 Advance reconnaissance forces of the Vázquez de Coronado expedition arrived in the Taos area in the summer of 1540. In command was Captain Hernando de Alvarado, one of Vázquez de Coronado's trusted commanders, and the first Spaniard to visit Taos Pueblo.^{2.32}

1598 The colonizing expedition led by Juan de Oñate y Salazar departed frontier Spanish towns in Chihuahua in 1598 to establish permanent settlements in New Mexico for the Spanish Crown. By July, Oñate y Salazar, along with other Spaniards and natives under his command, reached Taos Pueblo.^{2.33}

1615 to 1620 Although an early Franciscan mission was established at Taos Pueblo by Fray Francisco de Zamora in 1598, the first Spanish settlers did not arrive in the Taos valley for nearly two decades. By 1620, the first Catholic church, San Geronimo de Taos, had been constructed at Taos Pueblo.^{2.34}

1680 The Pueblo Revolt in 1680 was the culmination of a complex set of tensions between Native Pueblo communities and Spaniards over a period of decades – pressures exacerbated considerably by one of the most severe droughts in the last millennium.^{2.35} Following a series of successful attacks on major and minor Spanish occupations in the Santa Fe area, Spanish settlers and many of their Native allies were forced to retreat to El Paso, Texas.^{2.36}

2.31 Richard Flint, *No Settlement, No Conquest: A History of the Coronado Entrada* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008).

2.32 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 7.

2.33 Romero, *History of Taos*, 22.

2.34 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 7.

2.35 Carla R. Van West, "The Role of Climate in Early Spanish-Native American Interactions in the US Southwest" in *Native and Spanish New Worlds: Sixteenth Century Entradas in the American Southwest and Southeast*, ed. Clay Mathers, Jeffrey M. Mitchem and Charles M. Haecker (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013).

2.36 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 7.

1692 Spaniards and their allies returned to New Mexico in 1692 and began a series of ferocious military campaigns led by Diego de Vargas. These were designed to reoccupy territories lost in the First Pueblo Revolt. Vargas made several return trips in 1694 and 1696 to ensure the allegiance of Taos Pueblo.^{2.37}

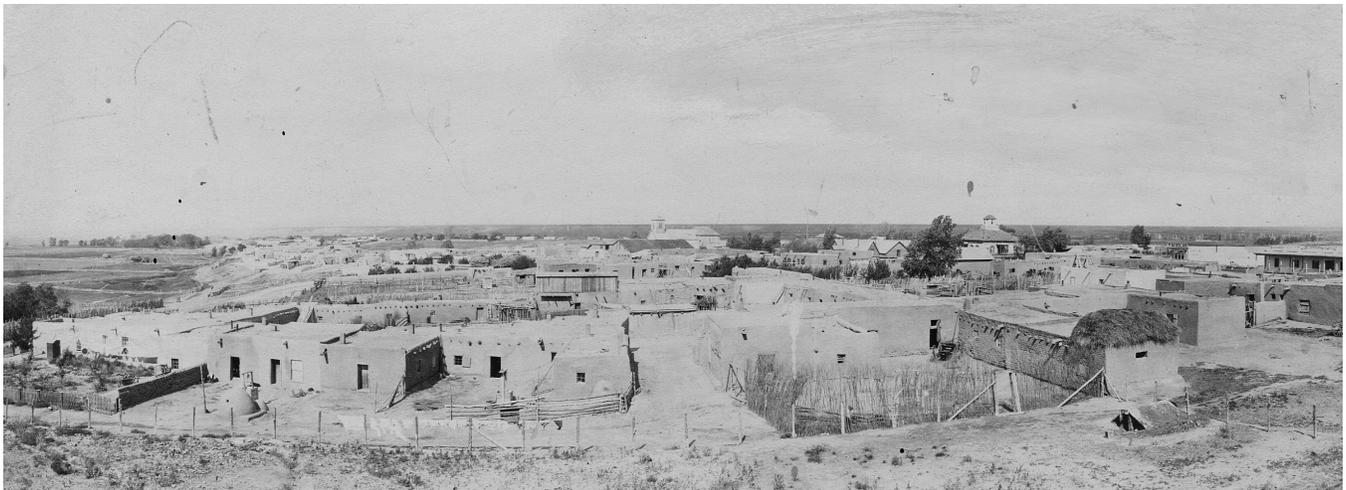
Early 1700 Land grants were transferred from pre-Revolt residents of the Taos Valley to new settlers. The Spanish settlers that arrived in the eighteenth century oversaw the establishment of a self-sufficient, agrarian society based upon the development of the acequias, haciendas and ranchitos that were occupied and worked by large extended families.^{2.38}

Establishment Of Don Fernando De Taos (1796 To 1849)

The Don Fernando de Taos Grant was established in 1796. Town of Taos was built around the central Plaza. The early Taos Plaza was a rectangular shaped residential block, similar to a very large hacienda. The Plaza had a protected gated entrance so it could be closed off to attack from cattle or horse rustlers, or an American Indian attack. This traditional Spanish vernacular Plaza was fortified with thick buttressed walls. Buildings were linear one story structures with portales, small mica windows, heavy wooden doors, small communicating doors between residences, flat roofs,

Figure 2-11. Early photograph of Taos looking east, c. 1900. The Guadalupe Church, center background, is the tallest building, the Plaza is the treed space in front, below. (Town of Taos)

Figure 2-12. Taos in 1908, right. (Sanborn Fire Insurance Map)



2.37 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 7.
2.38 Romero, *History of Taos*, 37.

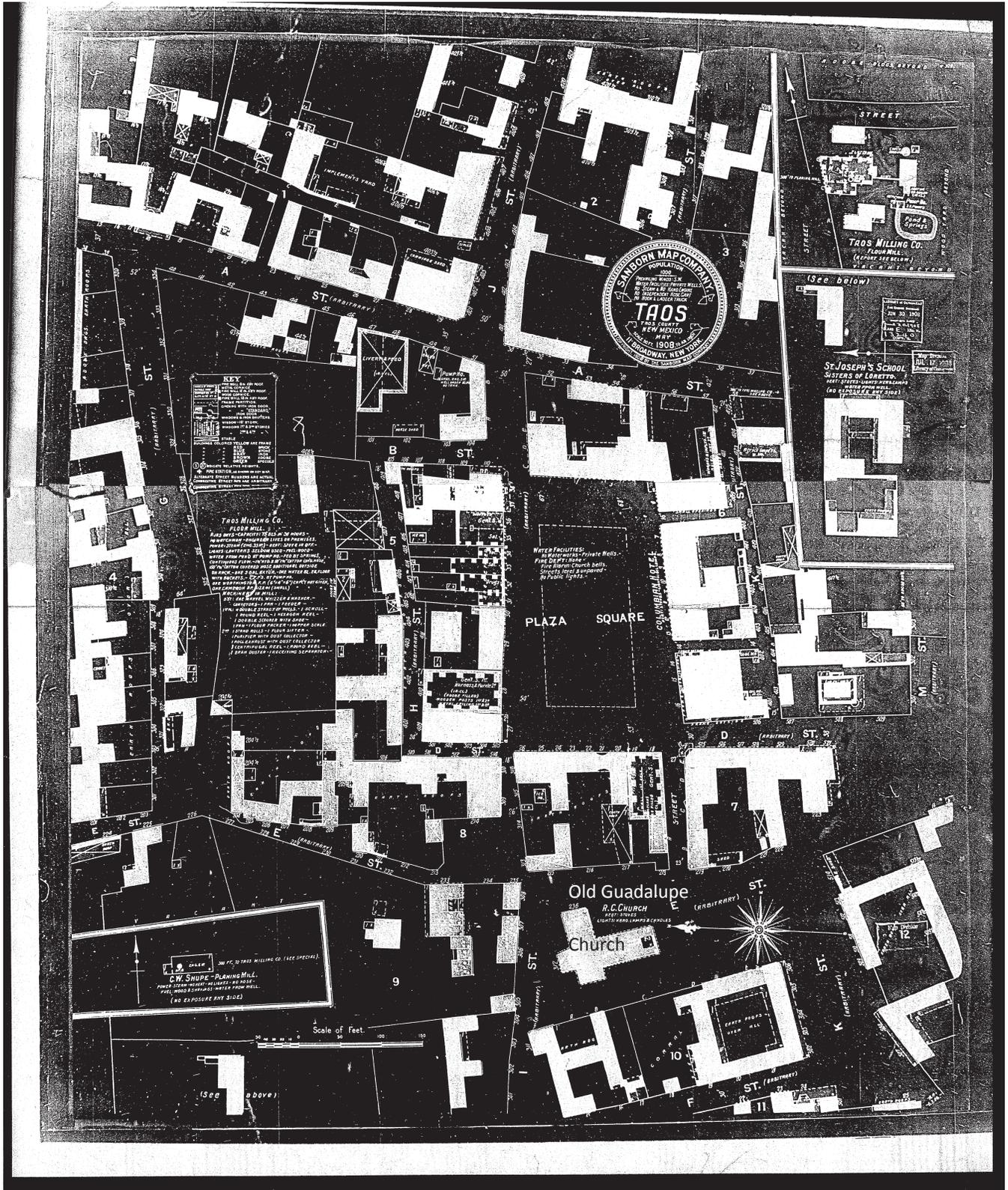




Figure 2-13. Taos Plaza pre - 1880. The first County Courthouse with gable roof is on the right. (Palace of the Governors Photo Archives)



Figure 2-14. Taos Plaza c. 1915. by George L. Bean. (Palace of the Governors Photo Archives)

and parapets to provide shielding for armed guards who patrolled the rooftops. All windows faced the Plaza's interior. No windows or openings occurred at the rear of buildings, offering an impenetrable edge. Access to the Plaza was probably guarded by towers and heavy gates.^{2.39} Early settlers built an acequia that fed the Plaza from a board flume from Kit Carson Park.^{2.40} As the threat of raids decreased, the original linear structures were extended into more irregular shaped buildings, particularly on the north and south sides of the Plaza.^{2.41} The Plaza retained its original rectangular shape of the open grass/dirt Plaza framed by perimeter dirt roads.

c. 1796 to 1800 The town of Don Fernando de Taos was established during this time. The town was originally built as a fortified Plaza to protect Spanish settlers from continued raids by American Indians.^{2.42}

Early 1800s The danger of American Indian raids lessened in the early nineteenth century, and the town began to expand beyond the original boundary of the Plaza.^{2.43} The Plaza and surrounding buildings remained, but streets and narrow lanes were added connecting the low adobe houses. The adobe buildings were built around small courtyards called placitas.

1801 Our Lady of Guadalupe Church was established north of the Plaza.^{2.44}

1820 One of the first observers from the U.S. noted that the town was "a collection of mud houses built around a miserable square or Plaza."^{2.45}

1821 Declaration of the Mexican Republic.

1824 The first wagon train from the east brought new building materials and styles to the architecture of Taos.^{2.46} The new building materials of milled lumber and glass for windows were mixed with traditional adobe construction.^{2.47}

1825 Kit Carson Home was built east of the Plaza on Kit Carson Road. It is still standing.

2.39 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 8.

2.40 Henry Architects, Archinia, and Hands Engineering Inc. "Historic Taos County Courthouse," 4.

2.41 Henry Architects, Archinia, and Hands Engineering Inc. "Historic Taos County Courthouse," 5.

2.42 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 2.

2.43 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 2.

2.44 Romero, *History of Taos*, 83.

2.45 Blanche C. Grant, *When Old Trails Were New: The Story of Taos* (Chicago: The Rio Grande Press, 1963), 42.

2.46 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 2.

2.47 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 2.

c. 1830 to 1844 The first Taos courthouse was built facing the Plaza.^{2.48}

1837 Taos was declared an official port of entry and remained an important trade center on the Santa Fe Trail.^{2.49} The increase in trade brought new goods and people which influenced the architecture of Taos. Glass, milled lumber, brick, and corrugated iron were integrated with the already present hybrid style of Spanish and Pueblo architecture.

Jose Gonzales, a Pueblo Indian from Taos, led the Revolt of 1837 against the current governor, Albino Perez, over taxes and corruption. Perez was executed, and Gonzales appointed governor. However, the former governor Manuel Armijo rallied troops and marched from Albuquerque and captured the rebels, executing Jose Gonzales.^{2.50}

1843 Kit Carson arrived in Taos. He was a scout, trader, and Indian agent.

1846 Outbreak of the Mexican-American War. General Kearney marched into Santa Fe, declaring New Mexico for the United States, and appointed Charles Bent as the Territory's first governor.

After New Mexico became part of the United States, the Spanish and Mexican land patents were typically transferred to the original recipients, however due to the communal nature of many of these grants, land grant speculators from the U.S. used devious tactics to acquire land grant lands within Taos during the transition period.^{2.51}

1847 Governor Bent was assassinated at his home in Taos by local residents who were Mexican nationalists. Colonel Sterling Price, stationed in Santa Fe, headed north and surrounded the revolutionists in the San Geronimo de Taos church and leveled it. The survivors were hung north of the Plaza.^{2.52}

Territorial Period (1850 To 1928)

By 1850 more and more U.S. citizens and Europeans were arriving in Taos. They brought new ideas about architectural styles, and influenced the architecture of Taos. New construction materials were combined with traditional materials and meshed with the Greek Revival style, then popular in the east, to form the Territorial Style. By the 1860s, the earthen walls of Plaza buildings were whitewashed.^{2.53}

In the 1880s a vast majority of the adobe buildings around the Plaza were demolished or covered with clapboard and board and batten siding typical of other towns in the American West. The Plaza was surrounded

2.48 Henry Architects, Archinia, and Hands Engineering Inc. "Historic Taos County Courthouse," 5-6.

2.49 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 2.

2.50 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 8.

2.51 Romero, *History of Taos*, 86.

2.52 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 9.

2.53 Henry Architects, Archinia, and Hands Engineering Inc. "Historic Taos County Courthouse," 5.

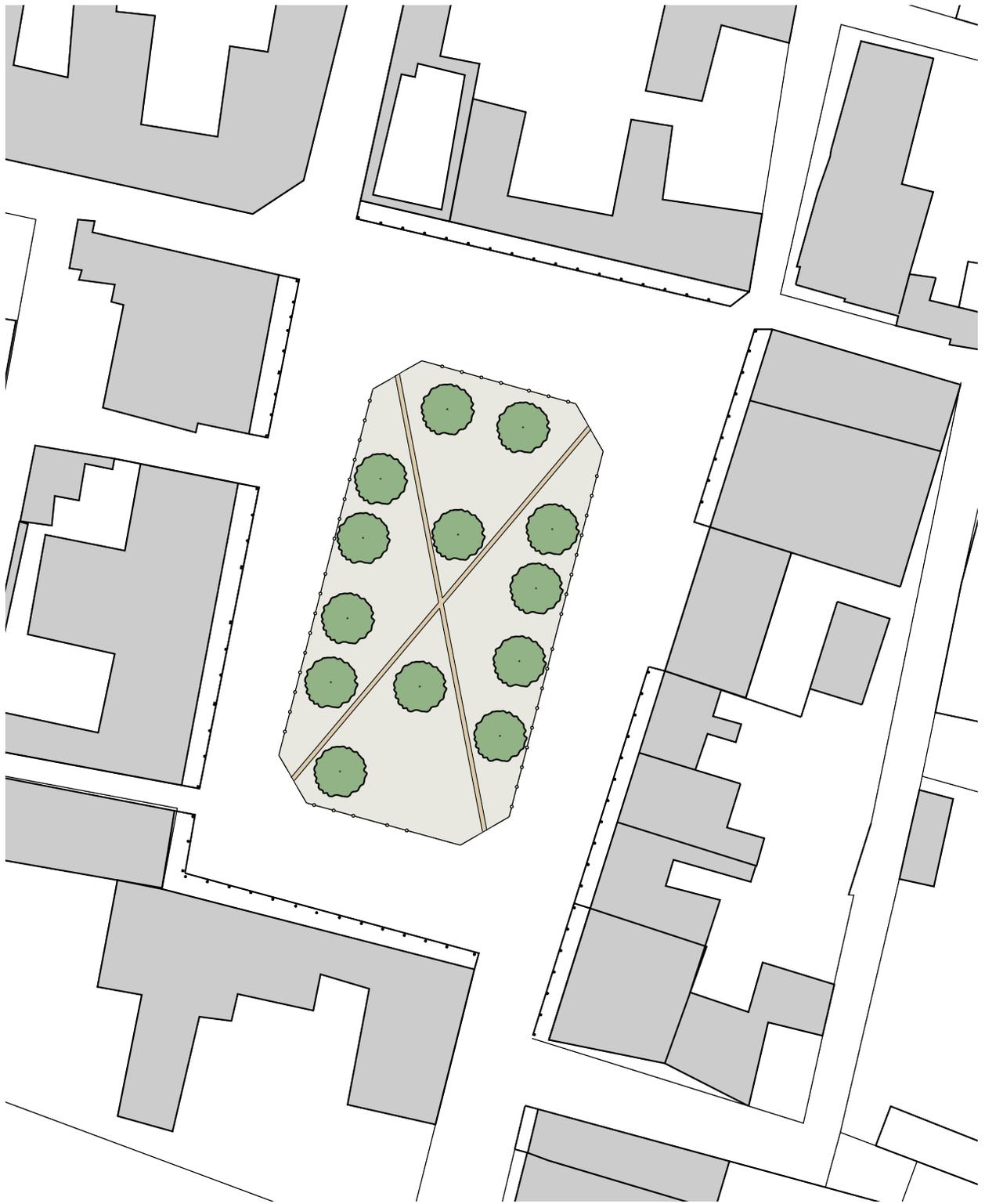


Figure 2-15. Plan of the Plaza c. 1880, based on historic photographs. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)



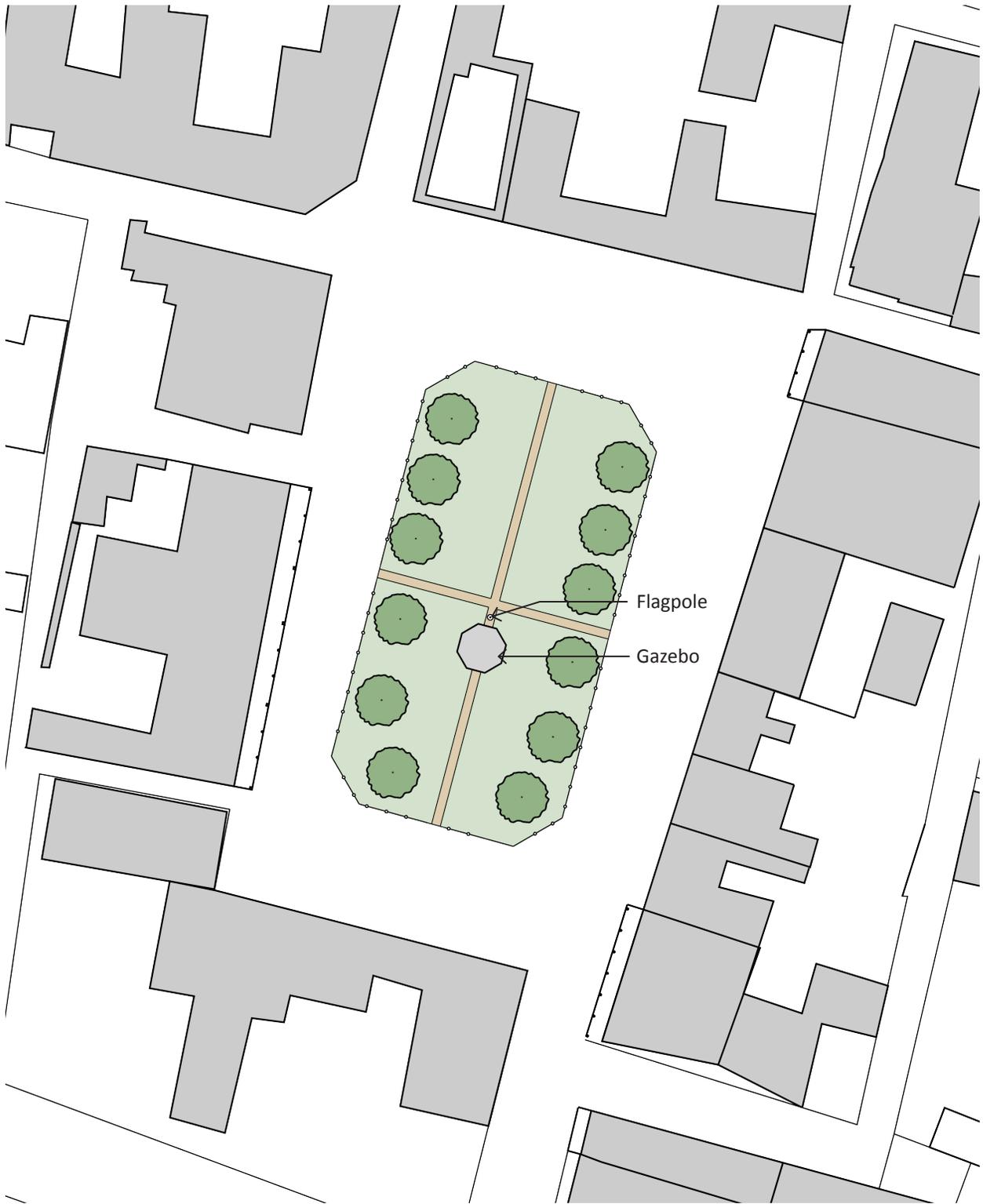


Figure 2-16. Plan of the Plaza c. 1908, based on Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, historic photographs.
(Mundus Bishop, 2015)



by buildings with wooden storefronts, large storefront windows, pitched roofs, wood trim, and retractable awnings. Historic photographs of Taos in this period are unrecognizable to contemporary Taosños, because of the abundant signage and the wooden boardwalks surrounding the Plaza. The original rectangular shape of the open grassy Plaza framed by perimeter dirt roads remained, although the outside perimeter of the Plaza was expanded to accommodate growth.^{2.54}

1850 New Mexico was established as a U.S. Territory.

1853 A U.S. visitor to the Plaza noted that the courthouse was “a low, rude building and less comfortable than the cow stables in some of the states.”^{2.55}

1861 At the outbreak of the American Civil War, Kit Carson, Ceran St. Vrain and others nailed the United States flag to the pole in the Plaza and stood guard over it to prevent Confederate sympathizers from taking it down.^{2.56}

1866 to 1867 Discovery of gold at Red River brought newcomers and prosperity to Taos.^{2.57}

1879 The first railroad arrived in New Mexico in 1879. Due to the mountainous location and modest economy the railroad never reached Taos.

1880 The second Taos County Courthouse was built on the north side of the Plaza.^{2.58} Designed in the Territorial style, the courthouse was built of adobe with a flat roof. There was no portal over the central doorway which was flanked by three windows on either side. The courthouse had taller proportions than the surrounding buildings.

1887 The portales on the Plaza buildings were torn down in 1887.^{2.59}

1890 The Columbian Hotel was built on the south side of the Plaza in 1890.

1897 A picket fence enclosing the Plaza was built in 1897.^{2.60} The Plaza was covered with tall grasses and dirt paths radiating out from the center. A few shade trees were planted.

2.54 Henry Architects, Archinia, and Hands Engineering Inc. “Historic Taos County Courthouse,” 5-6.

2.55 Grant, *When Old Trails Were New*, 145.

2.56 NRHP, “Taos Downtown Historic District”, 9.

2.57 NRHP, “Taos Downtown Historic District”, 9.

2.58 Henry Architects, Archinia, and Hands Engineering Inc. “Historic Taos County Courthouse,” 6.

2.59 NRHP, “Taos Downtown Historic District”, 9.

2.60 NRHP, “Taos Downtown Historic District”, 9.

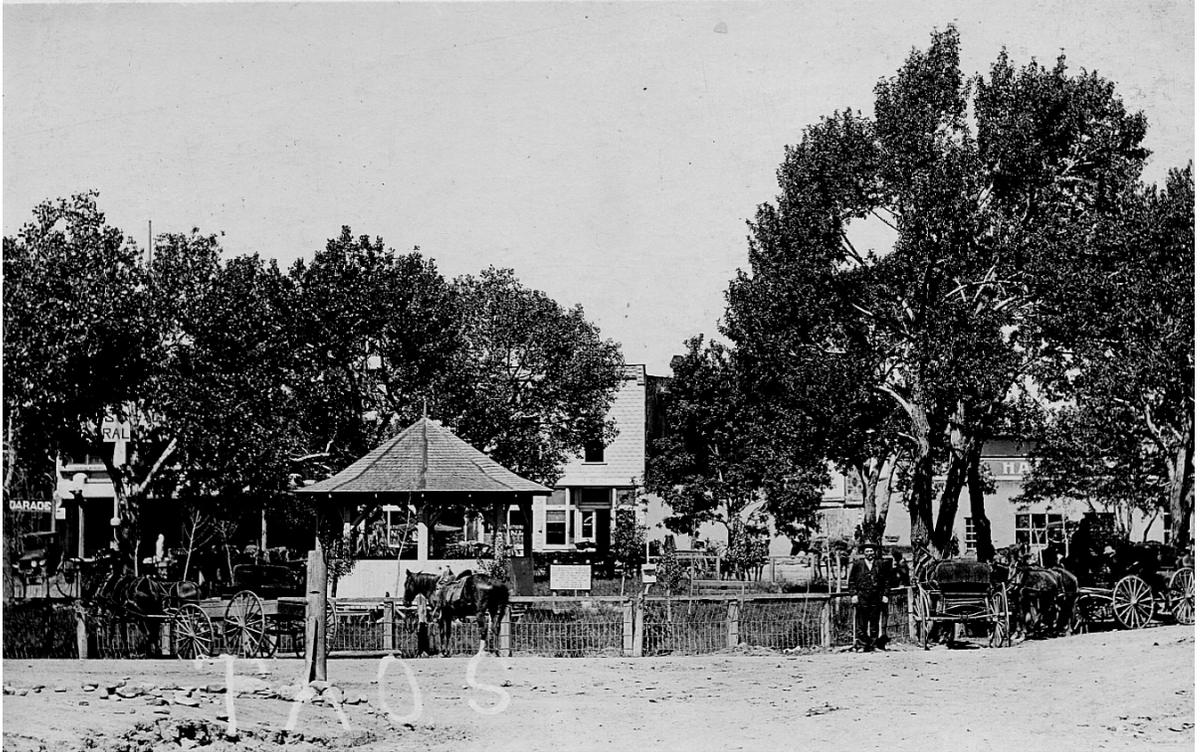


Figure 2-17. Taos Plaza with wooden gazebo, c. 1915. (Town of Taos)



Figure 2-18. Taos Plaza, c. 1907. (Town of Taos)



Figure 2-19. Taos, 1928, based on Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from 1928 (Denver Public Library)



Figure 2-20. An alley in Taos and adjacent Mission Revival architecture, c.1920. (Town of Taos)



Figure 2-21. Taos Plaza designed in the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style, view looking west, c. 1937. (Town of Taos)

1898 The Spanish-American War precipitated violence at Taos, where local Hispanics threatened to chase Anglos from the United States out of town. The local sheriff was accidentally killed in the fray.^{2.61}

In 1898, Earnest Blumenschein and Bert Phillips started the Taos Art Colony. They were traveling through and had brought a broken wheel to Taos Plaza to be repaired. They stayed for several months and Phillips decided to make Taos is permanent home, setting off Taos as an artistic mecca.

Early 1900s In the early 1900s, an influx of other artists came to Taos, attracted by the light and scenery. The artists influenced the architecture of the town, by introducing a rambling, asymmetrical and picturesque style. At the same time, the Bungalow Style on the west coast combined with the new Spanish-Pueblo Revival style to create a new style of residential architecture.^{2.62} The economic base of the town shifted from an agrarian economy to one of tourism and recreation.^{2.63}

“With the influx of new visitors came a need for hotels and restaurants, which started to change the architecture of the business district again. By 1900, there were more businesses than residences around Taos Plaza.”^{2.64}

1908 A wooden octagonal gazebo was built in the Plaza. The Plaza interior was planted with grass.^{2.65} The 1908 Sanborn map indicates that the Plaza’s streets were level and unpaved. Several buildings were adobe with earth roofs, there was no public water source, only private wells and no public lighting.^{2.66}

1911 The original church situated on Guadalupe Plaza (just west of the Plaza) was razed. A new church was built in the same location.^{2.67}

1912 The buildings on the east side of the Plaza burned down.^{2.68}

1915 By 1915, the picket fence enclosing the Plaza had been replaced with a post and wire mesh fence with a top rail. The shade trees (possibly cottonwood trees) had matured.

In 1915, the Taos Society of Artists was formed. Due to the Society’s nation-wide touring exhibitions, Taos became recognized as an art destination.

2.61 NRHP, “Taos Downtown Historic District”, 9.

2.62 NRHP, “Taos Downtown Historic District”, 3.

2.63 Romero, *History of Taos*, 137.

2.64 Henry Architects, Archinia, and Hands Engineering Inc. “Historic Taos County Courthouse,” 6.

2.65 Henry Architects, Archinia, and Hands Engineering Inc. “Historic Taos County Courthouse,” 3.

2.66 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1908.

2.67 NRHP, “Taos Downtown Historic District”, 9.

2.68 NRHP, “Taos Downtown Historic District”, 9.



Figure 2-22. The Plaza and Don Fernando Hotel in background, c. 1927. (H.S. Poley, Denver Public Library P-256)

1918 The McCarthy House, at the east side of the Plaza, burned. This area was never rebuilt as a solid block and is today the McCarthy Plaza.

1920s and 1930s A series of fires destroyed many of the original buildings that surrounded Taos Plaza.^{2.69} A section of the outer wall remains at the northwest edge of the Plaza.

1927 The Don Fernando Hotel was established on the southwest corner of the Plaza.^{2.70} The hotel became an architectural showpiece and symbolized the touristic romanticism of Taos. It would burn a few years later.

1928 The Columbian Hotel on the south of the Plaza burned down.^{2.71} It was later replaced by the Hotel la Fonda.

Spanish-Pueblo Revival (1929 To 1949)

A series of fires destroyed many of the buildings around the Plaza in the 1920s and 1930s. New buildings were designed and built in the popular Spanish-Pueblo Revival style. Second story additions were built on the remaining one story structures. The buildings were built with clerestories for improved interior lighting.^{2.72} Viga portales with carved corbels were added along the north, west, and south sides of the Plaza. New buildings were covered with brown stucco.^{2.73} The characteristic boardwalks of in 1847 were removed and replaced with concrete sidewalks.^{2.74}

After the fires, the Plaza was extensively remodeled. It followed the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style, and included a gazebo, perimeter wall, and an interior of lawn and flowers.

1929 The street around the Plaza was widened for automobile traffic, and the wire fence replaced by a stone wall.^{2.75} The Plaza's interior became a grass lawn. The acequia on the Plaza was replaced with barrels that were filled from a well in the center of the Plaza.^{2.76}

1931 A fire destroyed buildings on the west side of the Plaza.^{2.77}

1932 A fire burned the north side of the Plaza, including the courthouse, which was destroyed.^{2.78}

2.69 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 2.

2.70 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 9.

2.71 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 9.

2.72 Henry Architects, Archinia, and Hands Engineering Inc. "Historic Taos County Courthouse," 7.

2.73 Rodriguez. "What Tunnels under Taos Plaza?", 82.

2.74 Henry Architects, Archinia and Hands Engineering Inc. "Historic Taos County Courthouse," 7.

2.75 Rodriguez. "What Tunnels under Taos Plaza?", 81.

2.76 Henry Architects, Archinia and Hands Engineering Inc. "Historic Taos County Courthouse," 7.

2.77 Rodriguez. "What Tunnels under Taos Plaza?", 82.

2.78 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 9



Figure 2-23. Plan of the Plaza c. 1930s, based on Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, historic photographs, Taos Plat maps from 1932. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)





Figure 2-24. Taos Plaza and street, 1946.
(NM Archives #002755)

1933 A fire burned down the Don Fernando Hotel on the southwest corner of the Plaza in 1933.^{2.79}

The Taos County Courthouse was built in 1933 on the north side of the Plaza, designed by Louis Hesselden in the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style.^{2.80} It was built with partial funding from the Public Works Administration combined with a loan from a local bank.^{2.81}

The Plaza was modified in 1933. The 1908 wooden octagonal gazebo was replaced with a Spanish-Pueblo Revival style gazebo. It included a stucco parapet and wood vigas, lintels, posts and corbels, and matched the surrounding Spanish-Pueblo Revival buildings. A modern flagpole was added adjacent the gazebo. Evergreen trees were planted near the existing cottonwood trees in an informal pattern. Wooden sidewalks were replaced by concrete paving, and a low stucco wall was built surrounded the edge of the Plaza.

1934 The Town of Taos was incorporated in 1934.

The Taos Inn was built from four existing structures, facing Paseo del Pueblo Norte.^{2.82}

1937 The two-story La Fonda Hotel replaced the old Columbian Hotel on the south side of the Plaza.

Late Twentieth Century To Present (1950 To Present)

By the end of the 1940s the buildings surrounding Taos Plaza had taken on their present-day appearance. Minor changes occurred in the 1950s and 1960s, but the Plaza was greatly modified in the 1970s. The design incorporated stucco walls, steps and paving to create smaller spaces rather than the large open space that existed historically. Since that time, several features have been added to the Plaza, including monuments, statues, a kiosk, lighting, and signs. New construction in the historic district was built in the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style, but incorporated modern construction techniques of concrete block and stucco.

1950s Flagstone paving was added to the walks in the Plaza.^{2.83}

1957 Asphalt pavement, a new drainage system, and parking meters were installed in the streets surrounding the Plaza.^{2.84}

2.79 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 9

2.80 Henry Architects, Archinia, and Hands Engineering Inc. "Historic Taos County Courthouse," 6.

2.81 Henry Architects, Archinia, and Hands Engineering Inc. "Historic Taos County Courthouse," 9.

2.82 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 5.

2.83 Rodriguez. "What Tunnels under Taos Plaza?", 82.

2.84 Rodriguez. "What Tunnels under Taos Plaza?", 82.

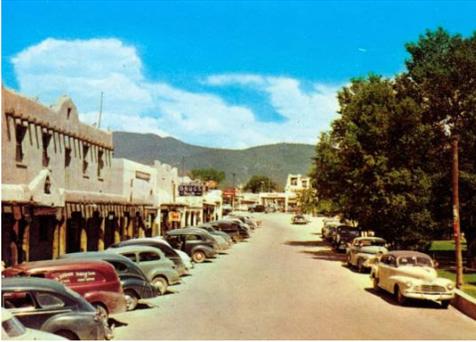


Figure 2-25. Taos Plaza and street, 1950s.

1960s The stucco gazebo built in 1933 was demolished. An open gazebo was built in the northwest quadrant. A large cross commemorating Taos's World War II Bataan soldiers was erected in the Plaza. The main highway and other roads in the study area were paved.

1961 The second church in Guadalupe Plaza burned down and was rebuilt in a different location, further to the north.^{2.85}

1968 The County of Taos relocated their offices from the Courthouse to a new location south of town.

1970s The Taos Plaza was extensively modified in the 1970s. The design reflected modernist sensibilities popular at the time. However, the asymmetrical arrangement and organization of the Plaza into small spaces did not reflect the historic character of the Plaza. The design added stucco walls, steps and paving creating smaller spaces rather than the original large open space that existed for years. Since the 1970s work features have been added to the Plaza. New construction in the historic district continued to mimic the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style, but incorporated modern construction techniques of concrete block and stucco. These lack the thoughtful architectural details of earlier buildings.

1990s In the 1990s, a series of Spanish-Pueblo Revival-influenced buildings were built on the eastern edge of the Plaza.^{2.86}

1995 An information booth/kiosk was added to the east side of the Plaza, replacing an information booth formerly placed there by the chamber of commerce. Flagpoles were relocated adjacent the World War II memorial cross. Portions of the low stucco wall from the 1930s were replaced by a ramped sidewalk. A new perimeter sidewalk of six feet wide was added. An evergreen tree was planted as a 'permanent Christmas tree' and was surrounded by a small grassed area. (Refer to Figure 2-24 and Existing conditions Plan)

2003 Sculpted stucco benches, low walls, and cobblestone paving were built along the alleys north of the Plaza.

2006 Padre Antonio Jose Martinez statue was added to the Plaza.

2.85 NRHP, "Taos Downtown Historic District", 10.

2.86 Henry Architects, Archinia, and Hands Engineering Inc. "Historic Taos County Courthouse," 12.

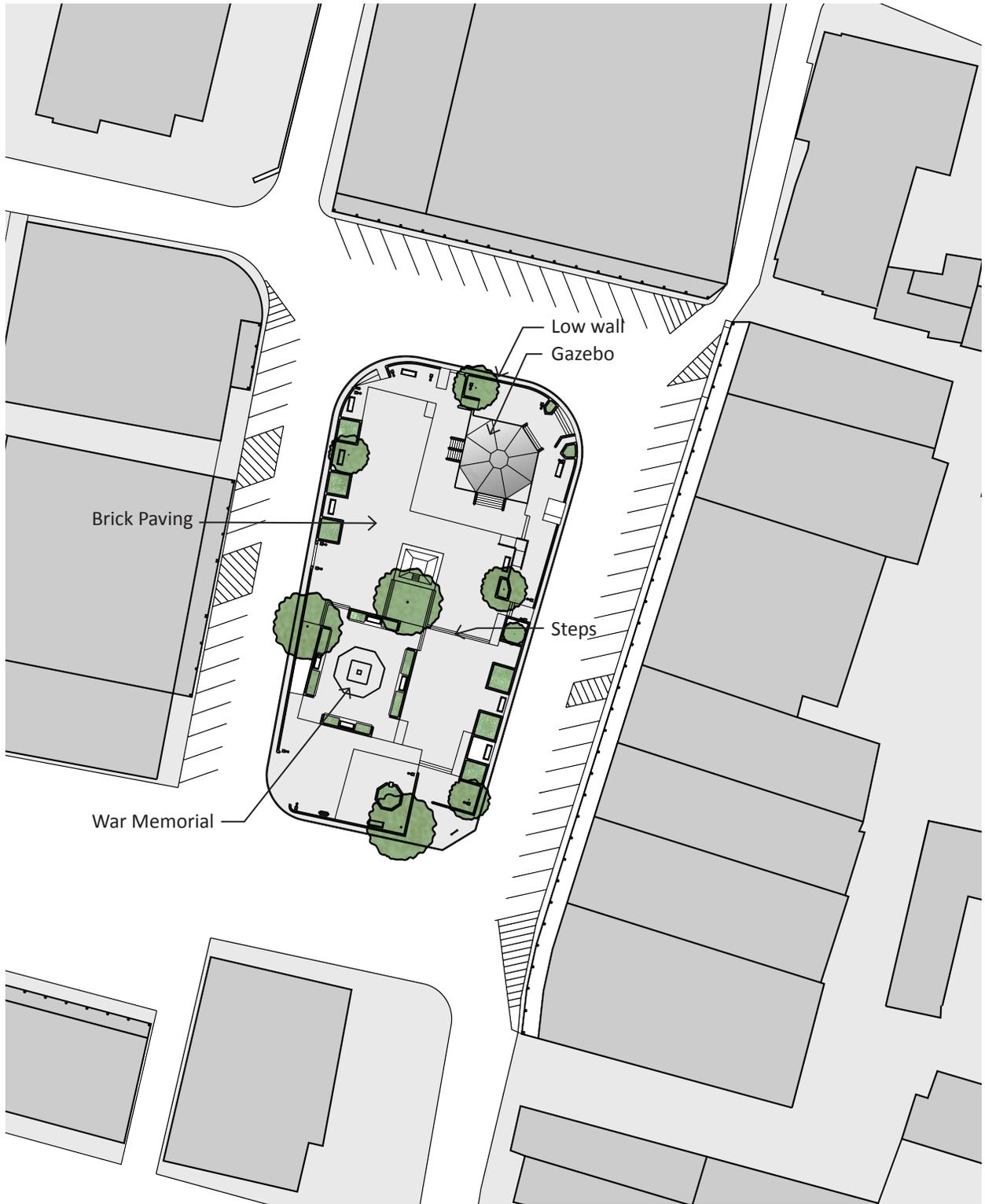


Figure 2-26. Plan of the Plaza c. 1970s, based on drawings, historic photographs.
(Mundus Bishop, 2015)



Chapter 3. Existing Conditions and Analysis

Introduction

This chapter presents the existing condition and analysis of integrity for the cultural landscape of the study area and the Taos Plaza. This assessment is undertaken to understand the cultural landscape as a whole, and to identify those qualities that contribute to its historic character and significance as a cultural landscape. **Contributing, non-contributing, and compatible features for the study area, and for the Plaza and its immediate surroundings is included in this chapter.** This is followed by a narrative summary describing the condition of features and an analysis comparing the current condition with the historic. The existing condition documentation and analysis is undertaken in order to determine if the characteristics and features that defined the landscape during the period of significance are present. The narrative is accompanied by photographs of contributing features. Graphic plans illustrate the existing condition and analysis.

The assessment is accomplished by analyzing landscape characteristics associated with the study area and the Taos Plaza. Those include: Natural Systems; Archeological Sites; Cluster Arrangement; Buildings and Structures; Circulation; Small Scale Features; and Vegetation.

Natural Systems are those natural aspects that have influenced the development and physical form of the study area including climate, streams, native vegetation, topography and adjacent mountains.

Archeological Sites are the ruins, traces, or deposited artifacts in the landscape, evidenced by the presence of either surface or subsurface features.

Cluster Arrangement is the location of buildings and structures in the landscape, including the arrangement of elements that define and create space.

Buildings and Structures are three-dimensional man-made constructions, including the NRHP-listed buildings, gazebo, and kiosk.

Circulation includes features and materials that constitute systems of movement including vehicular routes such as roads and parking areas, and pedestrian routes including trails and walkways.

Small Scale Features are the human-scaled elements of contemporary time that provide specific functions and include walls, lights, signs, and street furniture.

Vegetation is indigenous or planted trees, shrubs, lawn, ground covers, and herbaceous materials.

Added new category: 'compatible features' that include the War Memorial and statue of Padre Martinez



Figure 3-1. Portales along the Plaza enhance the feeling of the study area. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Assessment of Integrity

The historic integrity of a cultural landscape relates to the ability of the landscape to convey its significance. In addition to being listed in the National Register of Historic Places, a property must also have integrity, which is grounded in a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. Essentially, the question of integrity is answered by whether or not the property retains the identity for which it is significant. Integrity is defined by seven aspects or qualities: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Location is the place where the cultural landscape was constructed or where an historic event occurred.

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure and style of the cultural landscape.

Setting is the physical environment of the cultural landscape.

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during the particular period(s) of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form the cultural landscape.

Workmanship includes the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.

Feeling is the cultural landscape's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.

Association is the direct link between the important historic event or person and a cultural landscape.

The Taos Plaza has diminished integrity due to the presence and arrangement of the 1970s features. The addition of non-contributing features has altered the former simplicity of the Plaza, which had been an open space enclosed by the surrounding buildings. Historically, the Plaza was composed of a level area of lawn or dirt, surrounded by a fence, with a linear arrangement of shade trees and paths, and a central focus (either a well or gazebo). The 1970s additions introduced a new design pattern within the Plaza, creating a multi-level, asymmetrical space. The large gazebo at the west side, interior walls, steps, ramps, and extensive use of hard surfacing have altered the design of the Plaza greatly from its historic appearance.

The Plaza has diminished integrity in materials due to the lack of lawn and trees, and soft-surfaces that existed historically. The extensive use of brick and flagstone surfacing has reduced the integrity of materials. The

use of concrete and stucco on the perimeter and interior walls, rather than historic adobe brick, further diminishes integrity of materials. The Plaza has diminished integrity of workmanship due to the absence of original features that would reflect the craftsmanship of earlier time periods.

Integrity of feeling and association are diminished due to contemporary elements that have altered the feeling of the Plaza from an open, level, and rectilinear space to an multi-leveled, hard space enclosed by internal barriers.

The Plaza retains integrity of location and setting. Key historic features associated with the development of the Taos Plaza remain in original locations, including the arrangement of buildings, portales and roads which frame the exterior of the Plaza and compose the setting. The intimate connection between the portales and the Plaza edge remains intact, as does the perimeter road that circles the Plaza.

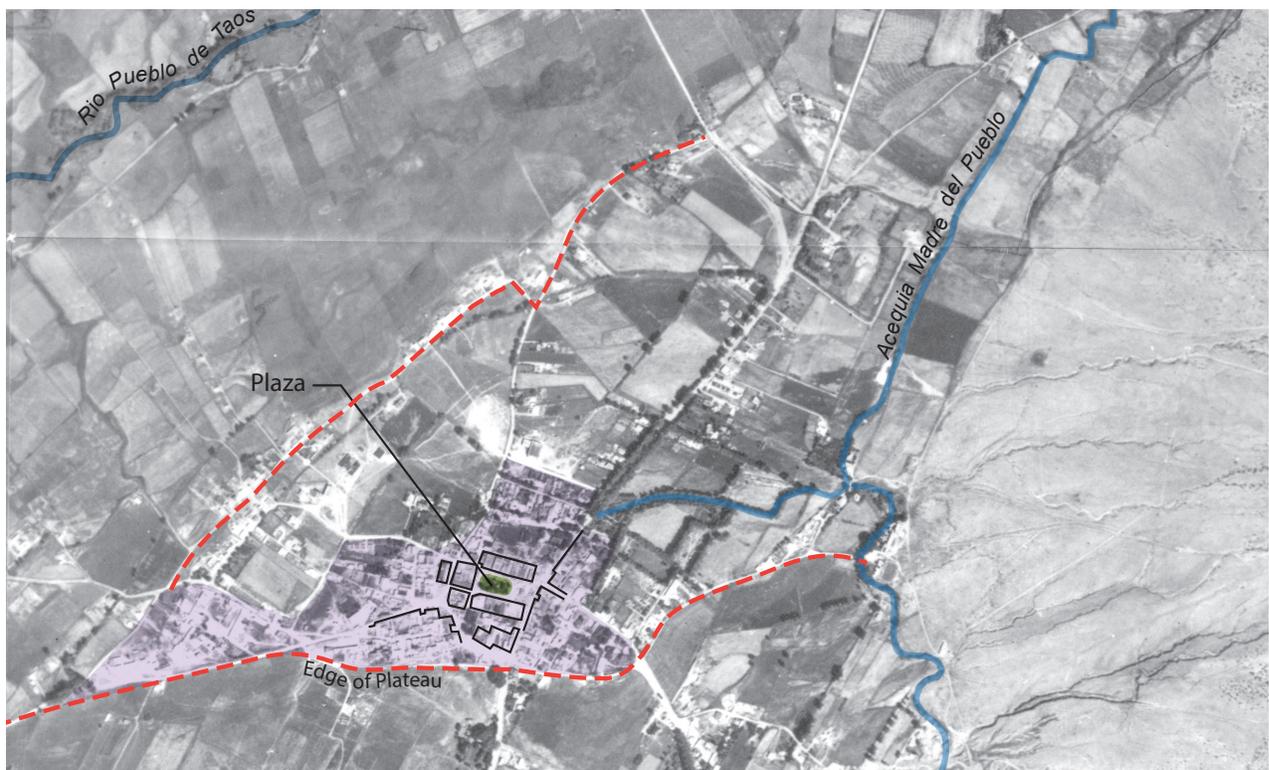


Figure 3-2. Taos was clustered at the top of a hill, in order to preserve arable land for farming. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Contributing, Non-Contributing, and Compatible Features

Contributing features are essential components of the cultural landscape that give the study area and Taos Plaza its significance. These include culturally significant buildings and structures that remain from the period of significance, and other elements that contribute to the overall integrity of the landscape that remain from the period of significance (c.1790 to 1950). The contributing buildings and features listed here are also considered contributing either to the National (NRHP) or State (SRCP) Registers and/or the Taos Historic Overlay Zone (HOZ). These designations are indicted below.

Non-contributing features are generally recent additions that do not assist in understanding the historic character of the landscape. Additionally, property owners in Taos have the option to opt-out of the Historic Overlay Zone making their building non-contributing. Compatible features are recent additions that have cultural value to contemporary residents of Taos and are valuable features in their own right.

Study Area

Contributing Buildings and Features

Natural Systems

- Topography – elevated Taos plateau

Cluster Arrangement

- Building arrangement and road alignments

Buildings and Structures

- Taos Inn (1934, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- John Dunn House (c.1880, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- Governor Bent's House (c.1835, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- Bert Phillips House (c.1880; 1905, NRHP, HOZ)
- Manby House (1898, SRCP, HOZ)
- Trujillo House, 134 Bent St (1908, HOZ)
- Flores Home, 136 Bent St (unknown, NRHP, HOZ)
- 123 Bent St (1930; 1980, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- Trujillo Home, 127 Bent St (unknown, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- McCartley, 122 Paseo del Pueblo Norte (unknown, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- Maxwell House, 131 Bent St (unknown, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- Fidel Cordova Building/ Cabot Building, 119 Bent St (unknown, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- F. Guttman/F. Sanchez, 109 Bent St (unknown, NRHP, HOZ)
- 103 Bent St (unknown, NRHP, HOZ)
- 119 Paseo del Pueblo Norte (unknown, NRHP, HOZ)
- 103 Paseo del Pueblo Norte (unknown, NRHP, HOZ)
- 110 Paseo del Pueblo Norte (unknown, NRHP, HOZ)
- 124 Paseo del Pueblo Sur (unknown, NRHP, HOZ)
- 121 Camino de la Placita (c.1939, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- 108 Terresina Lane (unknown, NHRP, SRCP, HOZ)

- LEGEND**
- ▬ Study Area
 - Contributing Structure (Taos Historic Overlay Zone)
 - Non-Contributing Structure (THOZ)
 - Parking
- 123 Street Number
- ① Historic Taos Plaza
 - ② Our Lady of Guadalupe Church
 - ③ Hotel la Fonda (1937, NRHP, SRCP)
 - ④ Kit Carson Home (c.1825, NRHP)
 - ⑤ County Courthouse (1932, NRHP, SRCP)
 - ⑥ Taos Inn (1934, NRHP, SRCP)
 - ⑦ John Dunn House (c.1880, NRHP, SRCP)
 - ⑧ Gov. Bent's House (c.1835, NRHP, SRCP)
 - ⑨ Bert Phillips House (early 1800s, NRHP)
 - ⑩ Manby House (1898, SRCP)
 - ⑪ Scheurich Lane
 - ⑫ Teresina Lane
 - ⑬ Juan Largo Lane
 - ⑭ La Fonda Alley
 - ⑮ South Alley
 - ⑯ John Dunn House Alley
 - ⑰ McCarthy Placita



Figure 3-3. Study Area Existing Conditions

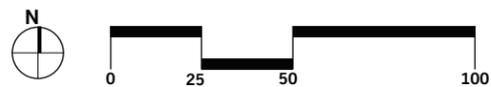
- 133-135 North Plaza (unknown, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- 129 North Plaza (unknown, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- 125 North Plaza (NRHP, HOZ)
- 115 North Plaza (post 1932, NRHP, HOZ)
- 111 North Plaza (unknown, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- 109 North Plaza (unknown, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- 107A North Plaza (unknown, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- 111 East Plaza (1957, SRCP, HOZ)
- Old County Courthouse (1937, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- Hotel la Fonda, 108 Plaza South (1937, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- 114 South Plaza (original date unknown; 1996 addition, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- 118 South Plaza (c.1935, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- 110 West Plaza (1945, HOZ)
- 108 West Plaza (unknown, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- 106 West Plaza (unknown, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- 104 West Plaza (unknown, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- 102 West Plaza (unknown, NRHP, SRCP, HOZ)
- 120 West Plaza (post 1933, HOZ)
- Portion of original wall (northwest of Plaza)

Circulation

- Camino de la Placita
- Paseo del Pueblo Sur/Norte
- Bent Street
- Scheurich Lane
- Juan Largo Lane
- Teresina Lane
- La Fonda Alley
- South Alley
- John Dunn House Alley
- North Plaza
- South Plaza
- East Plaza
- West Plaza
- McCarthy Placita

LEGEND

- Contributing Structure (Taos Historic Overlay Zone)
- Non-Contributing Structure (THOZ)
- Tree
- Vegetation/Lawn
- Brick Paving
- Stone Paving
- Stucco Wall
- (A) Old County Courthouse (1937)
- (B) Hotel la Fonda (1937)
- (C) Gazebo (1970s)
- (D) Kiosk (1995)
- (E) Low Wall
- (F) War Memorial
- (G) Padre Martinez Statue



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Taos Plaza

Contributing Features

Buildings and Structures

- Plaza space, surrounded by circular roads and building facades (c.1790)
- Adobe wall, extant at west edge (c. 1933)

Vegetation

- Cottonwood trees
- Lawn

Compatible Features

Small Scale Features

- Taos Plaza Memorial (c. 1960)
- Padre Martinez Statue

Non Contributing Features

Structures

- Plaza walls and paving (1950s; c. 1970)
- Gazebo (c. 1970)
- Kiosk (1995)

Small Scale Features

- Sculpture
- Flagpole, compatible
- Signs (5 types)
- Street/pedestrian lights
- Benches (3 types)
- Bike Rack
- Planters
- Parking Meters
- Trash receptacles
- Newspaper receptacles
- Fire hydrants

Vegetation

Non Contributing Features

- Evergreen trees
- Shrubs: roses; juniper
- Perennials



Figure 3-4. Looking east from North Plaza. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Evaluation and Analysis of Landscape Characteristics Study Area

Natural Systems. The Town of Taos is on the western edge of the Sangre de Cristo Range at nearly 7,000 feet in elevation. The region is semi-arid, composed of pinon-juniper and oak woodlands, and an arid desert/grassland. Several streams drain from the mountains, including Rio Pueblo de Taos north of town and Rio Fernando south of town, both joining the Rio Grande. The Rio Grande, west of town, is confined to a deep gorge approximately 800 feet deep.

The development of Don Fernando de Taos was in response to these ecological systems. Due to the semi-arid climate, settlement of the Taos Valley was dependent upon a reliable water source. The Rio Pueblo de Taos flows through the center of the pueblo. By the early 1700s its waters were used by the Spanish for drinking and irrigation water, which flowed through constructed acequias. One acequia flowed through the Taos Plaza, and may have fed a public well.

The early town took advantage of the regional topography and situated the fortified Plaza on a high rise above the valley to the south, an ideal defensive position. As the town expanded, new building construction occurred on the elevated plateau. Below the town, the valley was more fertile for growing crops. The adobe buildings on the Plaza included portales for shade and shelter from the elements. Early photographs show few plantings, but trees were planted in the Plaza by the late 1880s. Ornamental vegetation was kept to a minimum. Most available water was reserved for domestic and agricultural use.

Archeological Sites. A records search of the New Mexico Cultural Resource Inventory System (NMCRIS) database of the New Mexico Archaeological Records Management Section (ARMS) was conducted to obtain information all previously recorded archaeological investigations and sites within the Historic Taos Plaza study area, and within 1640 feet (ft) (500 meters [m]) of the study area. Laboratory of Anthropology (LA) forms and Geographic Information System (GIS) shapefiles were obtained from ARMS. A review of current listings in the National Register of Historic Places and the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties was consulted to determine the presence of historic properties and/or districts within the study area. The purpose of these record searches was to determine the location of known cultural resources that might be affected by future construction activities within the study area.

Surveys. File searches revealed that eleven archaeological activities have been conducted within, or in the immediate vicinity, of the study area (Tables 1 and 2). The activities include seven pedestrian surveys, two literature reviews, one survey/monitoring project, and one test excavation project that included testing of two archaeological

Table 1. Previous Investigations within the Taos Plaza Study Area

NMCRIS Activity No.	Performing Organization	Activity Type	Date	Acreage
16311	NM Historic Sites for NM State Planning Office	Literature Review	1967	N/A
75542	US Dept. Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration	Literature Review	2001	N/A
51994	UNM Office of Contract Archaeology	Test Excavation	1995	N/A
107734	Criterion Consulting	Pedestrian Survey	2007	5.31
42186	Boyer, Jeffrey L. consulting archaeologist	Pedestrian Survey	1991	2.5
126994	Boyer, Jeffrey L. consulting archaeologist	Pedestrian Survey	1992	4.9

Table 2. Previous Investigations within 1640 ft (500 m) of the Taos Plaza Study Area

NMCRIS Activity No.	Performing Organization	Activity Type	Date	Acreage
47958	Boyer, Jeffrey L. consulting archaeologist	Pedestrian Survey	1995	3.4
54836	Boyer, Jeffrey L. consulting archaeologist	Pedestrian Survey	1996	2.14
99842	Boyer, Jeffrey L. consulting archaeologist	Pedestrian Survey	2006	1.5
102675	Criterion Consulting	Pedestrian Survey	2006	1.4

sites. Of the pedestrian surveys, three surveys encompassed or overlapped the study area (Table 1), and five investigations were situated entirely outside (Table 2). These surveys were associated with investigations relating to municipal infrastructure and highway/transportation infrastructure improvements.

Archaeological Sites within the Study Area. Four archaeological sites are within, or extend into the study area: Taos (LA 3924), Rebecca James House (LA 112902), Loma Lateral of the Acequia Madre del Pueblo (LA 100580), and Our Lady of Guadalupe Churches (LA 112903) (Table 3). Six additional sites are within close proximity to the study area: LA 3929, LA 84857, LA 100579, LA 108049, LA 115982, and LA 158989 (Table 4). These are described in more detail below.

LA 3924 – Taos Recorded in 1965, this archeological site encompasses 30,000 square meters centered on the Taos Plaza, according to the original recording. This area was identified during a 1965 Historic Sites Inventory. Additional information about the history of the region was included in a 1971 Historic Sites Inventory Report. This site designation was based on a literature review, not a pedestrian survey, and no proper boundaries were delineated for the site.

LA 100580 – Segment of the Loma Lateral of the Acequia Madre del Pueblo This site is a portion of the abandoned Loma Lateral of the Acequia Madre del Pueblo. The historic acequia is plotted as running roughly east-west in the northern end of the study area. At the eastern end of the study area, the acequia turns to the north and continues along Paseo del Pueblo Norte (US 64). The site is described as a wide, shallow swale that is visible through trees. According to the LA form, the acequia provided water for the convent and school grounds formerly associated with Our Lady of Guadalupe Church. It is estimated to date to 1790. No more information regarding site features and eligibility status are available at ARMS. However, a separate segment of the same acequia outside the study area, documented as LA 108049, indicates that the resource, “may be eligible under [Criterion] A for its association with the development of the modern town of Taos.”

LA 112902 – Rebecca James House This a multi-component site is centered on the Rebecca James House, on the northeast corner at the intersection of Camino de la Placita and Bent Street, within the study area. The extant house was the residence of artist Rebecca S. James, known for her reverse-oil paintings on glass and for her colcha stitch embroideries. Two historic components were identified at the site: an Hispanic, US Territorial (1880-1900) cultural/temporal affiliation, and an Anglo/Euro-American, US Territorial to Recent (1900-present) cultural/temporal affiliation were assigned based on diagnostic artifacts and Sanborn map data dating to these periods. LA 112902 was recommended as eligible for

listing in the NRHP under Criterion B, for its association with an important person who was influential in the development of the Taos art colony. It was recommended as eligible under Criterion D for containing intact buried cultural deposits that have potential to provide important additional information about local and regional history.

The site was subjected to archaeological test excavations in 1996, in advance of proposed road-widening of Camino de la Placita (NMCRIS 51994). Excavations focused on the former west wing of the house, which was removed in 1937. An intact pre-1900 trash deposit was identified during the excavation. The artifact assemblage included diagnostic historic glass, ceramic and artifacts, as well as indeterminate historic Puebloan micaceous sherds, a chert core, and animal bones. One feature—a deep hole over 40 cm deep—was identified, which was filled with large chunks of broken cement.

LA 112903 – Historic Our Lady of Guadalupe Churches This is the former location of the first two Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe churches. Although the site is primarily on the western side of Camino de la Placita and outside the study area, a corner of one of the churches extends into the present-day roadway, within the study area. The close proximity of the archeological site to the study area, warranted its inclusion.

The first of the historic churches was built around 1802, razed in 1911. It was associated with the controversial local priest, Padre Antonio Jose Martínez, who played an important role in the lives of the local Hispanic population. The second church was built in 1911, and burned down in 1961. The site was attributed a Hispanic and Anglo/Euro-American (ca. 1802-1961) cultural/temporal affiliation. It was recommended as eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion B, for its association with the well-known Padre Martínez, and under Criterion D for the potential of intact cultural deposits (including burials) that may contribute additional important information about local and regional history.

The site was subjected to test excavations in 1996, in advance of a proposed road-widening of Camino de la Placita (NMCRIS 51994). Testing indicated church foundations and burials probably associated with both churches are present beneath the parking lot, and possibly extending into the right-of-way of Camino de la Placita. Hundreds of artifacts and three features that likely represent foundations of the former churches were identified during testing.

Archaeological Sites within 1640 ft (500 m) of the Study Area

LA 3929 – Kit Carson House The Kit Carson House was initially recorded as LA 3929, prior to its designation as a National Historic Landmark (NHL) in 1963 and its listing in the National Register in 1966. The building is an example of Spanish-Colonial and territorial architecture, and was the home of the famous American frontiersman, Kit Carson, from 1843 to 1868. Kit Carson was a trapper, Indian Agent, and American Army officer, and is perhaps best known today for his scorched-earth campaign

against the Navajo people. There are no records pertaining to the initial designation of the archaeological site on file at ARMS. However, the later NHL and NRHP nomination forms and associated information are included in the site record. The site boundary for LA 3929 available through NMCRI is centered on Kit Carson Memorial Park, not the Kit Carson House, although the site record clearly identifies LA 3929 as the Kit Carson House.

LA 84857 (AR-03-02-05-175) This site consists of three Forest Service administrative buildings of the Camino Real Ranger District, Carson National Forest. They were built in 1937 in the Spanish Colonial/Pueblo Revival architectural style, and include the Supervisor's Office, Garage and Shop, and Oil Building. In 1965 a non-compatible addition was built between the Supervisor's Office and the other two structures. A Historic Building Inventory Form was prepared for the buildings in 1987, which recommended that they are eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C as excellent examples of New Mexico Spanish-Pueblo Revival architecture, and may be contributing to a potential historic district. The buildings were surveyed in June 1990 and found to be in excellent condition. No artifacts or features were identified during this investigation.

LA 100579 This site represents a segment of a large, unnamed acequia that dates to the US Territorial to World War II periods (A.D. 1880-1936). It measures some 470 m long and 2 m wide and had no artifacts or ancillary features recorded in association with it. Its NHRP eligibility status has not been recorded.

LA 108049 – Segment of the Loma Lateral of the Acequia Madre del Pueblo This archeological site was recorded as another distinct segment of the abandoned Loma Lateral of the Acequia Madre del Pueblo. This recording dated the acequia to the US Territorial to Recent Historic periods (A.D. 1846-1995). The acequia measures some 950 m long and 2 m wide and had no artifacts or ancillary features recorded in association with it. Its NHRP eligibility status has not been determined formally, but the statements from April 1995 indicate that the site: "May be eligible under [Criterion] A for its association with the development of the modern town of Taos."

LA 115982 – Kit Carson Lateral and sub-lateral of the Acequia Madre del Pueblo A 115982 consists of two laterals of the Acequia Madre del Pueblo: the Kit Carson lateral, and an unnamed sub-lateral ditch. The laterals run through and along Kit Carson Park and cemetery. Near the northwestern corner of the Park, a headgate diverts water from the Kit Carson lateral into a sub-lateral that runs west along the northern boundary of the park. As of the 1996 recording, the Kit Carson Lateral was culverted beneath paths and roads within the Park. The acequia may date to as early as 1797, and was still in use at the time of its recording. The acequia was determined eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion D by the NM SHPO in 1997.

3-16 *Historic Taos Plaza, New Mexico*
Cultural Landscape Report

Table 3. Archaeological Sites within the Taos Plaza Study Area

Site No.	Description	NMCRIS Activity No.	Survey Project/ Date	Temporal Affiliation	NRHP Eligibility
LA 3924	LA 3924, or Taos, consists of the historic settlement of Taos centered on the Plaza	16311, 75542	1967, 2001	Spanish-Colonial to Recent Historic (A.D. 1539- 1993)	Not Listed
LA 100580	LA 100580 consists of Acequia Madre del Pueblo- Loma Lateral	126994	Placitas Road: Historic Structure Review and Archaeological Survey in Taos, Taos County, New Mexico (1992-1993)	Post-Pueblo Revolt to Recent Historic (A.D. 1790-1992)	Not Listed
LA 112902	LA 112902 or the Rebecca James House. Consists of hundreds of historic artifacts and a house foundation that was not relocated.	51994	Test Excavations at Two Historic Sites in the Town of Taos, New Mexico (1995-1997)	1. US Territorial (A.D. 1880-1900) 2. US Territorial to Present (1900-present)	Recommended Eligible, Criteria B and D
LA 112903	LA 112903 consists of Our Lady of Guadalupe Churches; one cemetery feature, two church features, one post hole, two structure foundations, an hundreds of historic artifacts	51994	Test Excavations at Two Historic Sites in the Town of Taos, New Mexico (1995-1997)	Post-Pueblo Revolt to Recent Historic (A.D. ca. 1802-1961)	Recommended Eligible, Criteria B and D

Table 4. Archaeological Sites within 1640 ft (500 m) of the Taos Plaza Study Area

Site No.	Description	NMCRIS Activity No.	Survey Project/ Date	Temporal Affiliation	NRHP Eligibility
LA 3929	Kit Carson House National Historic Landmark,	No associated activity in NMCRIS	Unknown	Mexican/Santa Fe Trail – US Territorial (A.D. 1843-1868)	Listed on NRHP 1966
(AR-03-02-05-175)	Three Forest Service buildings in the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style	No associated activity in NMCRIS	Unknown	NM Statehood – WII (A.D. 1937)	Recommended Eligible, Criterion C
LA 100579	LA 100579 consists of an unnamed Acequia or irrigation ditch	126994	Placitas Road: Historic Structure Review and Archaeological Survey in Taos, Taos County, New Mexico (1992-1993)	US Territorial to WWII (A.D. 1880-1936)	Not Entered
LA 108049	LA 108049 consists of the Acequia Madre del Pueblo- Loma Lateral	47958	Taos Public Library: Archaeological Survey in Taos, Taos County, New Mexico (1995)	US Territorial to Recent Historic (A.D. 1846-1995)	Recommended Eligible, Criterion A
LA 115982	Kit Carson Lateral and sub- lateral, Acequia Madre del Pueblo	54836, 75542	Pedestrian survey (1996); Literature review (2001)	Spanish-Colonial to Recent (A.D. 1797? – present)	Eligible, Criterion D
LA 158989	Historic artifact scatter (ceramics and lithics) with a one subsurface feature	109518	1-acre survey and monitoring of backhoe trenching at private residence (2008)	US Territorial – NM Statehood (Early A.D. 1900s)	Not Eligible

LA 158989 LA 158989 was identified during monitoring of a backhoe trench in La Loma Plaza, and consists of a single feature: an intact trash deposit with artifacts dating to the early 1900s. Artifacts include nine ceramic sherds (five Native American and four Euro-American) three chipped stone artifacts, six glass bottle fragments, one window glass fragment, seven wire-nails, three miscellaneous items, and 20 bones and bone fragments. The site was determined to be not eligible for listing on the NRHP, as it is currently defined by the presence of one feature with limited data potential. According to the NM SHPO, this determination could change if other features or cultural materials are found within La Loma Plaza.

Analysis Of the ten archaeological sites within, or in close proximity to the study area, only LA 3924 (Taos) is shown as overlapping the Taos Plaza area. This site was not delineated on the ground, but rather was the result of a literature review conducted as part of Historic Site Inventories in 1965 and 1971 that documented the history of the Taos region. The Taos Downtown Historic District (SR 860), which was listed in the national and state registers in 1982, more accurately reflects the extent of the historic village of Taos. That said, given the age and history of the settlement, it is possible that the Plaza, and the study area as a whole, contain buried cultural deposits reflecting nearly 300 years of continuous settlement. Test excavations of two sites within the study area—of the Rebecca James House (LA 112902) and the Our Lady of Guadalupe Churches (LA 112903)—revealed the presence of intact cultural deposits that pre-dated 1900. Human burials were identified at LA 112903, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church.

Based on the information derived from previous investigations in the area, it is recommended that prior to any future ground-disturbing activities in and around the Taos Plaza, an archaeological testing plan be developed and implemented in consultation with the New Mexico SHPO. The testing plan may include the implementation of remote sensing technologies (such as ground penetrating radar) to help identify intact foundations or other features such as burials with minimal disturbance. Any ground-disturbing activities within close proximity of LA 112903 (Our Lady of Guadalupe Churches) would have a higher chance of encountering significant buried cultural deposits.



Figure 3-5. Study Area Figure Ground (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Cluster Arrangement

Don Fernando de Taos began as an enclosed and fortified space. The town was situated at the top of a hill, in order to preserve arable land for farming and to create a defensive position against raids by American Indian groups. The original arrangement of the town was as a cluster of buildings that were organized in a square shape around a central open space, which became the Plaza, a community green space.

By the 1800s the danger of American Indian raids lessened and the fortified walls were no longer needed. Over time, the Plaza space was no longer completely enclosed and openings were created in new locations to connect to new parts of town. The growth of the town followed a pattern of grouping buildings together around central public places. Today, Taos has several placitas formed as part of this outgrowth. The Plaza is connected to other placitas (public and semi-public spaces) by narrow roads and alleys, which forms a web of interconnected public spaces.

At the Taos Plaza, most buildings are conjoined to create a unified façade along the Plaza or street. There is little or no setback from the road and typically only room for a narrow sidewalk. The architectural styles vary but most buildings are one or two stories, and have stepped massing and flat roofs. The majority of the buildings have covered portales that further reinforce the unified façade and create a homogeneous appearance. Prior to the 1930s, the architectural styles of the buildings had greater variation. The cluster arrangement – as a series of interconnected public spaces framed by low-profile buildings remains as it was during the period of significance. The historic cluster arrangement of the study area has been modified due to the loss of the original Our Lady of Guadalupe Church. Prior to 1961 the church was located just west of the Taos Plaza. It was reconstructed nearby, but no longer feels part of the Plaza, and the former church space is now a parking area. Other modifications along the Paseo del Pueblo Sur have disrupted the historic spatial organization of the town, mainly the demolition of buildings. Parking areas built in locations that were historically building clusters, for example at the southern intersection of Paseo Pueblo del Sur and Camino de la Placita, and the corner of Paseo del Pueblo Sur and Kit Carson Road, diminish the historic cluster arrangement of the town.

Table 3-5: Study Area — Buildings (Figure 3-3)

Landscape Feature	Date(s) of Construction	Historic Register	Description
Taos Inn 125 Paseo del Pueblo Norte	original date unknown; 1934	NRHP SRCP HOZ	The Taos Inn was created from four existing structures, three of which faced Paseo del Pueblo Norte. It was owned and run by Doctor T.P. Martin and his wife. The structure is composed of the existing three houses facing the street, a “U” shaped addition in back which mirrors the northern-most of these, a house in back and two adobe outbuildings. The Inn served as a classy place to stay for visitors to Taos before and after World War II. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
John Dunn House 124 Bent Street	c.1880	NRHP SRCP HOZ	
Governor Bent’s House 117 Bent Street	c.1835	NRHP SRCP HOZ	The Bent House is currently on the National Register of Historic Places. Built around a nucleus constructed prior to 1835, the structure consists of a single story, “U” shaped adobe dwelling, now occupied by a gallery and a museum. It is an excellent example of an early 19th century New Mexico residence. Charles Bent settled into the house in 1835 with his wife, Maria Ignacia Jaramillo. Prominent in the trade with St. Louis, Bent had established a reputation for trade in partnership with Ceran St. Vrain and his brother, who helped to establish Bent’s Fort in Colorado. When Kearney marched into New Mexico during the Mexican-American War and declared it United States Territory, Charles Bent was declared the first civilian governor. While visiting his family in January of 1847 he was scalped and killed by insurrectionists hostile to the American Occupation. The house, both for its historic value and as an example of New Mexican vernacular residential architecture, is significant.
Bert Phillips House Paseo del Pueblo Norte 136	c.1880; 1905	NRHP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival/Hispanic Vernacular/Mission; decorative posts and beams in pyramid shape building, rope carved posts & beams at LaLana entry, varied roofs.
Manby House 133 Paseo del Pueblo Norte	1898	SRCP HOZ	This property was acquired by Arthur Rockford Manby between 1891 and 1898. In 1900, Manby began to build a larger house by combining several small buildings. This, the current building, was constructed of adobe with wood vigas and flat roofs with parapets. The house was later bought by the Taos Artist Association. This building is a good example of regional architecture and is on the New Mexico State Register of Historic Places.

Buildings and Structures Buildings and structures within the study area are from a wide range of historic periods and architectural styles. The designs reflect Spanish Colonial, Territorial, Mission Revival and Spanish-Pueblo Revival styles that greatly influenced the development of the town, and the Taos Plaza. Of these, the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style of the 1920s and 1930s is the most common.

The Town of Taos developed similarly to other New Mexico towns with a plan typical of most settlements in northern New Mexico. The plan included an open placitas surrounded by low flat-roofed adobe buildings with portales in front. This building pattern remains in several locations throughout the study area.

In researching the study area, buildings and structures were designated as significant, contributing or non-contributing, based upon NRHP criteria. Significant buildings were worthy of special notice due to integrity of architectural design, use as an exceptional example of a style, or the historical association of a person or event together with merit as a building. Buildings and structures were designated as contributing when they reinforced or added to the character. Non-contributing was used to describe structures which intruded upon the surrounding area because of scale, style or materials. In the following matrix, each contributing and non-contributing building and structure is described.

Table 3.5 provides a brief description of the buildings and structures within the study area.



Figure 3-6. Kit Carson Road. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Table 3-5: Study Area — Buildings (Figure 3-3)

Landscape Feature	Date(s) of Construction	Historic Register	Description
Trujillo House 134 Bent St	1908	HOZ	A single story painted adobe former residential building with a low cross-hip roofline covered with blue propanel. The walls are battered and curve inwards at the gable roof eaves. The building sits at the street edge on the north and adjacent to a large parking lot on the south. A centrally-located painted stucco yard wall runs along the north property line east and connects this building with #130 Bent to the east. A flagstone patio exists in the open area between the structures. An additional low stuccoed yard wall encloses the property on the east.
Flores Home 136 Bent St	unknown	NRHP HOZ	Adobe with stucco and U-shaped courtyard
Jose Martinez Home 132 Bent St	unknown	none	Adobe with stucco interior courtyard and outbuildings
123 Bent St	1930; 1980	NRHP SRCP	Folk Territorial/Spanish-Pueblo Revival; 2-story
Trujillo Home 127 Bent St	unknown	NRHP SRCP	Hispanic Vernacular/Spanish-Pueblo Revival; 19th century building with Territorial windows & Spanish-Pueblo portales
The John Dunn Shops 120 Bent St	1990	none	2 story Mountain Gable Style building with asphalt shingle roofing on hip and Dutch gable roofs. Queen Anne style portal with Victorian brackets. Second story portal has turned wood railing.
The John Dunn Shops 124 Bent St	1988	none	
McCartley 122 Paseo del Pueblo Norte	unknown	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Mission Style Vernacular with river rock coping on portal, parapet roofline. River rock front wall and two outbuildings
Maxwell House 131 Bent St	unknown	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Territorial style adobe with stucco
Casa Feliz 137 Bent St	1940	HOZ	CMU with stucco
Fidel Cordova Building/Cabot Building 119 Bent St	unknown	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Territorial style, abode with stucco courtyard: in portal areas has flagstone, grass and planters, banco
F. Guttman/F. Sanchez 109 Bent St	unknown	NRHP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival/Hispanic Vernacular; first story entry was portal at one time with balcony at top
103 Bent St	unknown	NRHP HOZ	Adobe with stucco projecting vigas on west & east side of south wall; second story portal on northeast end of building; recessed doors
119 Paseo del Pueblo Norte	unknown	NRHP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival with courtyard, carved doors. Central enclosed courtyard
105 Paseo del Pueblo Norte	1946	HOZ	One story Pueblo Revival Style with continuous portal on the west side facing Pueblo Norte with wooden posts, corbels and beams. The portal has canales for draining the portal roof onto the street.
103 Paseo del Pueblo Norte	unknown	NRHP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival



Figure 3-7. Bent House (Mundus Bishop, 2015)



Figure 3-8. Taos Inn (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Table 3-5: Study Area — Buildings (Figure 3-3)

Landscape Feature	Date(s) of Construction	Historic Register	Description
103 Kit Carson Rd	1995	none	
110 Paseo del Pueblo Norte	unknown	NRHP	Hispanic Vernacular with Mission style decorative elements & stucco; former site of Travelers Motel courtyard at entrance with Mexican style fountain and boardwalks, landscaped areas with planters
106 Paseo del Pueblo Norte	1946; 1989	none	One-story Pueblo Revival Style with one long, continuous portal on the east side of building. Portal has wooden posts, corbels, beams and exposed vigas.
102 Paseo del Pueblo Norte	unknown	none	
124 Paseo del Pueblo Sur	unknown	NRHP HOZ	2-story, flat parapet roof, deeply set windows, corbels.
121 Camino de la Placita	c.1939	NRHP SRCP HOZ	One-story stucco
229 Camino de la Placita	1982	none	One story Pueblo Revival Style with portal on the north side facing parking lot area. Portal has plastered end walls with corbel and beam openings. Remainder of portal has wooden posts, corbels and beams with two canales.
121 Scheurich	unknown	HOZ	Frame? with stucco
108 Terresina Lane		NHRP SRCP HOZ	2-story adobe, Hispanic vernacular
Old County Courthouse 121 North Plaza	1937	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Courthouse moved to new location in 1968.
133-135 North Plaza	unknown	NRHP SRCP HOZ	CMU with stucco, canales, parapets, portales
129 North Plaza	unknown	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, 2-story adobe with stepped front; portales, zapata bracket corbels
125 North Plaza		NRHP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, 2-story, adobe and brick.
119 North Plaza	c.1939	HOZ	An infill building between what used to be the old Taos County Courthouse, and the Taos Trading Co. The entry is covered by a continuous plastered portale.
115 North Plaza	post 1932	NRHP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, CMU with stucco,
111 North Plaza	unknown	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, poured concrete with stucco
109 North Plaza	unknown	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, poured concrete with stucco



Figure 3-9. 122 Bent Street (Mundus Bishop, 2015)



Figure 3-10. Bert Phillips House (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Table 3-5: Study Area — Buildings (Figure 3-3)

Landscape Feature	Date(s) of Construction	Historic Register	Description
107A North Plaza	unknown	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, poured concrete with stucco
111 East Plaza	1957	SRCP	
115 East Plaza	1957	NRHP SRCP	
103 East Plaza	1977	none	Cement-block and stucco two-story building with portal and second-story terrace.
Hotel la Fonda 108 Plaza South	1937	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Built after the Columbian Hotel burned in 1934. 3-story Spanish-Pueblo Revival style.
104 South Plaza	1908; 1980	HOZ	One-story Pueblo Revival Style with metal storefront window system on the north façade. Primary exterior material is plaster with a flat parapet, and no portal or other distinguishing decorative features. May be one of the “original” buildings on the Plaza, circa 1830-1880.
114 South Plaza	original date unknown; 1996 addition	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, 2-story adobe and CMU
119 South Plaza	unknown	HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, 2-story adobe
118 South Plaza	c.1935	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, 2-story adobe; corner entrance, no portales
110 West Plaza	1945	none	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, one story building with an east-facing portal in the The portal parapet is flat with two extended wood canales. The building parapet behind and above the portal is also flat and has one metal canale draining onto the portal roof. Exterior material is mainly plaster with wood posts, corbels, beams and vigas at the portal. Behind the portal, the building has an aluminum storefront with steel columns. 1940’s reconstruction is plaster over CMU.
108 West Plaza	unknown	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, 2-story adobe with stucco
106 West Plaza	unknown	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, 1 1/2 story adobe
104 West Plaza	unknown	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, 1 1/2 story adobe
102 West Plaza	unknown	NRHP SRCP HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, 1 1/2 story adobe and CMU
120 West Plaza	post 1933	HOZ	Spanish-Pueblo Revival, carved wood portal elements; parking on north side; drive around west & south; paved entrance & exit on west Plaza; site was location of a historic building which burned in 1933. Adjacent walls of CMU with stucco



Figure 3-11. Hotel la Fonda south of the Plaza. (Mundus Bishop 2015)



Figure 3-12. Old courthouse north of the Plaza houses studios and galleries. (Mundus Bishop 2015)



Figure 3-13. Teresina Lane (Mundus Bishop, 2015)



Figure 3-14. Scheurich Lane (Mundus Bishop, 2015)



Figure 3-15. South Alley (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Circulation The alleys and streets within the study area provide the circulation framework for the study area. The circulation routes are roughly oriented on a grid. The Paseo del Pueblo Norte /Sud is the major thoroughfare and the Camino de la Placita creates a loop around the west side of the study area. Routes are typically narrow, not exceeding 35 feet in most places, and several routes, such as Bent Street, are narrow enough that vehicles and pedestrians share the space. Pedestrian circulation is via covered walkways under the portales, sidewalks, and alleys. Paving materials for pedestrian walkways and include concrete, cobblestones, exposed aggregate, and brick and flagstone within the Plaza.

Circulation routes remain similar to historic routes. Comparing the existing condition with aerial photography from the 1930s, the vehicular routes appear to be similar. One major change is the use of McCarthy Plaza, which was established as a parking area, which it is no longer. Parking areas exist in areas that were previously open space or building clusters. At the south end of the study area, off of Camino de la Placita two large parking areas occur. One was historically an open space and the other was a cluster of buildings. Another parking area occurs between the Dunn House and Camino de la Placita. This was historically an open field, however there were also buildings that lined the edge of the Camino. Another circulation change includes the addition of the walkway for the John Dunn House Shops.



Figure 3-16. Juan Largo Lane (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Table 3-6: Study Area — Circulation (Figure 3-3)

Landscape Feature	Date(s) of Construction	Condition	Description
Camino de la Placita	unknown	Good	Two-lane, asphalt paved road with attached concrete sidewalk on both sides. The road widens in places to accommodate vehicular turn lanes.
Paseo del Pueblo (Sur/Norte)	1700s	Good	Two-lane, asphalt paved road with attached concrete sidewalks. Sidewalk widths vary from appx. 3' to 5' with yellow-painted curb; portions of the sidewalk are under portales. Also called State highway 68 (Sur) and Federal highway 64 (Norte).
Bent Street	c.1830s		One-way narrow asphalt-paved road. East end of street has parallel parking on both sides and attached concrete sidewalk. Road narrows at west end; buildings at edge of road in places. (Figure 3-18)
Scheurich Lane	unknown; pre-1908	Good	Pedestrian-only, cobblestone paved route approximately 20' wide. Concrete and stucco walls, some with integrated benches, edge the lane.
Juan Largo Lane	unknown; pre-1908	Good	Pedestrian-only, cobblestone paved route approximately 20' wide. Concrete and stucco walls, some with integrated benches, edge the lane.
Teresina Lane	unknown; pre-1908	Good	Pedestrian-only, cobblestone paved route approximately 15' wide. Concrete and stucco walls, some with integrated benches, edge the lane.
La Fonda Alley		Fair	Asphalt-paved, approximately 15' wide, closed to motor vehicles.
South Alley			Narrow dirt alley, approximately 15' wide.
John Dunn House Alley	recent	Fair	Pedestrian walkway with center walk 8' wide exposed aggregate; planting areas between walkway and building entrances.
North Plaza South Plaza East Plaza West Plaza	c.1776; 1929; 1956; 1995	Good	One-way, asphalt paved with metered diagonal parking on right side. Traffic goes counterclockwise around the Plaza. Road is approximately 30' to 40' wide, including parking. Major entrance into the Plaza is from Paseo del Pueblo. One-way exit at northwest corner of Plaza; one-way entry at southwest corner. Pedestrian circulation is accommodated along the exterior edge of these routes, covered by portales.
McCarthy Placita	1934	Good	Rectangular space located at southeast corner of Plaza. Brick-paved with raised stucco planters, concrete steps, wood benches and pedestrian lights. (Figure 3-17)



Figure 3-17. McCarthy Placita (Mundus Bishop, 2015)



Figure 3-18. Looking west to Bent Street (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Taos Plaza

Buildings and Structures The Plaza is an oval-shaped space with a perimeter walk, interior and perimeter walls. Extensive brick paving covers most of the interior. The buildings and structures within and surrounding the Plaza include the old County Courthouse, Hotel la Fonda, and the gazebo and kiosk within the Plaza. The majority of the buildings along the north, west, and south blocks are contributing features. The large building to the east of the Plaza does not date from the period of significance and is non-contributing.

The Plaza was originally built as a fortified Plaza, to protect Spanish settlers from raid by Comanche and Ute Indians. It was designed and constructed similarly to other New Mexico plazas, which included an open Plaza surrounded by low flat-roofed adobe buildings with portales in front. All windows faced the Plaza's interior, with no windows or openings at the rear of buildings. At each end of the town, fortified watchtowers provided a guarded gated access to the Plaza. Only a small portion of the original wall remains. A series of fires in the 1920s and 1930s destroyed most of the earlier buildings, and the blocks were rebuilt in the 1930s in the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style. These buildings are of a similar scale and form to the earlier buildings; however the architectural styles and materials were previously more varied. Characteristics of the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style include long portales with wood posts and corbels surrounding the open Plaza, one to two-story flat-roofed buildings with small windows, low door openings, and canales to drain the flat roofs. The 1930s Spanish-Pueblo Revival style buildings remain mostly unchanged. Buildings constructed since the end of the period of significance follow this same style but incorporate contemporary materials, for example the building block on the east side of the Plaza.

Within the Plaza is a raised, octagonal gazebo, built in the 1970s, located in the northwest corner. This structure is in poor condition and is not in an historic location. A small kiosk is located on the east end of the Plaza, it is in fair condition but is underutilized and also does not reflect the historic appearance of the Plaza.

Small Scale Features The small scale features within the Plaza include memorials and statues, signs, street furniture, and other human-scaled elements. These elements are all recent additions. Most are non-contributing features, added recently. Some small scale features including the War Memorial and Padre Martinez Statue are compatible features. These are recent additions that have cultural value and meaning to the present-day residents of Taos, and are compatible with the cultural landscape.

Historically, small scale features in the Plaza have included fences and walls, flagpole, and signs. A picket fence surrounded around the Plaza in the late 1800s, this was replaced by a wire fence with wooden top rail by the early 1900s. In the 1930s a low stucco wall was built around the Plaza's edge. This was removed during the 1970s remodel of the Plaza. The flagpole is a recent addition but there was a flagpole in the Plaza during the American Civil War.

Study Area 3-7: Plaza — Buildings and Structures

Landscape Feature	Date(s) of Construction	Condition	Description
Plaza	1776; 1880s; 1908; 1930s; 1970	Poor	Oval-shaped, 100 feet across north to south; 210 east to west. A perimeter sidewalk, brick paving, benches, trees, a small lawn area, monuments and commemorative plaques. Raised gazebo and small information kiosk. Bordered by streets on all sides.
Plaza walls	1933; 1970; 1995	Fair	Concrete walls, vary from 18" to 4' ht. with stucco finish
Plaza paving	varies, 1950s, 1970s, 1990s	Poor	Concrete walk surrounding Plaza, 5' ht.; brick paving; flagstone paving; concrete steps
Gazebo	1970s	Poor	Octagon-shaped structure with wood posts and copper roof, metal railing and 2 sets of wooden stairs and basement police offices.
Kiosk	1995	Fair	Information booth, octagon-shaped, stucco siding with metal roof. Appx. 18' ht.



Figure 3-19. The existing gazebo was constructed in the 1970s and is in poor condition. (Mundus Bishop 2015)



Figure 3-20. War Memorial constructed c. 1960. (Mundus Bishop 2015)



Figure 3-21. Several styles of benches exist in the Plaza, and paving is in poor condition throughout. (Mundus Bishop 2015)

Plaza — Small Scale Features			
Landscape Feature	Date(s) of Construction	Condition	Description
Taos Plaza Memorial	1960	Good	Large cross, commemorating Taos's World War II Bataan soldiers.
Padre Martinez Statue	2008	Good	
Sculpture	c.1995	Good	Vietnam memorial sculpture
Flagpole (2)		Good	Typical, set in concrete and stucco base.
Signs		Varies	5 types: wall integrated; metal stanchion; wood carved; metal stanchion curved; low-profile
Street/pedestrian lights		Good	Metal base with square lantern globes, appx. 15' ht. Metal rods for flags.
Benches		Fair	3 types: wood with curved back; iron; backless wood-slat
Bike rack		Fair	
Planters		Fair	2 types: wood half-barrel; rectangular painted
Parking meters		Good	Typical meters, located at head-in parking spaces.
Trash receptacles		Good	Wood-slat, domed lid.
Newspaper receptacles		Good	Located at east side of Plaza
Fire hydrants		Good	Along exterior / building edge of Plaza.

Vegetation Vegetation within the Plaza is composed of shade trees and some ornamental plantings. These are non-contributing features however the large cottonwood trees reflect the historic vegetation. It is unknown what type of vegetation occurred within the Plaza prior to the late 1800s. The Plaza had access to water but this was likely for domestic use and not vegetation. By c.1880 trees had been planted within the Plaza accompanied by grass. Photographs dating from the early 1900s show tall cottonwood trees in the Plaza and an open lawn, with a few trees adjacent the buildings as well. In the 1930s, vegetation in the Plaza included cottonwood trees and several evergreen trees, set in an open lawn. The vegetation today is different from what existed historically. The Plaza has very little green space, and the open lawn that typified the Plaza throughout much of its history is gone. Ornamental plantings of shrubs and perennials does not reflect the historic appearance. The existing large shade trees and evergreen trees are similar species and in similar locations to the historic.



Figure 3-22. The Padre Martinez statue is placed in a planter. Planter walls are typical of walls surrounding the Plaza. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)



Figure 4-1. The view down Bent Street reveals the main tenets of Spanish-Pueblo Revival architecture. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Chapter 4. Treatment

Introduction

The cultural landscape of the study area —Taos Plaza and its immediate surroundings— is associated with the establishment of the Town of Taos and its significance as a cultural landscape, rich with history and art. Preserving and rehabilitating the study area to reestablish integrity and to protect contributing features and characteristics is a primary goal. Of equal importance is the improvement of Taos Plaza to meet contemporary needs associated with traditional use of the Plaza as the center of the community.

Treatment guidance is based upon a rehabilitation approach, and includes recommendations for the protection and improvement of Taos Plaza and the study area. Treatment guidance is founded on the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and Treatment of Cultural Landscapes, and the findings of the historical development, conditions assessment, and community outreach for this CLR. It is also based upon numerous Town planning policies and studies, and relevant planning proposals for the Plaza and study area. These include the Historic Overlay Zone - (16.16.220) Taos Town Code; 1981 NRHP nomination for the Taos Historic District; 2010 “Weaving Together Past, Present, and Future” prepared by the UNM’s Design and Planning Assistance Center; Historic Taos County Courthouse Condition Assessment and Preservation Plan; and the 2012 Taos Arts and Cultural District Plan, amongst others.

The guidance included in this chapter was informed by an analysis of existing conditions, assessment of historic integrity, and input from the Town of Taos, HPD, and the community. (Appendix C, Summary of Public Meetings) This chapter includes treatment guidance for the study area generally, and Taos Plaza specifically. The narrative is accompanied by graphic illustrations depicting a range of treatment options for the Plaza. Each option explores a different way to rehabilitate the Plaza and its historic form, while meeting contemporary needs. These options are intended to be a guide and starting point for future work.

Treatment Approach

Rehabilitation is the treatment approach for Taos Plaza and the study area. In accordance with the Secretary of Interior Standards, rehabilitation is a holistic approach that preserves features that convey the historical, cultural, and architectural values of the study area, including extant cultural resources, contributing features, and relationships between these. It allows removal of non-contributing features, compatible repairs, alterations, and additions needed for the continued of the Plaza and study area, and adaptive reuse of buildings and structures.

Rehabilitation offers the best approach for treatment of the study area as a cultural landscape with a long period of significance, where extant resources remain from a continuum of historical development. Depiction of the study area’s cultural landscape at one particular time is not appropriate as this would require removal of contributing resources; would not allow

continued traditional use; and adequate documentation does not exist for a restoration approach. In particular, rehabilitation of Taos Plaza to reflect its historic form, scale and character will reestablish integrity in design, setting, workmanship, feeling and materials, which were compromised by modifications to the Plaza in the 1970s. For the study area, preservation and repair of contributing buildings, compatible alterations and additions, and adaptive reuse will assist in repairing the historic form and pattern, which in turn will reestablish integrity in design, setting and workmanship, and feeling.

Treatment Guidance and the Period of Significance

A period of significance from c. 1790 to 1950 captures the time frame in which the Plaza and study area evolved concurrently in style and function. This period includes features remaining from the historical evolution of the study area, including the addition of the county courthouse in 1933, revision of the Plaza in keeping with the re-development in a Spanish-Pueblo Revival style, and the incorporation of the Town of Taos.

Study Area Guidance

The study area, set within the Taos Downtown Historic District, is characterized by Taos Plaza surrounded by low-profile Spanish-Pueblo Revival style buildings. Narrow roads and alleys extend from the Plaza, creating interconnected public spaces and densely clustered groups of buildings, reflecting varied historical architectural styles. Contributing features include buildings listed on the National Register, and the pattern and spatial arrangement of buildings, roads and alley alignments.

The guidance for the study area is provided in narrative and graphic form. The text provides guidance for the study area holistically, accompanied by a graphic plan identifying contributing features to preserve, potential improvements to pedestrian connections, open spaces, and opportunities for compatible infill.

Vision

The study area will be preserved and rehabilitated to protect contributing features and allow compatible alterations and additions to continue its use as a vibrant community center. Preservation of extant features, spatial relationships, views, circulation patterns, cluster arrangements, buildings and structures remaining from the period of significance is a primary goal. Equally important are compatible additions and adaptive reuse to continue the evolution of the study area to meet the needs of the community.

Figure 4-2. Preserve the narrow roadways and interconnected public spaces within the study area. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)





Figure 4-3. Preserve the historic urban form of the study area, including alleys and narrow walkways. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

General Guidance

1. Protect contributing buildings, structures, and features through preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation including adaptive reuse, using accepted preservation practices in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
2. Remove non-contributing features (vegetation, road patterns, etc.) that diminish the integrity of the study area.
3. Allow new additions in areas where non-contributing buildings or structures are currently located, and as properties are redeveloped. Design new improvements to be products of their own time, to be subordinate to contributing features, and compatible with the historic architectural styles and craftsmanship. Ensure new additions are located and sited to preserve setbacks, mass, scale, form and character of the study area as one holistic area.
4. Complete further research to better understand extant resources and to identify future needs.
 - Future archeological investigations should include investigating extents of the La Loma Lateral of the Acequia Madre del Pueblo within the study area. Within the Plaza, archeological investigations could provide evidence of the historic well at the center, and the extent of the adobe wall. Outside of the study area, the archeological site of the former Our Lady of Guadalupe Church could reveal important information about the history of Taos.
 - Additional archival research would assist in understanding resources related to the Rebecca James House, the acequias, and other archeological resources.
 - The Town of Taos acequia association, State Engineers office, plat maps, and other archives might elucidate information on the acequias.
 - Consider implementing additional studies including a transportation study, wayfinding, and sign plan.
5. The study area encompasses numerous archeological resources, and care must be exercised during any upgrades to below-ground utilities or during construction projects.
 - Locate infrastructure improvements in areas historically or currently identified as maintenance areas before proposing other locations within the cultural landscape.

6. Assure infrastructure and facilities are integrated holistically and sustainably within the cultural landscape to protect its integrity.
 - Adhere to best management practices for stormwater management and water conservation.
 - Underground powerlines throughout the study area, as possible.
 - HPD must be consulted on ground disturbing activity utilizing State or Federal dollars. Archaeological resources would need to be considered if underground powerlines are constructed.

Guidance by Landscape Characteristic

Cluster Arrangement

1. Preserve the historic urban form of the study area, including the building-edged central open Plaza, and the low-scale buildings of one to two stories throughout the study area. Preserve the open spaces and placitas between buildings. Preserve the narrow roads and alleys extending from the Plaza, creating interconnected public spaces and densely clustered groups of buildings.
2. Preserve the central Taos Plaza as the focal point of town, enclosed by low buildings.
3. Repair the historic urban fabric by encouraging infill of vacant land, and allow new construction compatible with the established historic urban pattern.
 - Areas identified for potential infill are located throughout the study area and support the dense character of building arrangement. (Refer to Figure 4-6)

Buildings and Structures

1. Preserve contributing buildings and structures associated with the study area (refer Chapter Three. Existing conditions Assessment and Landscape Analysis).
2. Allow the removal of non-contributing buildings and structures.
 - Non-contributing buildings include the block directly east of the Plaza, the Bent Street Shops, and buildings at the south end of the study area at Camino de la Placita. (Refer to Figure 4-6)
 - Non-contributing structures to remove include the stucco walls at Juan Largo Lane and features (pergola, timber planters) associated with John Dunn Way.



Figure 4-4. Spanish Pueblo Revival Style utilizes natural materials, with an emphasis on horizontal lines. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Spanish-Pueblo Revival Style

The history of Spanish-Pueblo Revival style architecture is specific to New Mexico, especially in the northern, high plateau of the state. Responding to the climate and borrowing from the indigenous materials and building practices of the Native Americans, Spanish-Pueblo Revival is distinct from other academic styles such as Mission Revival or Spanish Colonial. It is characterized by five character-defining features:

- Low and long building mass of modest scale, suited to traditional adobe construction. Rounded edges are often found, a result of the malleability of adobe.
- Horizontal lines and flat roofs, with the exception of the parapet. Roman arches and semi-circular outlines are discouraged.
- Facades punctuated by a variety of architectural devices: inset windows and doors, balconies and covered walks (portales).
- Ornament in the form of carved wood lintels and corbels. Projecting wood beams (vigas) contribute to the simple ornamentation.
- Avoidance of unnatural colors, respecting the earthen materials.

3. Design and site new construction to be compatible in mass, scale, form and materials to the historic. It is not necessary for new construction to mimic the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style of the historic buildings, or any other historic architectural style, rather the importance is on compatibility with the historic setting.
 - Follow established setbacks and build-to lines.
 - Preserve views to the surrounding mountains when adding new buildings and structures.
 - Use natural, local materials to the greatest extent possible.

Circulation

1. Preserve the existing alignment of narrow roadways, generous alleys, walkways, and interconnected public spaces as a significant character-defining feature of the study area.
2. Preserve narrow drive lanes within the study area, and do not widen the roads. Do not allow asphalt paving to touch historic building edges.
3. Maintain parking area north of the Plaza (west of John Dunn Shops). Although a non-contributing feature, this was historically on open field. Consider removing the parking area from the site of the former Our Lady of Guadalupe Church (east of study area).
4. Maintain simply-detailed concrete paving or stone pavers at pedestrian alleys and walkways.
 - Remove non-contributing paving finishes such as brick, exposed aggregate concrete, or stamped concrete.
 - Preserve contributing alley surfaces as compacted soil, where extant.
5. Maintain John Dunn Way as a pedestrian route. Consider redesigning the route to be aesthetically compatible with the historic district by removing non-contributing paving, planters, benches, etc.
6. Develop new areas for safe, non-motorist circulation. Development should respect the character-defining qualities of cluster arrangement. Consider a system of interconnected walkways, expanding the existing pedestrian walkway network.
 - Extend La Fonda Alley to Paseo del Pueblo Sur.

- Consider alley improvements, including improving drainage, lighting, and surfacing.
- Consider establishing a designated pedestrian walkway from the intersection of Paseo del Pueblo Sur and Camino de la Placita, to the north to Bent Street and beyond. This should utilize existing routes, but provide a way for pedestrians to access the historic center of Taos without needing to travel along busier roads.

Vegetation/ Stormwater / Sustainability

1. Allow additional shade trees within the study area.
2. Minimize the use ornamental plantings that do not reflect the local, native plant palette.
3. Allow lawn within the Plaza, however limit its use elsewhere within the study area, preferring drought-tolerant species.
4. Integrate to best management practices for stormwater management and water conservation.

Figure 4-5. Preserve buildings that contribute to the NRHP, SRCP, and HOZ. Vegetation in the study area should emphasize drought-tolerant native and adapted species. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

- Utilize on-site stormwater quality measures such as bioswales and rain gardens, where possible. Integrate rainwater harvesting and/or greywater to irrigate planted areas.



LEGEND

- - - Study Area
- Contributing Structure to Preserve
- Non-Contributing Structure
- Existing Parking to Remain
- Potential Infill
- Open Space to Preserve/Enhance
- Alley to Repair
- Crossing to Enhance
- - - Pedestrian Circulation to Enhance
- < - - - Views to Protect

- ① Taos Plaza, Repair Open Form
- ② Improve Plaza Entrance
- ③ Preserve Urban Form (buildings, alleys)
- ④ Remove Parking
- ⑤ Remove Non-Contributing Features
- ⑥ Provide Improved Pedestrian Wayfinding

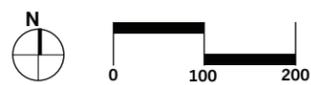


Figure 4-6. Proposed treatment for the study area.

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Figure 4-7. Preserve views to the mountains from Taos Plaza. (Mundus Bishop, 2015)

Taos Plaza Treatment Guidance

Rehabilitation of Taos Plaza will address the role of the Plaza as the center of the community. The traditional use of the Plaza as a central gathering space has remained similar throughout its historical development and into current day. Rehabilitation will preserve its historic form, scale and character while improving day-to-day use, regular events, and special festivities. Compatible amenities (seating, shade structure, lighting, etc.) and universal accessibility will meet contemporary needs while honoring the Plaza's history.

Treatment Vision

Taos Plaza will be rehabilitated to reestablish the qualities of the Plaza's physical form of the pre-1950s character when it was one open space enclosed by a low adobe wall, and characterized by a simple pattern of walks, trees, and a central focus.

The rehabilitation of the Plaza will preserve its extant historic form and scale, repair contributing features including portions of the original adobe wall, reestablish its historic open character, and provide compatible additions for continuation of its traditional use. New features should be designed to reflect the historic character of the Plaza and to showcase the work of local artists and designers.

Plaza Guidance

1. Preserve and repair extant contributing features including the form and scale of the Plaza, one continuous surface for roads surrounding the Plaza, surrounding buildings and portales, and the low adobe wall (at western edge and other original sections).
2. Remove non-contributing features that diminish the integrity of Taos Plaza (existing gazebo, ramps and multiple grade changes, extensive brick paving, information kiosk, etc.).
3. If desired by the community, relocate compatible features with special significance including the War Memorial(s) and Padre Martinez statue.
4. Reestablish a simple walk system with a perimeter walk, central terrace with central focus (water feature or temporary art installations), linear tree pattern, lights, and seating.
5. Reestablish the Plaza as a level, open space, with clear lines of sight.

Program

Existing and traditional uses of the Plaza will be retained and accommodated. As part of the CLR process, the community was consulted to determine the future uses and appropriate level of use for the Plaza. The desired program includes the following:

- Everyday use as a gathering space, meeting spot and place to rest with ample seating and opportunities for people watching, sitting, and informal picnicking. Desired uses include wayfinding and orientation for visitors;
- Regular events ranging from farmer's market to flea market, Thursday concerts, and other events that bring the community together on a regular basis;
- Large community gatherings including Fiestas de Taos and seasonal events.

Components

Key components of the treatment guidance for the Plaza include:

- Open character with simple pattern of walks, lawn and paved spaces;
- Open air shelter / bandstand (approximately 300 to 450 square feet) with small stage, dancing area, and set at the western end of the Plaza (traditional orientation for regular events).
- Seating integrated with historic pattern of the Plaza and oriented for connections to surrounding buildings and interior of the Plaza.
- Minor signage for identification, information and interpretation. Lighting for evening and seasonal uses.

Figure 4-8. Reestablish Taos Plaza as a level open space with accessible walking paths and a central focus, as existed historically, c. 1937 (Town of Taos)





Figure 4-9. Provide a central element within the Plaza, c. 1937 (Town of Taos)

Implementation

The guidance for the Plaza is presented to indicate the direction of improvements and to depict a range of treatment options. Each option explores a different way to rehabilitate the Plaza and its historic form, while meeting contemporary needs. These options are intended to be a guide and starting point for future work. The rehabilitation ideas for the Plaza are presented in Figures 4-11 to 4-18. These are provided as treatment options for the town to consider and further develop as the community desires. The compatible features within the Plaza, i.e., Padre Martinez statue and War Memorial, may be desirable to remain due to importance to the community. The treatment options look at alternative ways to incorporate these features into the Plaza rehabilitation, while also reestablishing historic patterns. Options 1a and 2a allow retaining the War Memorial and Padre Martinez statue, and Options 1b and 2b provide a vision for the Plaza if memorials are relocated.

Guidance by Landscape Characteristic

Cluster Arrangement

1. Preserve the form of the Plaza with an open character with continuous paving from the portales to the Plaza edge.

Views

1. Preserve views into the Plaza from the surrounding buildings, alleys and streets towards the Plaza space. Preserve the entrance into the Plaza by maintaining the view from Paseo del Pueblo.
2. Maintain views to Taos Mountain, and views to the west.

Structures

1. Preserve and repair extant contributing features including surrounding buildings and portales framing the open space of the Plaza.
2. Preserve the low adobe wall at the western edge of the Plaza and other original sections of the wall.
3. Remove non-contributing structures that diminish the integrity of Taos Plaza (existing gazebo, information kiosk, concrete walls). These structures are not in historically appropriate locations and are of a scale and mass that diminishes the integrity of the Plaza. Historically, structures were few, and modest in scale.
4. Provide a new open air shelter / bandstand at the western edge of the Plaza.

- The shelter / bandstand should have a light footprint (approximately 300 to 450 square feet) to provide a stage. Orient the structure at the western end of the Plaza with an adjacent area for dancing and views to the west.
 - The shelter / bandstand should be designed to reflect the historic character of the Plaza and to showcase the work of local artists and designers.
5. Ensure any new structures are subordinate to, and compatible with the mass, scale, and form of surrounding contributing Spanish-Pueblo Revival style buildings and portales.
 6. Reestablish a central element within the Plaza as a focal point.
 - This central element could be a circular planting area or water feature (symbolizing the old well and acequia), flagpole or other modest feature marking the center of the Plaza.
 7. Reestablish a mud plaster wall around the perimeter of the Plaza.
 - Establish this wall as a low structure of authentic adobe construction.

Circulation

1. Preserve and repair the road surrounding the Plaza and the sidewalk under the portales.
 - Repair the road curb at the edge of the portales by reestablishing the rolled curb to the sidewalk. This curb is extant on the north side of the Plaza but is missing at the other edges.
 - Continue vehicular traffic around the Plaza and provide diagonal parking. Do not allow vehicular parking at the edge of the Plaza.
2. Remove non-contributing circulation features that diminish the integrity of the Plaza, including ramps and steps, and brick and flagstone paving.



Figure 4-10. Reestablish a mud plaster wall at the perimeter of the Plaza. 1940 (Town of Taos)



Figure 4-11. Reestablish a linear arrangement of shade trees at the perimeter of the Plaza and an interior of lawn. c. 1915 (Town of Taos)

3. Reestablish a linear, organized system of pedestrian walks.
 - Establish a perimeter walk at the outside edge of the Plaza. Ensure this route meets universal accessibility requirements.
 - Establish a central terrace to enhance the feeling of a central space, as existed historically.
 - Provide pedestrian walks within the Plaza, mirroring the straight orthogonal routes of the historic condition.
 - Surface pedestrian walks with either a simple concrete or a stabilized soft-surface, so long as it meets accessibility requirements.
4. Provide safe and universally accessible routes into the Plaza from the adjacent streets. Connect pedestrian crosswalks with neighboring alleys.

Small Scale Features

1. Potentially relocate, in collaboration with the community, compatible features with special significance including the War Memorial(s) and the Padre Martinez statue.
 - If the War Memorial is removed, replace the flag poles, since a flag pole occurred historically within the Plaza.
 - If the War Memorial is retained, consider modifying its visual presence by removing adjacent walls and steps, and allowing for circulation around the memorial.
 - If the Padre Martinez statue is retained, consider resetting the statue on a new plinth that is compatible with the historic setting.
2. Remove non-contributing lights, benches, planters, signs, bike rack, trash receptacles, etc.
3. Reestablish simply designed outdoor lighting system.
 - Provide outdoor lighting that adheres to dark-sky principles. New lighting should be simple, not replicative of the historic or of some time period, and should be visually unobtrusive by day.

4. Reestablish simple outdoor seating. Integrate seating with the historic pattern of the Plaza, oriented for connections to surrounding buildings the Plaza interior.
 - Provide seating along interior and exterior walkways. New seating should be a simple design, and not replicative of the historic or of some time period.
5. Minimize the use of signs within the Plaza.
 - Allow signage providing identification, information, interpretation and wayfinding where needed and establish a consistent design and style for signs. Consider incorporating this style throughout the study area.
6. Remove existing parking meters under the portales and create a centralized parking meter system, eliminating the need for individual meters at each space.

Vegetation

1. Reestablish the character of the vegetation by creating a space with an open interior (covered with grass or low vegetation) and a perimeter of shade trees.
2. Reestablish lawn within the interior of the Plaza.
 - Utilize a resilient, drought-tolerant mix of grass species.
3. Reestablish a linear tree pattern. Preserve contributing cottonwood trees until they have reached the end of their natural lives, then reestablish shade trees at the perimeter of the Plaza.
 - Utilize species that would have been used historically (cottonwoods) or adapted species that meet sustainability goals.
4. Provide irrigation water by collecting rainwater runoff and/or directing drainage from adjacent streets and alleys into the Plaza.
 - Allow opportunities to enhance stormwater quality within the Plaza (bioswales, rain gardens, etc.)
5. Maintain existing evergreen tree (Christmas tree), until it has reached the end of its natural life.
 - Once the tree has died, consider not replanting evergreen trees as they were typically not used historically within the Plaza.

- ① Shade Structure
- ② Maintain War Memorial / Central Terrace and Focus
- ③ Central Walks
- ④ Preserve Mud Plaster Wall
- ⑤ New Mud Plaster Wall
- ⑥ Repair Linear Tree Pattern
- ⑦ Accessible Crosswalk

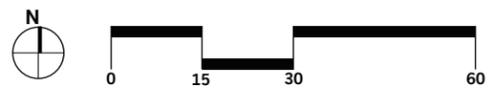


Figure 4-12. Treatment Option 1a

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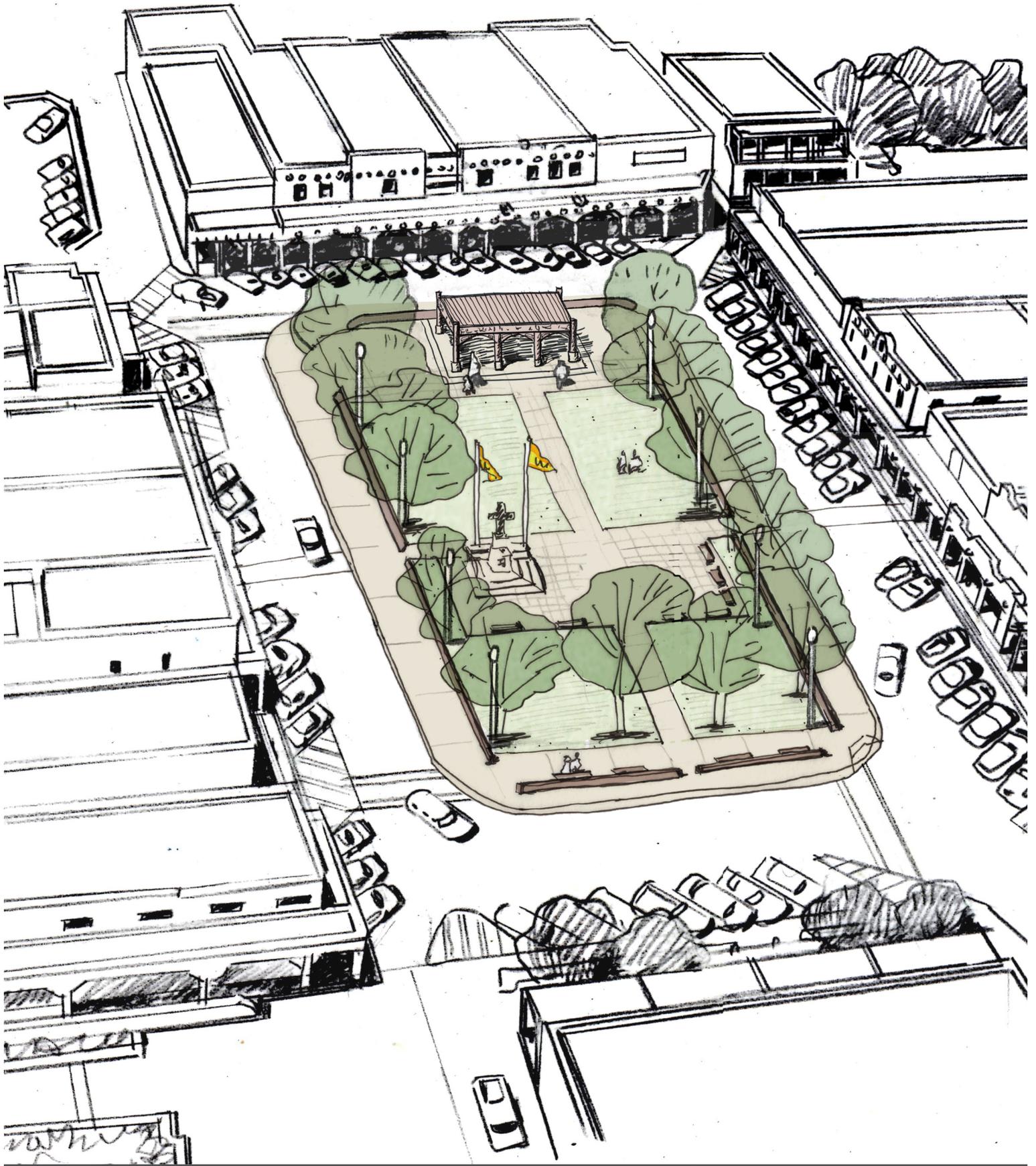


Figure 4-13. Treatment Option 1a

TAOS HISTORIC PLAZA
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT
Treatment Option 1a

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- ① Shade Structure
- ② Central Terrace / Focus (water, art, etc.)
- ③ Central Walk
- ④ Preserve Mud Plaster Wall
- ⑤ New Mud Plaster Wall
- ⑥ Repair Linear Tree Pattern
- ⑦ Flagpole
- ⑧ Accessible Crosswalk

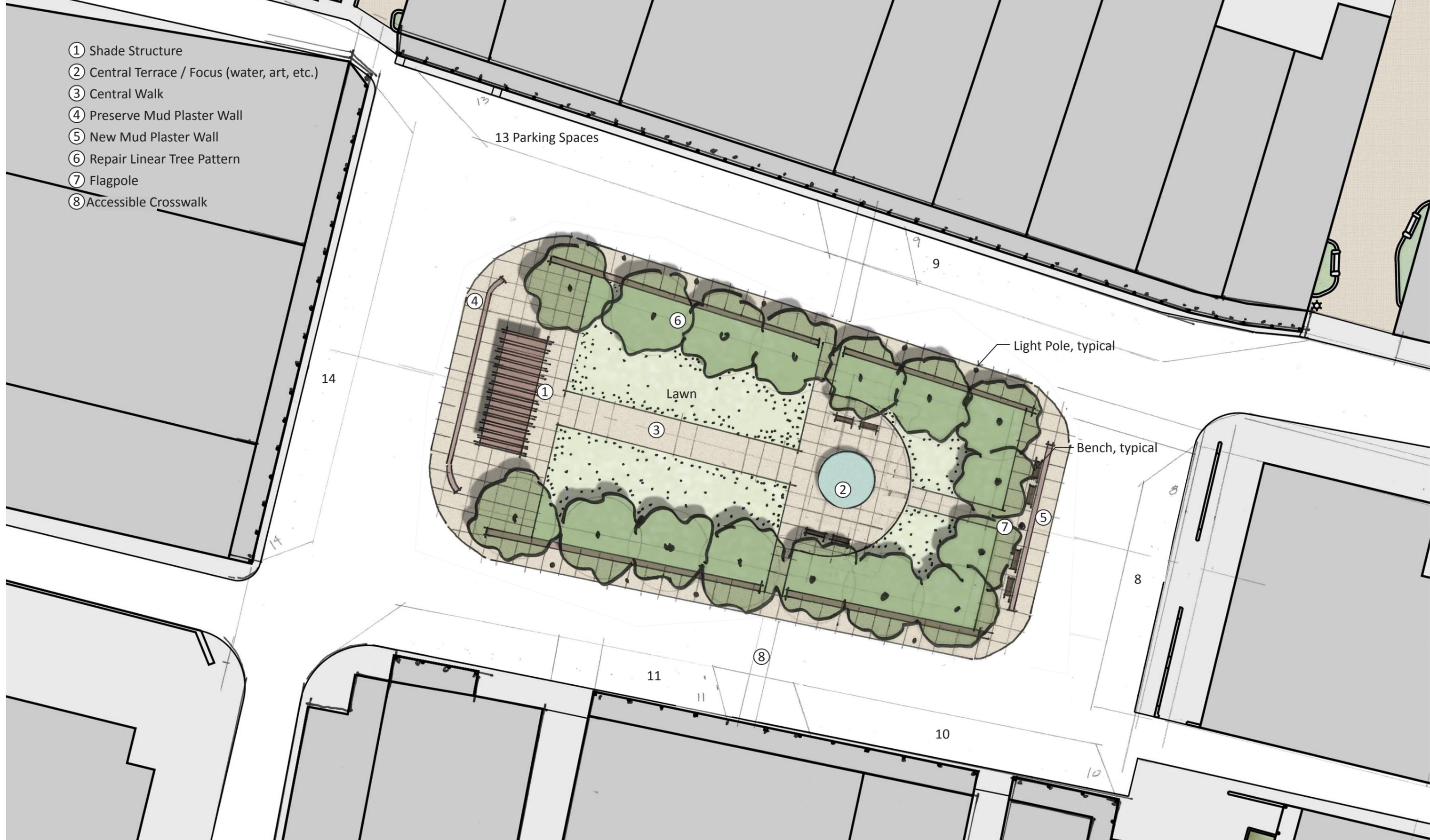
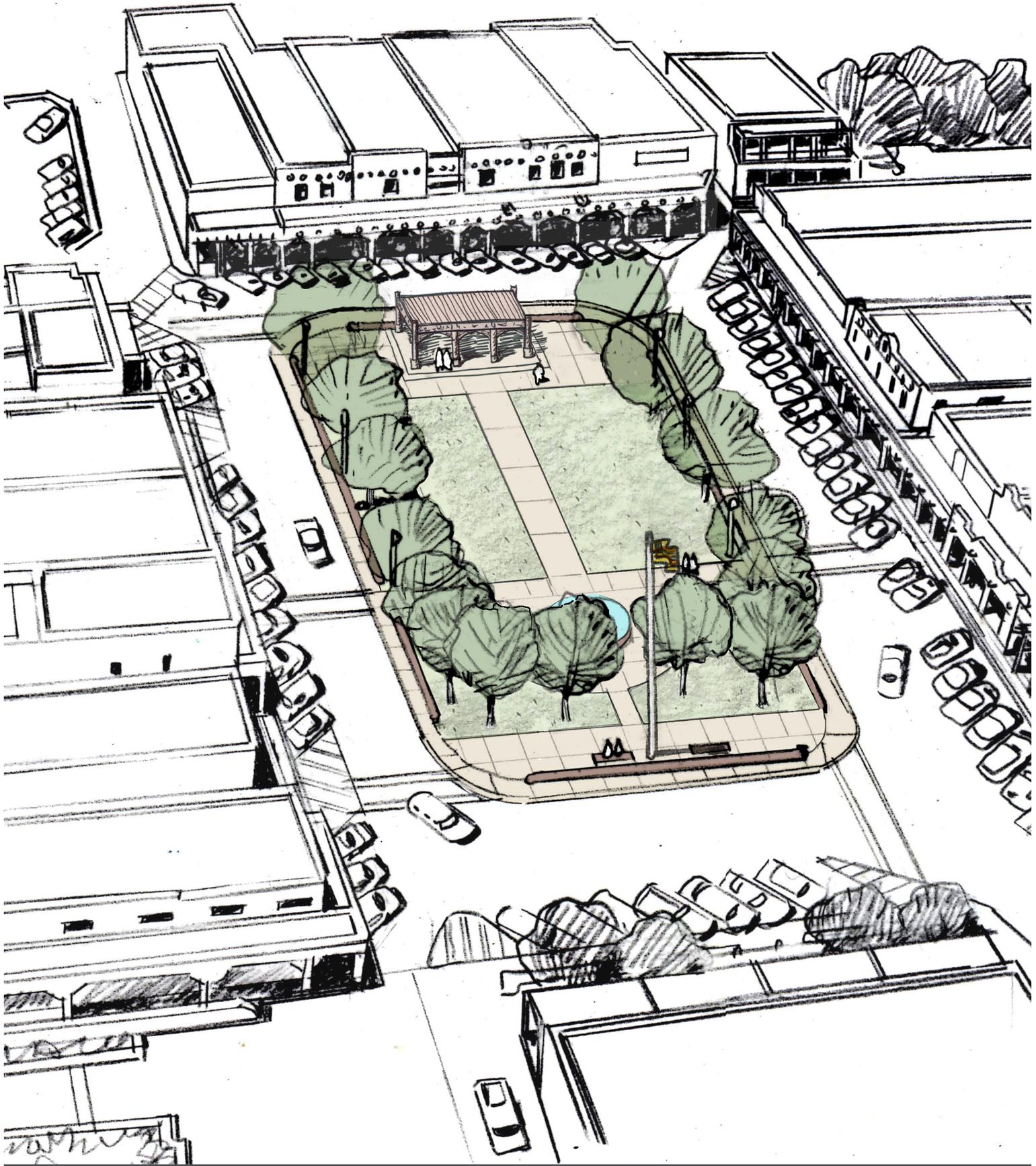


Figure 4-14. Treatment Option 1b

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TAOS HISTORIC PLAZA
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT
Treatment Option 1b

Figure 4-15. Treatment Option 1b

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- ① Shade Structure
- ② Maintain War Memorial / Central Terrace and Focus
- ③ Central Lawn
- ④ Preserve Mud Plaster Wall
- ⑤ New Mud Plaster Wall
- ⑥ Repair Linear Tree Pattern
- ⑦ Accessible Crosswalk
- ⑧ Perimeter Walk with Benches
- ⑨ Interior Walk

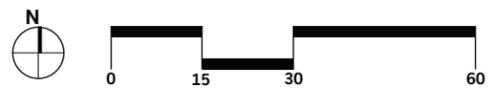
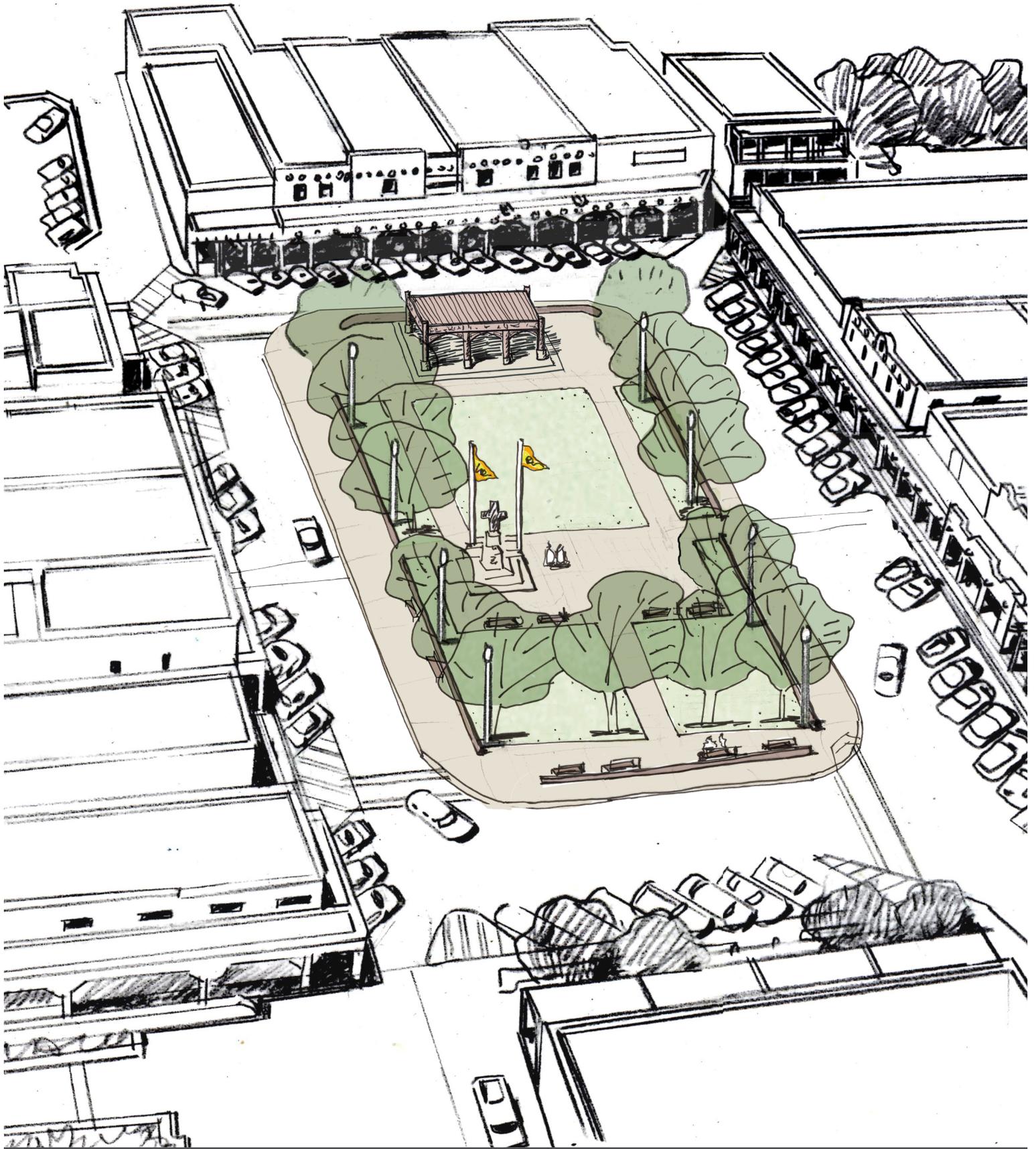


Figure 4-16. Treatment Option 2a

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TAOS HISTORIC PLAZA
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT
Treatment Option 2a

Figure 4-17. Treatment Option 2a

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- ① Shade Structure
- ② Central Terrace / Focus (water, art, etc.)
- ③ Central Lawn
- ④ Preserve Mud Plaster Wall
- ⑤ New Mud Plaster Wall
- ⑥ Repair Linear Tree Pattern
- ⑦ Flagpole
- ⑧ Accessible Crosswalk
- ⑨ Interior Walk

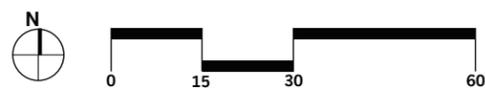


Figure 4-18. Treatment Option 2b

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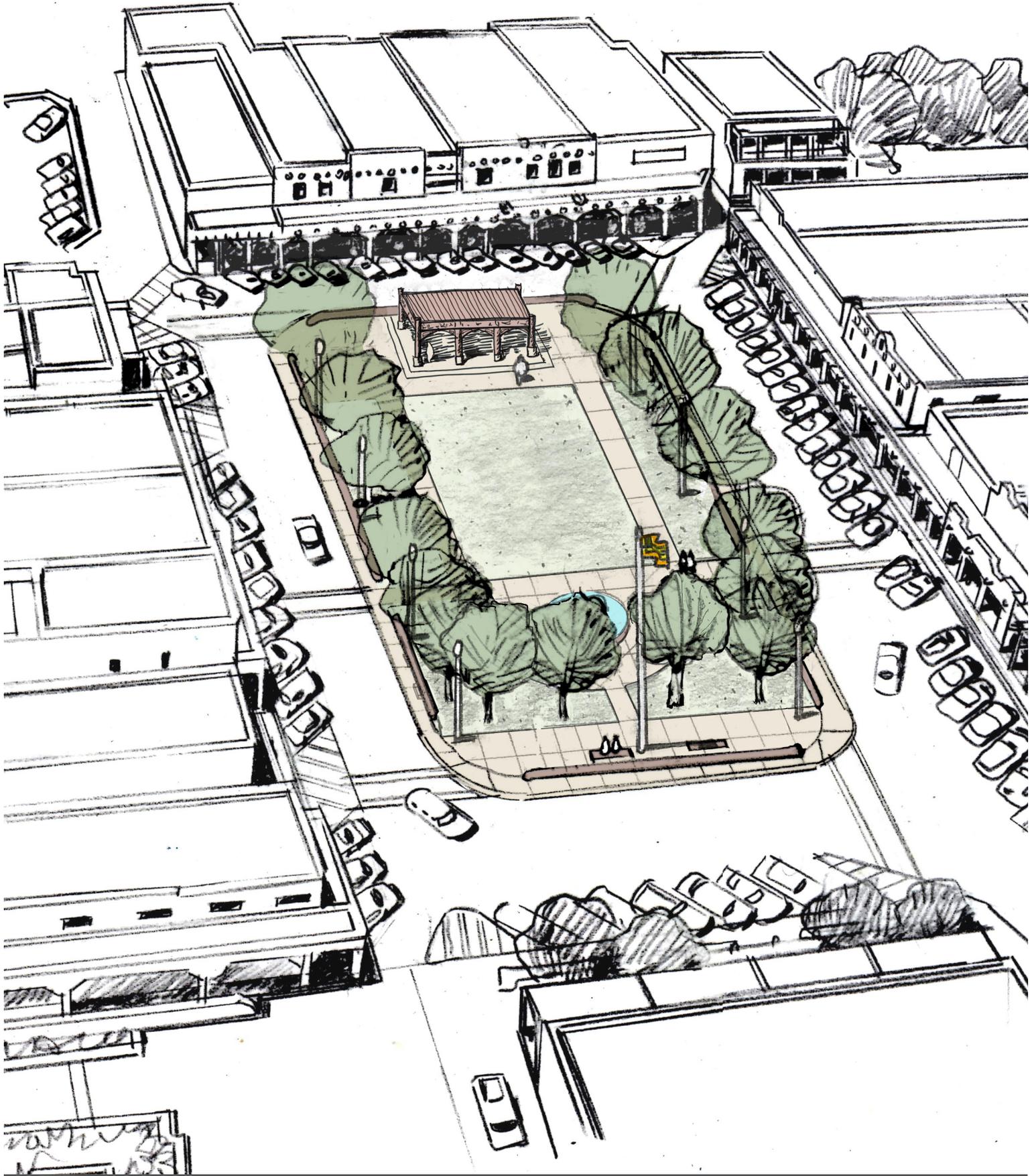


Figure 4-19. Treatment Option 2b

TAOS HISTORIC PLAZA
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT
Treatment Option 2b

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Figure B-1. Taos Plaza c.1875-1900. (Denver Public Library)



Figure B-2. Taos Plaza pre - 1880. The first County Courthouse with gable roof is on the right. (Palace of the Governors Photo Archives)



Figure B-3. Taos Pueblo, c. 1900. (Denver Public Library, X-30006)



Figure B-4. Early photograph of Taos looking east, c. 1900. The Guadalupe Church, center background, is the tallest building, the Plaza is the treeless space in front. (Town of Taos)



Figure B-5. Taos Plaza, c. 1907. (Town of Taos)



Figure B-6. Old Guadalupe church, west of the Taos Plaza, prior to 1911. (Town of Taos)



Figure B-7. Artist Herb Dutton painting outside Taos, c. 1915. (Palace of the Governors Archive LS.0966)



Figure B-8. Taos Plaza c. 1915. by George L. Bean. (Palace of the Governors Photo Archives)



Figure B-9. Taos Valley c.1915-1920. (George L. Beam, Denver Public Library)



Figure B-10. Taos Plaza with wooden gazebo, c. 1915. (Town of Taos)



Figure B-11. Coming Up From The Rio Grande. (Town of Taos)



Figure B-12. The Plaza and Don Fernando Hotel in background, c. 1927. (H.S. Poley, Denver Public Library P-256)



Figure B-13. Taos Plaza designed in the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style, view looking west, c. 1937. (Town of Taos)



Figure B-14. Dancers at the Fiestas de Taos, 1940. (Town of Taos)



"Taos Plaza", n.d.
,Image No. 002755, New Mexico Department of Tourism Photograph Collection,
Courtesy of the State Archives of New Mexico
1205 Camino Carlos Rey
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87507

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Figure B-15. Taos Plaza and street, 1946. (NM Archives item 002755)



Figure B-16. Taos Plaza and street, 1950s. (Town of Taos)



"Taos Plaza", 1968,
Image No. 064823, New Mexico Department of Tourism Photograph Collection,
Courtesy of the State Archives of New Mexico
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Santa Fe, New Mexico 87507

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Figure B-17. Taos Plaza c.1968. (NM Archives)

Taos Plaza Summary of Oral History Roundtable and Community Open House

This report documents meetings and workshops held from January 13 to 14, 2016. The intent of the trip was to conduct oral history interviews and a public open house to solicit information on the history, use, and desired future conditions of the Taos Plaza.

Wednesday, January 13, 2016 – Oral History Roundtable

Facilitators:

Louis Fineberg – Town of Taos, Planning Director; John Miller – Town of Taos, Senior Planner; Tina Bishop, Mundus Bishop (MB); Shelby Scharen (MB)

Participants:

Elizabeth Crittenden Palacios	Oscar Palacios
Kathryn Ritter	Sylvia Rodriguez
Bob Romero	Rena Rosequist
Marcia Winter	Barbara Brenner
Judith Cantu	John Delmargo
Francisco Guevara	Mark Henderson
David Henry	Davison Koenig
Lillian Miller	

Roundtable Discussion

1. Introductions and Project Overview
 - a. An overview of the project and outline of the evening was given to the invited participants, and the group broke into two groups at separate tables.
2. The roundtable discussion included memories of the Plaza, knowledge about the physical changes, and visions for the Plaza's future.
 - a. The oral histories were recorded and transcripts will be made.
 - b. Questions asked during the discussion included the following.
 - What are your earliest memories of the Plaza?
 - How has it changed since then?
 - What led to the changes in the Plaza in the 1970s?
 - What existing elements of the Plaza are important to you?
 - What is your perception of the Plaza today?
 - What is the biggest issue concerning the Plaza and study area?
 - What physical changes are needed to the Plaza? What would you change, if anything?
3. Highlights from the history discussion included the following.
 - a. The use of the Plaza has changed in recent times. Historically it was a gathering place and adjacent businesses catered to local residents.
 - b. The Plaza was used as a meeting point, a place to play games (horseshoes, nickels)

4. The groups identified the following key wishes for the future of the Plaza.
 - a. Re-create the feeling of center
 - b. Incorporate the Guadalupe Plaza and foster connection between spaces
 - c. Unclutter the Plaza, remove bricks, and simplify by making a level space that is easy to walk through
 - d. Create a pedestrian-friendly core throughout the study area

Thursday, November 19, 2015 – Community Open House

Participants:

Louis Fineberg – Town of Taos, Planning Director; John Miller – Town of Taos, Senior Planner; Tina Bishop, Mundus Bishop (MB); Shelby Scharen (MB); and members of the community.

Items Discussed

1. Louis Fineberg welcomed the group, introduced the project, and facilitated introductions.
2. The consultants described the project for the group, and provided an overview of what the Cultural Landscape Report is and what it will do.
 - a. The Cultural Landscape Report is a planning document that provides a background of the Plaza and study area, evaluates the existing condition and provides guidelines for the care and future development of the Plaza.
3. The consultants presented an overview of the Plaza's history as the center of the community and development of the Town of Taos; and an overview of the Plaza today, noting physical issues including access, items in need of repair, and how the current condition differs from the historic.
4. After the presentation, the group dispersed into an informal gathering, and participants were invited to discuss issues and opportunities facing the Plaza. Participants reviewed presentation boards, and were invited to share their knowledge of the Plaza and to provide guidance for its future condition.
 - a. One board asked participants for what they knew about the Plaza, including the following questions. The group's responses are listed below.
 - What is the best feature?
 - How is the Plaza used? (events, seating, gazebo, performances...)
 - How do you use the Plaza?
 - What is the biggest issue concerning the Plaza?
 - Why is the Plaza important?
 - b. Another board asked participants what they would like in a new plan for the Plaza, including the following question, with the list of responses below.
 - Which part of the Plaza's history do you like best?
 - How can the Plaza be more useable for everyday enjoyment?
 - Do you like the concept of one, big open space or smaller spaces?
 - What features/resources are important to keep?
 - What future uses and amenities would you like to see?



1880



1902



1908



c.1910



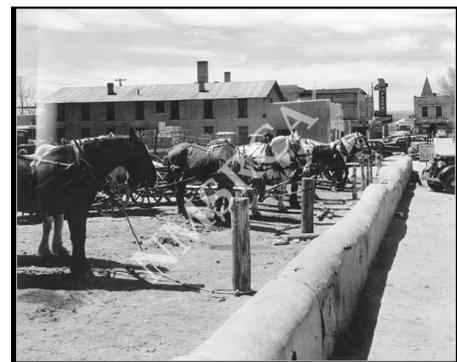
c.1915



c.1928



c.1935



c.1939

COMMUNITY
OPEN HOUSE
TAOS
PLAZA

JANUARY 14, 2016

MUNDUS BISHOP



1940



1940



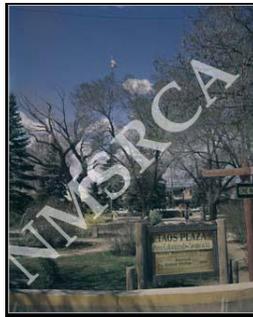
1941



1942



c1950s



1968



1978



2015



2015



2015

COMMUNITY
OPEN HOUSE
TAOS PLAZA

JANUARY 14, 2016

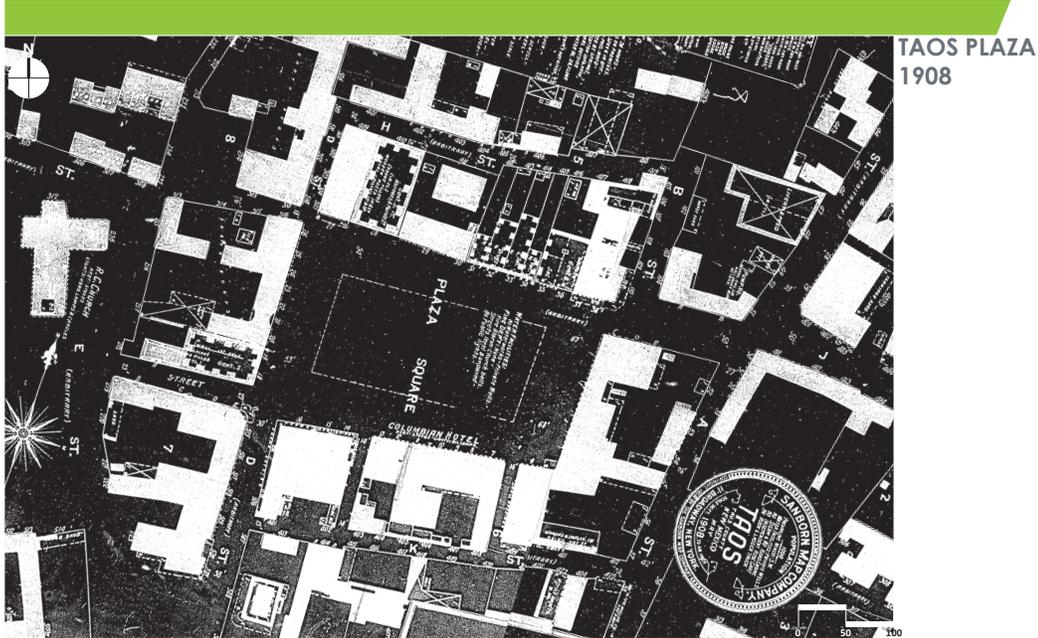
MUNDUS BISHOP



COMMUNITY
OPEN HOUSE TAOS
HOUSE PLAZA

JANUARY 14, 2016

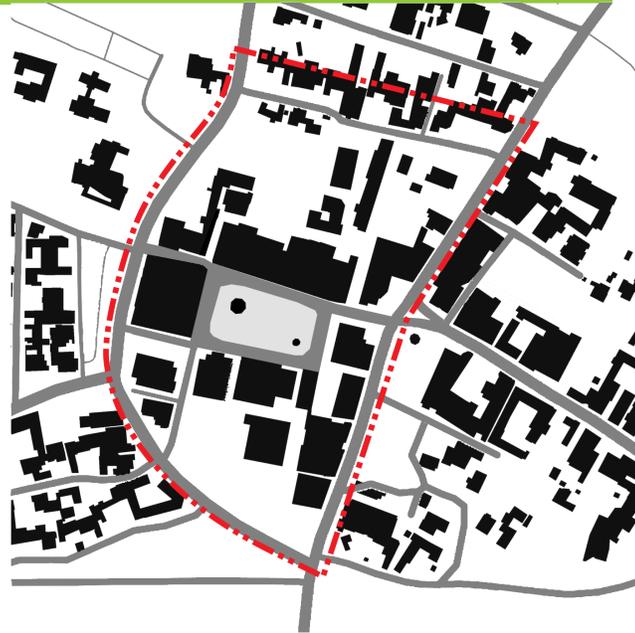
MUNDUS BISHOP



COMMUNITY
OPEN HOUSE TAOS
HOUSE PLAZA

JANUARY 14, 2016

MUNDUS BISHOP



TAOS PLAZA
STUDY AREA
FIGURE GROUND STUDY



TAOS PLAZA
STUDY AREA
REVERSE FIGURE GROUND

COMMUNITY
OPEN HOUSE TAOS
HOUSE PLAZA

JANUARY 14, 2016



LEGEND

- - - Study Area
- Contributing Structure (Historic Overlay Zone)
- Non-Contributing Structure
- Parking
- 123 Street Number
- ① Historic Taos Plaza
- ② Our Lady of Guadalupe Church
- ③ Hotel la Fonda (1937)
- ④ Kit Carson Home (c.1825)
- ⑤ Old County Courthouse (1932)
- ⑥ Taos Inn (1934)
- ⑦ Long John Dunn House (c.1880)
- ⑧ Governor Bent's House (c.1835)
- ⑨ Bert Phillips House (early 1800s; 1905)
- ⑩ Manby House (1898)
- ⑪ 112 Paseo del Pueblo Norte
- ⑫ Scheurich Lane
- ⑬ Teresina Lane
- ⑭ Juan Largo Lane
- ⑮ La Fonda Alley
- ⑯ South Alley
- ⑰ John Dunn House Alley
- ⑱ McCarthy Placita



**COMMUNITY
OPEN
HOUSE** TAOS
PLAZA
2015

JANUARY 14, 2016

MUNDUS BISHOP



COMMUNITY
OPEN
HOUSE TAOS
PLAZA
2015

JANUARY 14, 2016



MUNDUS BISHOP

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE PLAZA?

What is the best feature?

POTENTIAL

Gathering Space
location, history, merge historic photos, history
trees, location as gathering place
OPEN SPACE

TREES & Location
ability to provide vicarious understanding of community history
Green Area/park/meeting friends
location

How is the Plaza used?
events, seating, gazebo, performances...

FARMERS MARKET, LIVE MUSIC,
TRAINING DAYS AREA MARKET

Community events
Enc. Space, Public Plaza - town hall location
in Plaza - connect groups - historical in
place
Benches - Plaza - repair, redesign, public art
Bring community together
Events
to connect with to other attractions
Unintended

How do you use the Plaza?

Community events

FARMERS MARKET
Rarely, with the exception of Farmer's Market
Place to rest, to interact with tourists/visitors
and to sketch
Bring in all ages, races, together
Families Place visit with all ages (kids) friends
to bring visitor to events
public discussion history lessons for locals + visitors
it's my living room
FARMERS MKT
Thurs Music
hangout my out
Walk across of Plaza, nice pleasant

What is the biggest issue concerning the plaza?

ACCESSIBILITY / ACCESS
Safety, trip hazards
Trucks/trunks turning up bricks
Accessibility, pedestrian safety, lack of consensus on use

SENSE OF PLACE
BRINGING THE COMMUNITY BACK
Open Space
alternatives to auto access
plaza is not to scale for current community size

need to have complementary indoor community space Old Courthouse-Old Theatre
Trucks, Trunks, parking, or something that vehicles can't park
Should be a walking Plaza - no parking
Re-forest/trim - with proper Plant Species
It's ugly!

Please remove bricks!

Why is the Plaza important?

COMMUNITY
The living room of the community
History
Was, and can still be, the heart beat of the community

ECONOMY
town center
Living remnant of cultural history
SENSE OF PLACE

town hall democracy - conversation
Sense of place, economy, identity, gathering place for internet era / sense of place / celebration / identity
Community Events = its original concept - starting in 1880's
gathering place
Bringing people together

WHAT KIND OF PLAZA DO YOU WANT?

Which part of the plaza's history do you like best?

1880 model 1908
1935 period 1930's
1960's + 70's
1995 with big trees & a gazebo ✓
1935 with more right trees - right place
1907 and early. Not too much going on and that is ok. Too much is bad & cluttered

How can the Plaza be more useable for everyday enjoyment?
easier to open - A CALM, REFLECTIVE AREA
easier movement from plaza to buildings and entries
REMOVE IMMEDIATELY:
THE SIGN
THE BILLBOARD
THE CROSS
THE TOWER
MOST OF THE CONCRETE INTERIOR + EXTERIOR
MAKE IT ONE LEVEL
REMOVE CONCEPT
PLEASE TAKE SOMETHING
Redesign Mall - close to traffic at least partially

Do you like the concept of one, big open space or smaller spaces?
One level is the main level - good but to become a playground
Big open space - one level, get all the junk out of there
Big open space - one level
One big open space ✓

ONE big communal space agree
one level - NO BRICKS -
ONE big open plaza like space
ONE big open plaza like space
OPEN SPACE WITH GRASS + SHADE TREES
would like an open space if used properly to benefit community

What features/resources are important to keep?

Trees!
Trees
TRESS
space for movement conversation
Flag + cross
Trees & a gazebo BUT NOT the one we have
TRESS + trees + benches
UNIFORM TREES
SOME BRICKS
trees need more grass

What future uses and amenities would you like to see?

Integration - transition between plaza transportation/circulation + buildings
Greenhouse, Mercado (open air), farmers market, gathering place for community
CONCRETE IN THE BUILDINGS/ENTRIES
Grass = benches
Food carts * **GRASS**
WELL
GRASS
LIVE MUSIC, FARMERS MARKET, FLEA MARKET
OUTDOOR MOVIES, ICE SCULPTURE CARVING CONTEST
LOW-RIDERS SHOW

What needs immediate attention?

Trees - Planting/health and age are killing them - Need to start planting new trees to replace dying ones
Open Access...
Information on history for visitors
Remove Hard scape + Transition System
Future Landscapes
Improve Tree Species
HARD SURFACES ✓
GAZEBO
uneven Bricks
it smells sometimes when strains sewer/plumbing

Taos Plaza Summary Community Open House

This report Trip 3 including the community open house held from March 18, 2016. The intent of the trip was to present to the public four alternative treatments for the Taos Plaza and solicit community feedback on the ideas presented to help guide the desired future condition of the Taos Plaza. Included in this trip report is an outline of the evening's agenda, summary of community feedback, and items for follow up.

Friday, March 18, 2016 – Community Open House

Facilitators:

Louis Fineberg – Town of Taos, Planning Director; John Miller – Town of Taos, Senior Planner; Tina Bishop, Mundus Bishop; Shelby Scharen, Mundus Bishop

Participants:

Oscar Palacios; Elizabeth Palacios; Pascual Maestas; Lynn Fitzgerald; Jan O'Donahue; Peter ODonahue; Stacey Hiddleston; Carlos Mondragon; Jeff Stadler; Sandra Richardson; Darren Fernandez; Tom Myers; Fritz Hoshorn; Annette Arellano; (approximately 60 community members were present, but not all signed in)

Items Discussed

1. Louis Fineberg welcomed the group, introduced the project and consultants.
2. The consultants described the project for the group, and provided an overview of what the Cultural Landscape Report is and what it will do.
 - a. The Cultural Landscape Report is a planning document that provides a background of the Plaza and Study Area, evaluates the existing condition, and provides guidelines for the care and future development of the Plaza.
3. The consultants presented an overview of the Plaza's history as the center of the community and development of the Town of Taos. An overview of the Plaza today was provided, noting physical issues including access, items in need of repair, and how the current condition differs from the historic.
4. The presentation provided an overview of the last community meeting and issues and desires that the community expressed during that meeting.
5. The future program of the plaza was discussed, which will include both large events and everyday use. A small gazebo is provided as part of the program.
6. An overview of the four treatment options was provided. These were derived from feedback at the first community meeting, and informed by the desired program. A range of alternatives was considered that differ in the amount of physical change recommended.
7. After the presentation, the group dispersed into an informal work session in an adjacent room, where participants were invited to review each option more closely and provide feedback on what they like/dislike about the plans.
 - a. Option 1. Retains the most existing fabric such as the gazebo, war memorial, padre Martinez statue, and repairs surfacing, re-introduces lawn space, and

removes non-historic walls. The community's responses are listed below.

- Memorial not scaled
 - Need to retain view to the West
 - Like paving for dancing (need more) in front of gazebo
 - Gazebo should be on West side
 - Add gates to entrance
 - Add big steps down from Memorial
 - Need more trees
 - Want real adobe walls
 - Need restroom/little kiosk
 - Remove parking meters
 - Too much pavement
 - Would like walkways from corners (can also have square walls)
 - Big Sails perhaps decorated by artists?
 - More shade?
 - Real grass = dogs=dog poop
 - Like the simplified levels
 - Grass is great but not for dancing
 - Keep east side parking – do not loose parking
 - Let's keep it traditional and classy – simple and lovely
 - Grass needs to be seeded
 - Gazebo should go
 - Keep gazebo large enough for entertainment (4 votes)
 - Move gazebo to the center west side, level out the center and place the Vet Memorial on the east side by kiosk
 - Taos Pueblo donated Christmas tree
 - Padre Martinez statue was attained from the NM Legislature, if Taos wants to get rid of the statue, then research must be done to work on this legally.
- b. Option 2. Retains the War Memorial, but removes other non-contributing features in favor of a new gazebo, paths that follow historic alignments, and additional green space. The community's responses are listed below.
- Too much pavement
 - Needs some central shade (2 or 3 trees) but don't block view
 - Create a level area
 - Consider removing parking on east side
 - Do not remove any parking spaces
 - Input from school kids – what would they like to see?
 - Who else is not here – marginal stakeholders, go to them. E.g. los ancianos, asst. living, various other community orgs and groups
 - Too rigid, formal
 - Need dancing space in front of gazebo for Thursday nights (not lawn)
 - Amphitheatre with stadium type seating and planters

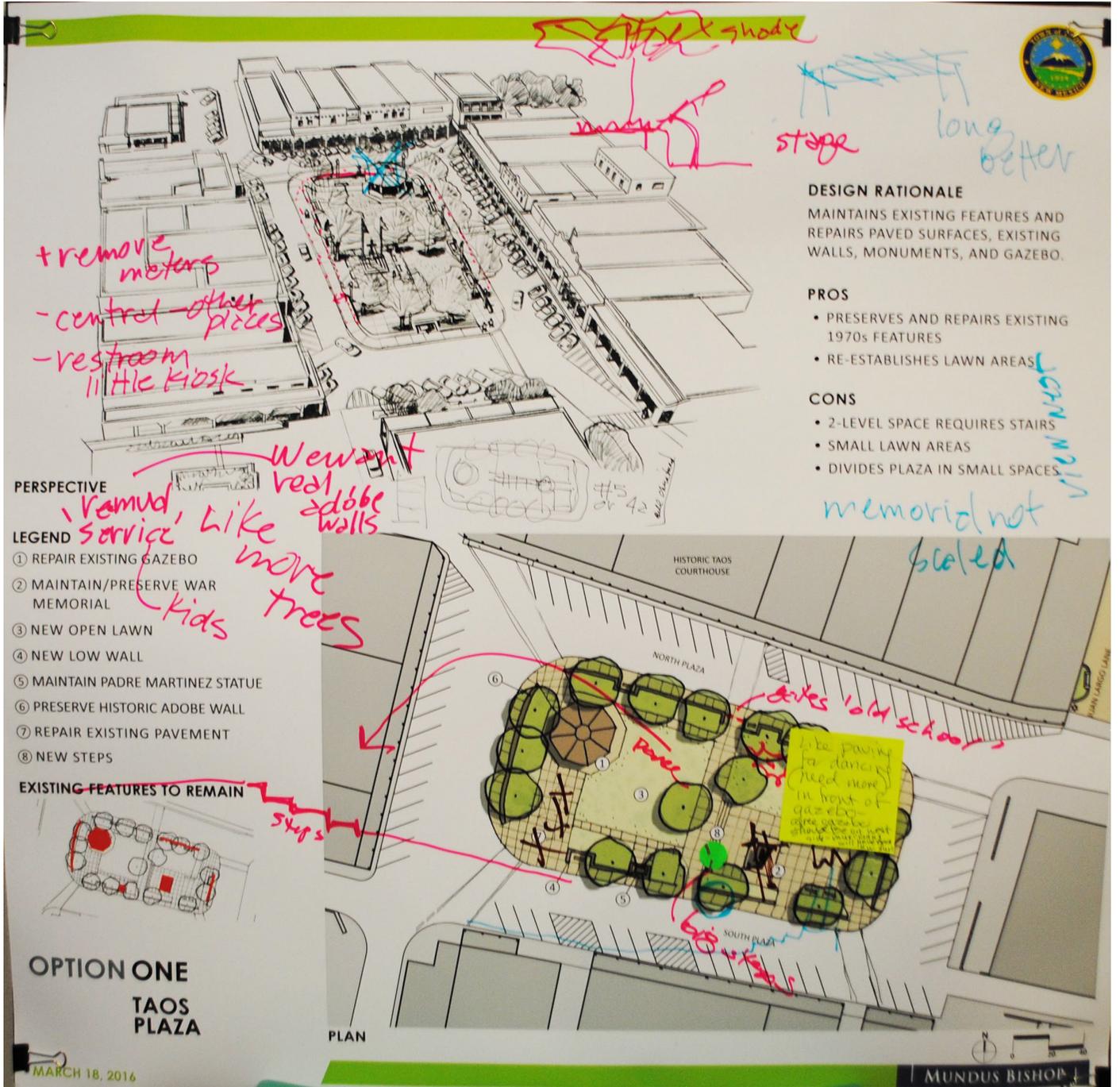
- The gazebo is good on the north central (or south central) side – more people can be around the performances
 - Too linear
- c. Option 3. Introduces a large lawn on the west side, with central gazebo surrounded by paved paths. The community's responses are listed below.
- Use stormwater runoff to irrigate lawn
 - Gazebo needs to be functional and big enough as a workable stage
 - Like central, informal trees
 - Like corner entrances/walkways
 - Like the exterior seat wall
 - Ok on this one except move the pavilion to the north side for more attendance at events
 - Need to keep view to west of sun setting
 - Gazebo needs to be band-sized (mariachi band is linear)
 - Need to incorporate kids activities, lawn, ice skating
 - Consider closing off the road on the south and east sides for events
 - Where's the Christmas tree?
 - Smaller spaces of fake grass
 - No lawn, maintenance issue, uses too much water, costly, forever, and depreciates
 - Elevate east half slightly with gazebo at west end will maximize views
 - What kind of money is available for large scale changes, maintenance. Already seems to be a problem
 - Lawn – yes!
 - Self-sustaining water catchment system, start with real grass (2 votes)
 - Gazebo should be centered for maximum viewing or remain on west end
 - Brick: needs maintenance, bad design on plaza today, needs removal
 - One level
 - Again, seating?
 - Old people like backs on their seats
 - Fake grass looks weird in the winter
 - Grass issue with droughts and maintenance issues – what about 'easy turf'? California and Arizona are requiring people to tear out grass for zeroscape designs
 - Drought resistance herbs/edibles
- d. Option 4. Follows a restoration approach, as much as possible, to restore the plaza to its appearance in the 1930s. The community's responses are listed below.
- Formal paths look nice, but people cut corners and ruin grass (2 votes)
 - Desire lines can be an issue
 - Like central gazebo

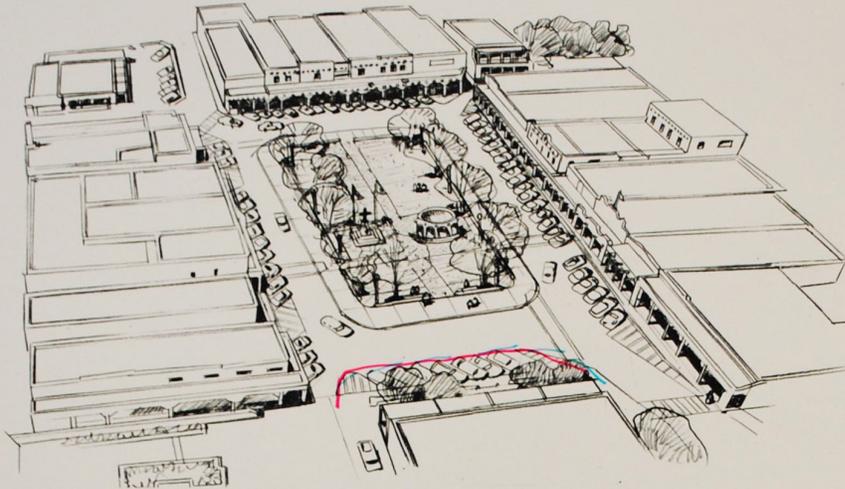
- Need larger sidewalk
 - Too many trees (6 votes)
 - Like crosswalks at half-way points
 - Need to explore xeric alternatives to grass
 - Need exterior walk, and criss-cross walks through plaza
 - Access looks difficult on this one
 - No wall around, more walkways
 - Put gazebo toward one end
 - Use diverse grass species, permeable pavers
 - Move Padre Martinez to new plaza where the old church stood
 - Move Padre Martinez to school
 - Move War Memorial to the VC
 - Add kneewalls to interior walks and lower them – keeps people from trampling grass (2 votes)
 - Don't like this one
 - Seating? View is blocked to gazebo
 - Like the two level approach
 - Like all the trees
 - Don't like the wall all the way around – graffiti heaven!
 - Like the shade but reduces viewing area for audience
- e. Specific Questions posed to the community include the following.
- Do you like the central gazebo?
 - Harder for viewing music events
 - No, toward one end
 - No, west end, so sunsets can be viewed during shows, concerts, etc.
 - Don't orient so musicians face west – make large dance area. Thursday night music in summer is very crowded and popular.
 - Move to center north or south
 - Reduces the multi-use of plaza
 - Larger gazebo at west end with plenty of seating area and space to view music, events and sunset.
 - How much paved space is needed?
 - Minimal (2 votes)
 - Not much! (2 votes)
 - Bricks become dangerous
 - Smooth area for dancing
 - Lots for dancing
 - Level area – keep paving. Put in some grass for accent
 - What if a section was a kid's sliding mound of artificial turf
 - Make diagonal pathways main pathways

- Paved space can be green – permeable pavers
 - No Memorial?
 - Do you prefer having a walk around the edge of the plaza?
 - Yes (3 votes)
 - No (2 votes)
 - Lots of access for crossing
 - Trees in center will block viewers (2 votes)
 - In looking at old plaza photos, parking was around center. In a remodeling at least 15 feet were taken so, no more extensions for walking around
 - Just a cross of sidewalk
 - Don't like walled plaza; no access (2 votes)
 - Need diagonal walkways (3 votes)
 - How much lawn space is needed?
 - As much as possible (2 votes)
 - Keep pavers
 - Currently grass is very poorly maintained, must be maintained
 - Lawn = dirt 5 months of year and endless expense and water
 - Larger gazebo at west end with plenty of seating area and space to view music, events and sunset.
 - Need seating with backs
 - Do you like a big, central lawn?
 - No (3 votes)
 - Yes (4 votes)
 - And picnic tables?
 - But need some shade too
 - Small picnic tables
 - Yes, lots of seating - public sponsored memorial benches?
 - No, lawn is no longer appropriate in high desert gets eco rating of 0 – smaller areas of fake lawn are great
 - Desert southwest is grass appropriate?
 - If more grass we need to irrigate (underground?)
 - Where is the best place for the war memorial?
 - Not on plaza – maybe Kit Carson Park?
 - Move to East end, center (2 votes)
 - Kit Carson Park
 - Kit Carson Cemetery Park County is building
 - By the library or Town Civic Plaza
 - Some other public space, Kit Carson is a good idea
 - Bring Martinez statue elsewhere. Does not honor our history. Or does it?
- f. General Comments. Additional written comments were provided by the community

and are as follows.

- Don't take the cruising away
- Simplify to see the space
- Taking away the Memorial would 'wake sleeping lion'
- Implementation and phased
- Remove or change the lights – save the trees!
- Do no remove parking spaces or traffic
- Park sky
- Changes: Batton Memorial on-site; get input; move junk around it
- Level the ground across the plaza, remove 'trip hazards'
- Grass – not drought friendly – expensive to maintain. Sets bad example in a town that is perceived enlightened. This is a great xeric opportunity
- An open space!
- Save the Christmas tree!
- Types of trees? Fruit trees?
- 2 levels – ½ grass, ½ paved, gazebo should be on west end
- Musicians need to face away (to east) from low west sun
- How much water usage? Cost to maintain grass
- Make diagonal walkways across plaza
- Street lights? Dark sky ordinance?
- Can we talk about the Christmas lights?! Too bright, down out lumanarias, too many colors, hodge podge
- Take colored lights off trees, only white lights year-round
- No walls around; No changes in elevation; No Memorials/Statues
- Need diagonal walkways (3 votes)
- Keep gazebo at west end – do not remove parking
- Where is seating?
- Don't take away parking places





DESIGN RATIONALE

MAINTAINS EXISTING WAR MEMORIAL, REMOVES OTHER NON-HISTORIC FEATURES. A SLOPING LAWN ALLOWS FOR EVENT SPACE.

PROS

- MAINTAINS WAR MEMORIAL
- RE-ESTABLISHES LARGE GREEN SPACE
- NEW PAVILION
- WIDENED EXTERIOR AND CENTRAL WALKS

CONS

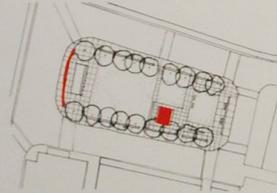
- MULTI-LEVEL SPACE
- DIVIDES PLAZA INTO SMALL SPACES

PERSPECTIVE

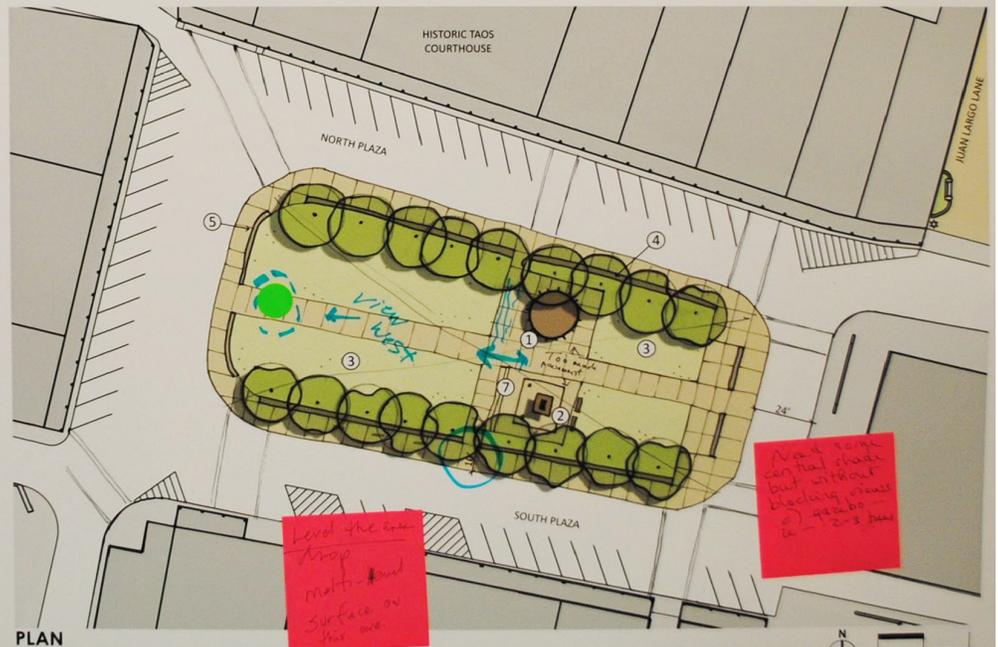
LEGEND

- ① NEW PAVILION
- ② MAINTAIN/PRESERVE WAR MEMORIAL
- ③ NEW LAWN
- ④ NEW LOW WALL
- ⑤ PRESERVE HISTORIC ADOBE WALL
- ⑥ OMIT PARKING FOR EXPANDED PLAZA AND IMPROVE CONNECTION
- ⑦ NEW STEPS

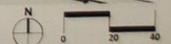
EXISTING FEATURES TO REMAIN



**OPTION TWO
TAOS PLAZA**



PLAN



MUNDUS BISHOP

MARCH 18, 2016

What do you
like about #2?

do not remove
any parking spaces!

Input from
School kids
... what would
they like to see?

Who else is not here - marginal
Stakeholders
Go to them.
e.g. los ancianos.
Asst. living
Various other
Community orgs +
Groups.

Potential
for green energy

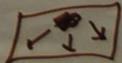
Too RIGID
FORMAL

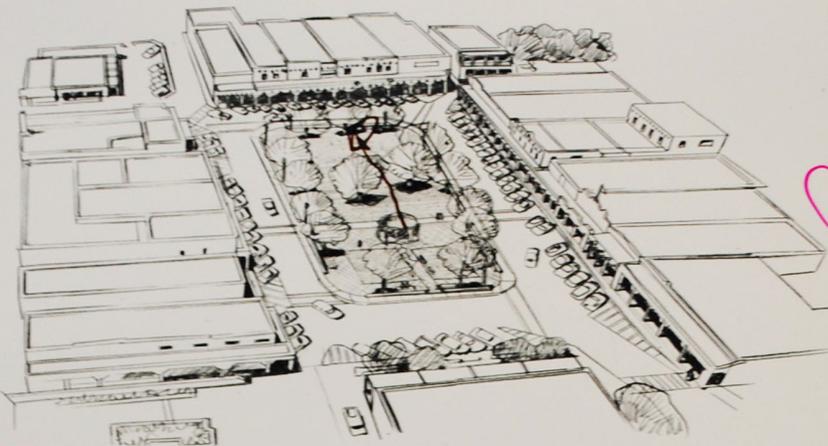
Need dancing
space in front
of gazebo
for Thurs music
nites (not lawn)

amphitheatre with
stadium type seating or lawns.

too
linear

The gazebo is good on the
North Central (or So. Central)
Side - that more people
can be around the performances





DESIGN RATIONALE

REHABILITATION APPROACH RE-ESTABLISHES A PAVILION AT THE CENTER, SURROUNDED BY A FLEXIBLE OPEN SPACE FOR EVENTS. LEVEL LAWN WITH SHADE TREES AS GATHERING AREA.

PROS

- RE-ESTABLISHES LARGE OPEN LAWN
- NEW CENTRAL PAVILION
- OPEN, FLEXIBLE USE SPACES
- EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR LOOP WALKS

CONS

- NOT A HISTORIC CONDITION

Teen to be placed out + play area



- ON
- ② NEW FLAGPOLE
 - ③ NEW OPEN LAWN
 - ④ NEW LOW WALL
 - ⑤ PRESERVE HISTORIC ADOBE WALL

FEATURES TO REMAIN

Structure
Roof
to right
open

Somebody
had to
be there
and
make
it
work

OPTION THREE

Kids
activities
- game hall
Ice Skating

OK as this is
south more the
parking to the
left side to
more circulation
access

Gravel
Needs to be
just a
and big
enough as a
workable
stage



MARCH 18, 2018

What do you like about #3?

ELEVATE EAST HALF SUFFICIENTLY WITH GAZEBO AT WEST END WILL RAISE VIEWLINE

grass → dogs → dog poop!

Where's the grass tree?

No lawn maintenance water costs \$\$ forever + depreciates

Yes smaller spaces of fake grass →

yes!

Formal Entry - Disturbance - People not coming into grass

design lines can be an issue.

What about "EASY turf"

What kind of money is available for large scale changes, maintenance already seems to be a problem

BRICK: Needs MAINTENANCE BACK design of PLAZA TO 1949. Needs removal

grass issue w/ droughts + maintenance issues

California + Arizona are requiring people to test out grass for zero scape designs

lawn is! self-sustaining water catchment system start with real grass

GAZEBO SHOULD BE CENTERED FOR MAXIMUM VIEWING OR REMOVED AT WEST END

Again, seating? Old people like backs on their seats.

Fake grass looks wierd in the winter.

drought resistant herbs & edibles.

What do you
like about #4

#2+3
Best

Ok more
monuments
Pedro school
Just Mount
CVC

For many
New D
4/4

Like the
Stark - but
Pedro's Viewing
Area for
Address

I don't like
wall all the
way around.
Angelle's View

If you sink
the sidewalk
and put in a
kneewall people
will stay on the
level path
YES

ITITO!

has the visitors info kiosk gone?
No but have someone actually about there - Nobody is THERE!

I like the green but too many trees block view.
Like the two level approach.
where is the seating?
All The Trees

Nothing I Don't!
Seating?
View is blocked
to gazebos

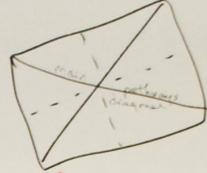
More trees - more trees
more trees
more trees

ITITO!

100 MANY TREES on #4. Need to clearly
view gazebos
Agree too many trees.

Do you like the central gazebo?

No - Toward one end



harder for viewing music events

✓ No: West End, So Sunsets can be viewed during Shows, Concerts, ect.



Don't orient so musicians face west - make large dance area. Thurs night music in summer is very crowded & popular
- move to center north or south

NO WALLS AROUND
NO CHANGES IN ELEVATION
NO MEMORIALS/STATUES
DITTO!
Yes!

No!

Reduces the multi-use of Plaza

What if a section was a kids sliding mound of artificial turf

How much paved space is needed?

Minimal ✓ Not much!

BRICKS become dangerous.
smooth area for dancing
NOT MUCH

level the area - keep paving

they are expensive

\$1 each - put in some grass for ~~acc~~ accnt.

paved space can be green-permeable pavers

Not much!

Lots for dancing

No memorial?
NO
let them have fun!

Do you prefer having a walk around the edge of the plaza?

Yes. Yes.



Lots of access for crossing

No No

Don't like walled plaza
No access
DITTO



Yes

walkways
Yes access
practical

Trees in center will block viewers. ✓

IX Looking at old Plaza Photos, Paving was around Center. In A Remodeling at least 15ft were taken so, no more Extensions for walking around.

Just a cross sidewalk
slide mound good idea!



COMMUNITY
OPEN
HOUSE TAOS
PLAZA

Bring Martinez statue elsewhere. Does not honor our history. Or does it?



How much lawn space is needed?

Keep grass at waist!
Do NOT eliminate ANY PARKING!!

Don't take away parking places

As much as possible

Keep lawn deep
yoo! F. S. 2000
yoo! F. S. 2000

Currently grass is very poorly maintained - MUST be maintained!

AS much as possible
lawn = dirt 5 months of yr + endless expense of water

larger gazebo @ west end - w/ plenty of seating area + space to view music events & sunset.

Do you like a big, central lawn?

Where is Seating?

add picnic tables?

YES! but need some shade too
small picnic tables
Yes!

NO

NO

Need seating with BACKS - events & sunset.
YES
LOTS OF SEATING
Desert Southwest Is Grass Appropriate?
YES
Public sponsored memorial benches?

No lawn is no longer appropriate in high desert gets eco rating of 0 - smaller areas of fake lawn are great

Where is the best place for the war memorial?

NOT ON PLAZA maybe Kit Carson Park?
Singular

Mount EAST END - Center - DITO
& KIT CARSON PARK

Kit Carson Cemetery - or New Veterans Park County is building (cemetery)

If more grass we need to irrigate! (underground?)

DO NOT eliminate ANY PARKING

or take the traffic off the plaza

including parking lot

Opposite END From Gazebo give it its own spot!

I like the cleaner design of this one.

By the Library or Town Civic Plaza
Some other public space
Kit Carson good idea

grass -> dog walkers -> poop!

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE TAOS PLAZA

MARCH 18, 2016

MUNDUS BISHOP

Taos Historic Plaza

Cultural Landscape Report

September 2016



| MUNDUS BISHOP |