

(Re)vision 2020

photos courtesy of
Taos Historic Museums

Land Use Element



"The butcher and the baker are the new endangered species in Taos."

- Taos resident

(Re)vision 2020

**The Land Use Element of the Town of Taos
Comprehensive Plan**

Acknowledgements:

Special thanks and gratitude to the members of the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Historic Preservation Commission who volunteer their time and expertise to the community.

Thanks to the many citizens who provided constructive criticism, attended public meetings, and contributed to (Re)vision 2020.

Table of Contents

• Executive Summary	Page 1
• Introduction	Page 4
• Purposes	Page 13
• Regional Setting	Page 20
• Legal & Political Framework	Page 27
• Challenges & Community Concerns	Page 36
• Vision	Page 62
• Goals, Policies & Objectives	Page 69
• Land Use Plan	Page 125
• Conclusions	Page 132

TABLES

• #1. Planning, Subdivisions, Zoning, Building Permits	Page 34
• #2. Population Data	Page 38
• #2.1 BBER Population Data	Page 38
• #3. Number of Farms in Taos County By Year	Page 56
• #4. Agriculture in Taos County	Page 58
• #5. Implementation	Page 123
• #6. Annexation Consideration & Priorities	Page 115
• #7. The TND and CLD	Page 127
• #8. Zoning Matrix	Page 128

CHARTS

• #1. The Relationship Between the Vision, Plans and Ordinances	Page 12
• #2. Population Projections	Page 37
• #3. Average Age of Taos County Residents by Decade	Page 39
• #4. Water Demand	Page 46

MAPS

- #1. Town Boundaries, One Mile Concurrent Zoning Authority, and the Three Mile Planning and Platting Jurisdiction Page 11
- #2. Town of Taos Bicycle Master Plan Page 16
- #3. Vicinity Map Page 24
- #4. The Taos Greenbelt Page 25
- #5. Building Density and Development Patterns Page 26
- #6. Zoning Map Page 30
- #7. Undeveloped Parcels & Infill Opportunities Page 61
- #8. Growth of Town Boundaries Page 50
- #9. The Chamisa Verde Neighborhood Plan Page 88
- #10. The Illustrative Plan of the Goodman Property TND Page 91
- #11. The Zoning Districts of the Fred Baca Park CLD Page 91
- #12. 2011 & 2012 Boundary Correction Annexations Page 113
- #13. 2007 Annexation Study Areas Page 114
- #14. Land Use Plan Page 130
- #15. Existing Land Uses Within Three Miles of the Town Page 131

APPENDIX

Community Preference Survey
THE TAOS INDEX

Executive Summary

The Town of Taos comprehensive plan is called the Vision 2020 Master Plan (Vision 2020). Since the Town Council adopted Vision 2020 in 1999, two major events have occurred which require the Town of Taos to seriously “re-vision” how we grow and how the Town integrates public opinion into development decisions. The first event was the economic recession that hit Taos, the United States, and the world. Communities across the globe are looking for new ways to encourage economic recovery without losing sight of what sustains them. The second event was the information revolution, which has provided the Town with a wealth of economic and demographic data as a basis for making development decisions. The information revolution also introduced social media, which gave voters and elected officials an unprecedented opportunity to exchange information and work together.

What has not changed since Vision 2020 was adopted, however, is the desire for Taos to become a sustainable community. The term “sustainable” is widely used but it is rarely defined. Unfortunately, it is most often used for political rhetoric or for “green washing” a construction project.

A sustainable community replenishes its resources.

These resources include energy, water, jobs, art, food, buildings, and many intangible resources which define the community. Vision 2020 was a noble attempt to create a sustainable community; however,

it has become too easy to disregard Vision 2020 as “only advisory” or “just a plan.”

Vision 2020 needs to be revised so it does not suffer the same fate as many comprehensive plans across the county. Most comprehensive plans do not clearly define the community’s goals, policies and objectives. The maps rarely illustrate the specific locations for future growth or conservation efforts. The most specific “objective” of a typical comprehensive plan is, for example, to “recommend the formation of a steering committee to consider possible amendments to the landscape ordinance.” This objective is timid and unenforceable. The objective should be very clear about how, when, and why the landscape ordinance should be amended and who should be

responsible for doing the work. Another typical objective of a comprehensive plan is to “work cooperatively with the county to ensure affordable housing for the community.” Although it is sincere, this objective is painfully obvious and unspecific. The people of Taos deserve measurable success and a clear set of goals, policies, and objectives that guide development decisions toward a sustainable future.

(Re)vision 2020 puts the principles of sustainable development into practice. It includes detailed maps and specific recommendations. It makes the connections between the trends and challenges in the community and the chosen strategies which will regenerate the built environment. It relies on previously adopted plans, the principles of smart growth, and on-going feedback and ideas from the public.

Taos is a great place, but it did not become a great place by accident. The traditional development patterns in historic Taos originated from the Law of the Indies, a 17th century collection of laws which applied to new communities that were developed by Spanish colonizers in the New World. The Law of the Indies allocated land uses and contained very specific development regulations. It allocated land for residential uses, food production, waste management, ceremony, and transportation.

The Land Use Element allocates land uses to develop Taos as a collection of complete and compact neighborhoods. The Land Use Map identifies each distinct neighborhood while the goals, policies, and objectives offer clear guidance for development decisions.

The aerial photo below reveals the traditional development pattern of the Law of the Indies. Downtown Taos is shown a complete and compact neighborhood. There are schools, churches, parks, plazas, and businesses mixed with a variety of residences. The neighborhood was surrounded by farms and open space, giving it a unique identity. A network of roadways made everything accessible while the architecture made it memorable. The Land Use Element of (Re)vision 2020 seeks to replicate this traditional pattern and fulfill our moral obligations to create a sustainable community for the future generations of Taoseños.



Downtown Taos was designed and built as a compact and complete neighborhood. It has a definite center and edge. This traditional development pattern has been lost in recent development. (Re)vision 2020 intends to bring this traditional pattern back to Taos.

Introduction

Taos is a great place. From the top of Wheeler Peak to the center of Taos Plaza, Taos provides a beautiful natural environment and fabulous urban environment. Although many people enjoy Taos, many more live in poverty. Suburban sprawl threatens the character, natural resources, and affordability of Taos.

**Taos is a great place because it is loved.
It is loved because it is a great place.**



Comprehensive planning can reverse the impacts of sub-urban sprawl. It is a powerful tool to help preserve rural traditions, protect existing neighborhoods, and promote the development of new communities that have unique identity and opportunity.

The elements of (Re)vision will update Vision 2020 one element at a time.

The American Planning Association defines a comprehensive plan as “the adopted official statement of local government’s legislative body for future development and conservation.” - **Planning and Urban Design Standards. American Planning Association. John Wiley & Sons. 2006. p. 6.** A comprehensive plan is typically updated every 5 years. Updates incorporate new demographics, maps, and new priorities. Vision 2020 includes 7 vision statements, 3 land use “scenarios”, 32 goals, 120 objectives, 125 policies, and 32 strategies, making it difficult (if not impossible) to evaluate development proposals against the expectations of Vision 2020. Unlike Vision 2020 which was adopted at one time and as one document, (Re)vision 2020 will be adopted one element at a time, allowing each element to be more specific, measurable, and focused.

The Land Use Element is the third element to be prepared and adopted by the Town Council. The Housing Element and the Community Economic Development Element were adopted prior to the Land Use Element. These elements are described below:

- **Affordable Housing**

The Affordable Housing Element describes and quantifies the supply and demand for housing for low- and moderate-income families (e.g. - special needs, subsidized rental, market rental, entry-level homeownership, and “move up” homeownership). It outlines several recommendations for potential funding, increasing the Town’s capacity to provide affordable housing, encouraging housing programs, developing Town-owned real estate, and improvements to the Town’s regulatory environment.

The Housing Element states that “it is apparent that both home sales prices and rental rates are unaffordable for nearly half the Taos households considered low-income, and that even moderate-income households struggle to find housing they can afford.” - **Town of Taos Affordable Housing Element. Housing Strategy Partners. p. i.**

- **Community Economic Development**

The Town Council approved the “Interim” Community Economic Development Element on June 14, 2011; however, it is incomplete and needs to be fully written and adopted. This Element recognizes the inseparable relationship between economic development, community development, and land use. Many of the recommendations reinforce and shape the goals, policies, and objectives of the Land Use Element. For example, the Community Economic Development Element highlights the important relationship between economic development initiatives and the need for natural resources conservation, mitigating traffic congestion, preserving open space, and developing recreation facilities as fundamental aspects to sustaining a strong economy. In other words, a community that can sustain a high quality of life can attract, grow, and retain profitable and innovative businesses.

The future elements of (Re)vision 2020 will be completed and adopted in the following order:

- **Infrastructure Element**

The Infrastructure Element will address the improvements and priorities for roadways (including bicycle and pedestrian facilities), water and wastewater systems, storm drainage facilities, and “dry utilities” such as natural gas and electric lines, communications and data services. It will also define the design standards and level of service standards for new infrastructure.

- **Natural Resources Element**

This element will address the priorities and specific strategies for preserving and protecting land, water, and air.



Sprawl threatens the vast natural resources of Taos. Farms and ranches are often converted to residential subdivisions, having harmful and irreversible impacts to soil, water, and wildlife.

- **Parks & Recreation Element**

The Parks & Recreation Element will include recommendations for the locations and types of trails, parks, playgrounds, and indoor recreation facilities.

- **Community Services Element**

This element will identify the needs for police and fire protection facilities as well as priorities for other community services including the Taos Public Library, the Convention Center, recycling, and the landfill.

- **Historic Preservation Element**

Preserving and restoring historic resources will be addressed in the Historic Preservation Element. Historic resources include buildings, acequias, rural landscapes, historic districts, archeological resources, and landmarks.



The majority of businesses in Taos depend on tourism. The historic Taos Plaza is certainly the one of the most visited destinations for tourists, but it has lost its appeal to local residents. Revitalizing the downtown will be a high priority in the Historic Preservation Element.



After each element is adopted, the next phase of (Re)vision 2020 is to extend the scope of each element to the three mile planning and platting jurisdiction. **Map #1** identifies the Town boundaries, the one-mile concurrent zoning authority and the three-mile platting and planning jurisdiction.

The Land Use Element is “comprehensive” because it applies to all land within the Town boundaries. It affirms the jurisdiction over land use and development for all levels of government. It is considered comprehensive because the development decisions (including the decision to prevent development) impact the quality of life for everyone in the community. Furthermore, it is “comprehensive” because it represents the values and expectations from the entire community as they are articulated in the vision statements, goals, policies, and objectives.

Since Vision 2020 was adopted, the Town has completed several studies and plans that should be incorporated into the appropriate elements of (Re)vision 2020. These include:

- the EPA Study for the Paseo del Pueblo Sur Corridor,
- the SmartCode Charrette Report,
- the Regional Water Plan and the 40-year Water Plan,
- the annual Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plans,
- the Bicycle Master Plan and Safe Routes to School Action Plans,
- the Taos County Climate Adaptation Plan,
- the Traditional Neighborhood Development District Infrastructure Standards Manual,
- the National Endowment of the Arts Resource Team Report, Our Town Charrette for the Arts & Culture District, and the ACD Cultural Plan.

Many of the challenges facing Taos can only be solved with the full cooperation of all levels of government. The Taos County Comprehensive Plan and the Phase I & II Growth Management Plan should also be incorporated into (Re)vision 2020, particularly when (Re)vision 2020 is extended to the three mile planning and platting jurisdiction. Plans from the New Mexico Department of Transportation, Taos Pueblo, the University of New Mexico, and utility providers should also be incorporated.

(Re)vision 2020 calls for the adoption of several master plans which address specific topics or are specific to a particular geographic area in Taos. The Town adopted a Bicycle Facilities Master Plan and a neighborhood plan for Chamisa Verde, for example, and will prepare and adopt other master plans which implement the goals and policies of (Re)vision 2020. Topics may include acequia restoration, climate adaptation, arts and culture, hazard mitigation and emergency evacuation, food security, renewable energy, and downtown parking. As time goes by, the Town Council will adopt a variety of ordinances which are far more specific and enforceable than the recommendations of a (Re)vision 2020. See **Chart #1** for an illustration of the relationships between the vision, plans, and ordinances.

The Land Use Element was created with extensive public input and feedback. The Town presented the draft to several agencies of local and state government, community organizations, businesses, and individuals. The Land Use Element was formally approved by the Town of Taos Planning & Zoning Commission and the Town Council.

The following organizations and individuals provided helpful feedback on previous drafts.

- Taos County Chamber of Commerce – Economic Development Committee
- Taos Friends United
- Town of Taos Recreation Advisory Board
- Taos Valley Acequia Association
- Taoseños Against Walmart Super Store
- Los Jardineros Garden Club
- Taos Land Trust
- Foothills Neighborhood Association
- Taos County Association of Realtors
- Taos Pueblo
- New Mexico Department of Transportation
- New Mexico Environment Department
- Carson National Forest
- Bureau of Land Management
- Taos County Planning Department
- The Taos Project
- Prudential Realty

The Land Use Element was the topic of several radio interviews and newspaper articles. The Land Use Plan Map was used as 11" x 17" paper placements at local restaurants in order to educate the community about (Re)vision 2020 and to solicit feedback. The Long Range Planner presented many of the illustrations and maps at Pecka Kucha #4 on October 2, 2011 at the Taos Community Auditorium. The title of the presentation was "Visions of Taos" and was delivered to over 200 local residents.

The following organizations participated in the Community Preference Survey:

- Taos Entrepreneur Network
- Taos Tourism Council
- Taos Public Library Staff
- Thrive Taos
- Taos Middle School Students
- Vista Grande High School Students
- Town of Taos Planning & Zoning Commission
- Taos County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors
- Town of Taos Facilities Services Staff
- Taos Native Plant Society

MAP #1
Town Boundaries, One-mile Concurrent Zoning Authority,
and the Three-mile Platting and Planning Jurisdiction

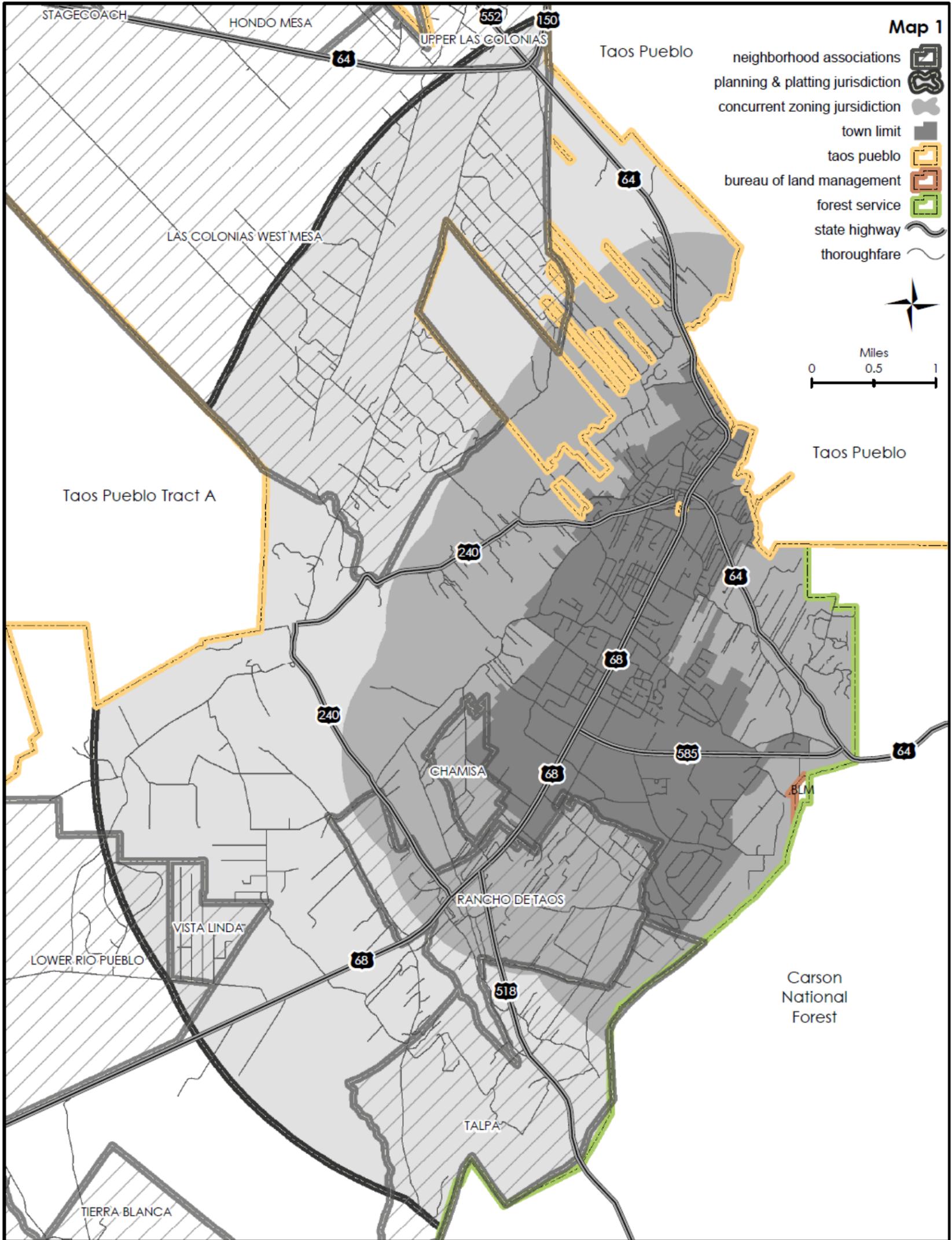


Chart #1. Relationships between the vision, plans, and ordinances.

For example:

All programs, budgets, polices, regulations, and plans should be consistent with the overall vision.

VISION

Comprehensive Plan

The highest level plan is the **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**. It includes a vision, goals, policies, and objectives to guide the development of the community. It includes several "elements." It is less specific than a master plan and not legally enforceable.

Infrastructure
 Historic Preservation
 Parks & Recreation
 Land Use
 Natural Resources
 Community Services
 Affordable Housing

The goals and policies of the **Natural Resources Element of the Comprehensive Plan** should be consistent with the vision.

Master Plan

The second level plan is a **MASTER PLAN**. They are more specific to a particular topic, such as the Taos Bicycle Master Plan or to a particular area of the community, such as the Chamisa Verde Neighborhood Plan. They are more specific than the Comprehensive Plan Elements but do not carry the force of law.

Trails
 Neighborhood Plans
 Acequia Restoration
 Industrial District
 Airport
 Green Infrastructure
 Downtown
 Climate Adaptation
 Renewable Energy
 Food Security
 Infrastructure Capital Improvements

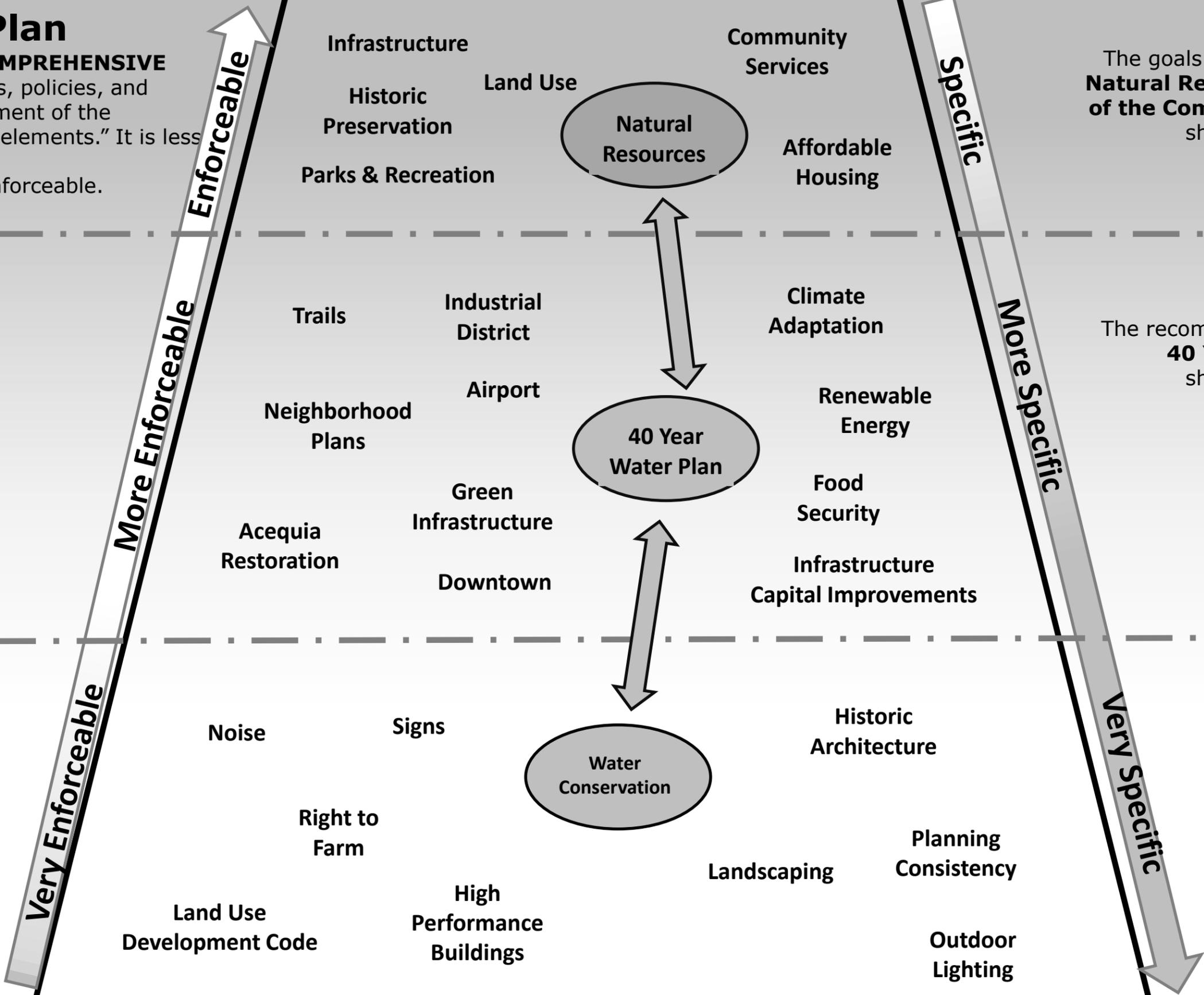
The recommendations of the **40 Year Water Plan**, should be consistent with the goals and policies of the Natural Resources Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Ordinance

An **ORDINANCE** is designed to implement and enforce the goals, policies, and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan Elements and the recommendations of the master plans. They are very specific and legally enforceable.

Noise
 Signs
 Right to Farm
 Land Use Development Code
 High Performance Buildings
 Water Conservation
 Historic Architecture
 Landscaping
 Planning Consistency
 Outdoor Lighting

The regulations of the **Water Conservation Ordinance** should be consistent with the 40 Year Water Plan.



Purposes

The primary purpose of the Land Use Element of (Re)vision 2020 is to establish the goals, policies, and objectives for managing the physical development of the community.

The Town Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, the Historic Preservation Commission, and the staff of the Planning, Zoning & Building Department will reference the plan when making decisions regarding specific development projects and programs. They will also use it as a guide to revising the Land Use Development Code and the official zoning map, enabling the Town to comply with state statute 3-21-5 that requires a municipal zoning authority's regulations and restrictions to be "in accordance with" the comprehensive plan. The public can use the plan to help shape land use and development policy and keep the Town accountable for development and zoning decisions. The plan is a communication tool for the Town Council and the public that helps everyone understand the Town's approach to land development, natural resources conservation, and growth management.

"One of the most important and practical purposes of a comprehensive plan is to give guidance to the specific land use regulations adopted by the local government. Such regulations include:

1. zoning ordinance
2. official zoning map
3. subdivision regulations, and
4. growth management tools"

- **Steve Burstein, ACIP. Comprehensive Plan Template. Undated.**

In his book *The Urban General Plan*, T.J. Kent outlines the fundamental purposes of a Comprehensive Plan:

1. To improve the physical environment of the community as a setting for human activities – to make it more functional, beautiful, decent, healthful, interesting, and efficient.
2. To promote the public interest, the interest of the community at large, rather than the interests of individuals or special groups within the community.
3. To facilitate the democratic determination and implementation of community policies on physical development.
4. To effect political and technical coordination in community development.
5. To inject long-range considerations into the determination of short-range actions.
6. To bring professional and technical knowledge to bear on the making of political decisions concerning the physical development of the community.

Another purpose for revising Vision 2020 is because many of the recommendations have already been completed. Page 3 of Vision 2020 summarizes the initiatives “that will be undertaken to make the vision of the Master Plan a reality”:

“• Updates of the Town of Taos' Land Use Development Code to revise the zoning map, strengthen natural resource protection, and enhance community character through performance-based community design overlay zones.”

The Town adopted the Traditional Neighborhood Development District and the Rural Historic Landscapes Overlay Zone in addition to numerous code amendments to encourage density in downtown and reduce unwarranted parking standards.

“● Updates of existing and creation of new ordinances for landscaping, dark skies, signage, and noise.”

The Town has updated the landscaping ordinance, adopted a dark skies ordinance, and amended the signage ordinance on many occasions. The noise ordinance has not been amended.

“● Annexation of rapidly developing areas that need centralized water and sewer.”

The Town completed a comprehensive study to determine the costs and benefits of annexing nine areas adjacent to the Town’s boundaries. The study was not approved; however, the recommendations of the study are included in the Land Use Element. Also, the Town is in the process of annexing 19 areas through the Municipal Boundary Commission in order to clean up the Town’s boundaries.

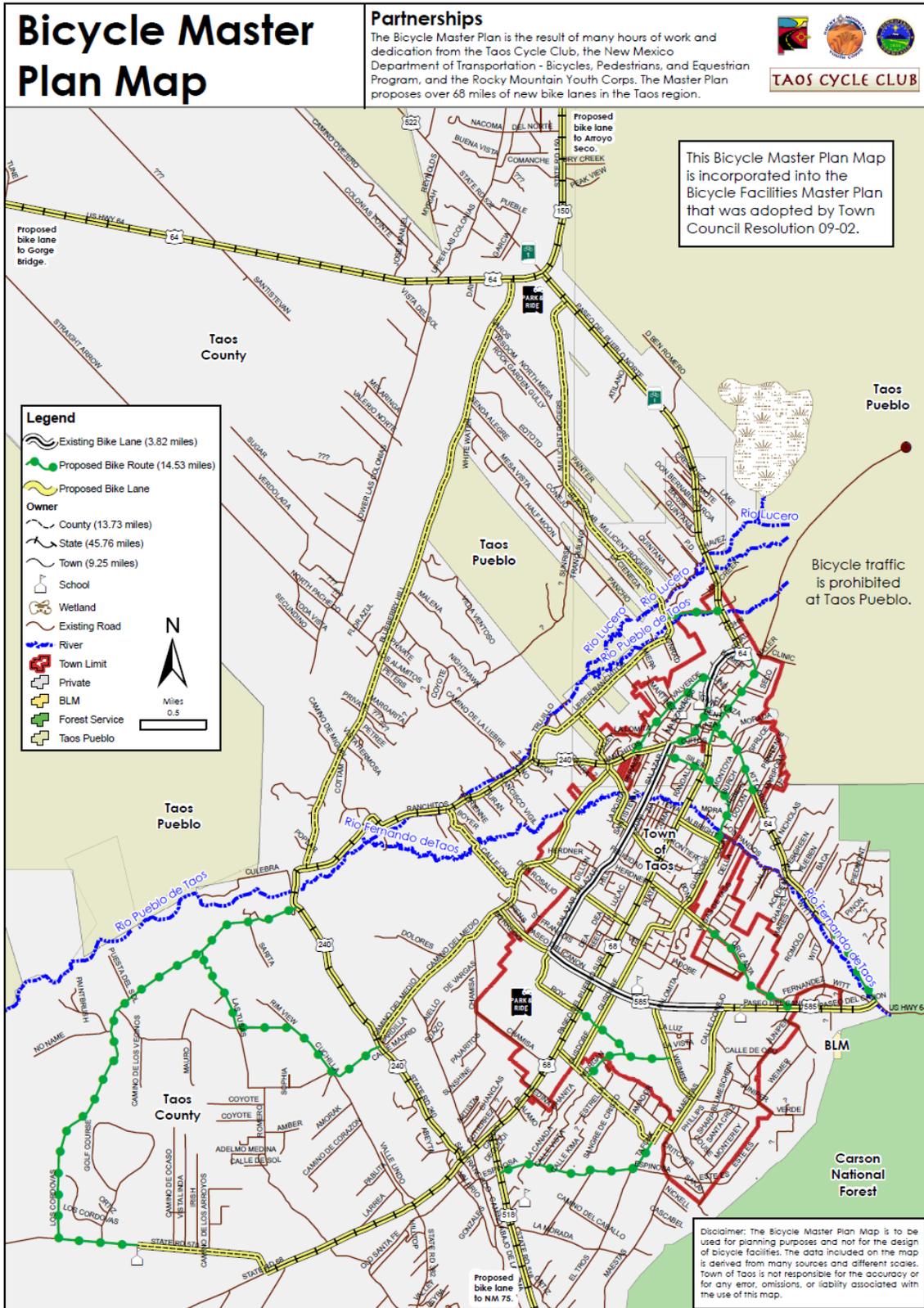
“● Master Planning to create a network of open spaces, agricultural lands, parks, and recreational areas that will encourage non-motorized transportation through trail linkages.”

The Town initiated a green infrastructure plan with the Nation Park Service and numerous stakeholders in Taos County. The Town also received grant funding to nominate areas of Cañon to the state register of historic places so they can be preserved as rural landscapes. The Town also funded the Taos New Mexico Food Systems report in May 2010 and formed the Mayor’s Acequia Restoration Task Force, which completed a detailed plan to restore the acequias in the Historic Overlay Zone.

“● Master Planning for transportation, including relief routes, public transit, and multi-use trails.”

The Town worked closely with the NM Department of Transportation on the Taos Relief Route Study and operates the Chili Line with service to Taos Ski Valley. The Town also supports the Regional Transit Authority and coordinates transit service with the Rail Runner, providing public transit to Santa Fe and Albuquerque. The Taos County Green Infrastructure Plan resulted in the Town Council’s adoption of the Taos Bicycle Master Plan.

Map #2. The Town of Taos Bicycle Master Plan.



“● Master Planning, on-going education, and support to diversify the Taos economy and attract small, sustainable industries with high-paying jobs.”

The Town funded the “Investing in the Future” study which recommended the formation of an Economic Development Department and hiring an Economic Development Director. The Town re-organized the Planning & Zoning Department and created the Community & Economic Development Department. The Director prepared the Interim Community Economic Development Plan / Element. This plan was adopted by the Town Council in June 2011. The Town also prepared the Economic Leakage Report to determine the extent of purchases that are made out of Town.

The Town was designated as an Arts & Cultural District by the state Economic Development Department in 2009.

“● Regional planning through the creation of Intergovernmental Council (IGC) Task Forces.”

Although the Town participates in the IGC, Task Forces have not been formed for the purposes of regional planning.

“● Inclusionary zoning, land banking, land purchases, and the creation of a Community Housing Development Organization (CHODO) to increase the availability of affordable housing.”

The Planning & Zoning Department proposed an inclusionary zoning ordinance but it was not approved. Instead, the Town funded the Taos Housing Corporation for three years. The Town purchased 11 acres of land near Fred Baca Park for the purpose of developing affordable housing.

“● Resource allocation for community facilities.”

The Town allocated funding to community facilities every year and leases facilities to Los Ensuenos, Ancianos, and the CAV. Los Ensuenos and the CAV received energy efficiency grants from the Town to improve the energy efficiency of their facilities.

“• Capital improvements planning, special assessment districts, and franchise agreements to expand and improve infrastructure.”

The Town adopts a Capital Improvement Plan every year. Special assessments district have been considered in several planning documents but have not yet been approved. Negotiations of franchise agreements are an on-going effort.

“• Support for the formation of neighborhood associations and neighborhood-specific ordinances and regulations.”

The Town adopted the Chamisa Verde Neighborhood Plan and the Traditional Neighborhood Development District zoning ordinance. The Town amended the Land Use Development Code for the design standards in the Historic Overlay zone. The Arts & Cultural District received funding for the Resource Team Report, the Our Town Charrette, the Cultural Plan and most recently received \$70,000 for the Downtown Master Plan.

The Town’s Long Range Planner participated extensively in the development of Taos County’s Comprehensive Plan, Growth Management Plan, and the Neighborhood Overlay zones.

“• Update of the building code to encourage the use of solar energy and sustainable technologies.”

The Town Council adopted the High Performance Building Ordinance which requires certification under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standard for new commercial construction and a Home Energy Rating System standard for new residential construction.



The Town installed a 51 kw solar photovoltaic system at Town Hall. The savings from the system are deposited in a dedicated fund to provide staff training, HERS ratings for affordable housing, and on-going energy efficiency programs for Town buildings.

“● Development of a one-stop shop for building permits.”

The Town has updated its building permit applications and review process to reflect the most current building code requirements. The Town also formed the Development Review Committee so development applications can be reviewed by all departments during one meeting. The DRC is composed of the Planning, Zoning and Buildings Department, Legal Department, Fire Department, Police Department and the Public Work and Public Utilities Departments.

“● An educational campaign to keep Taos clean and beautiful.”

The Town receives a Clean and Beautiful grant every year. All staff members of the Town are required to participate in an all-day clean up event to pick litter from many miles of Town streets.

Regional Setting

The Town of Taos is a growing rural community. Despite the small size, Taos offers amenities not found in similar communities. The Taos region includes an exceptional urban atmosphere, such as Taos Plaza and the historic districts, as well as pristine natural environments such as the Rio Grande Gorge and the Carson National Forest. The **Vicinity Map (Map #3)** shows the location of the Town in relation to surrounding communities, public lands, and natural resources.

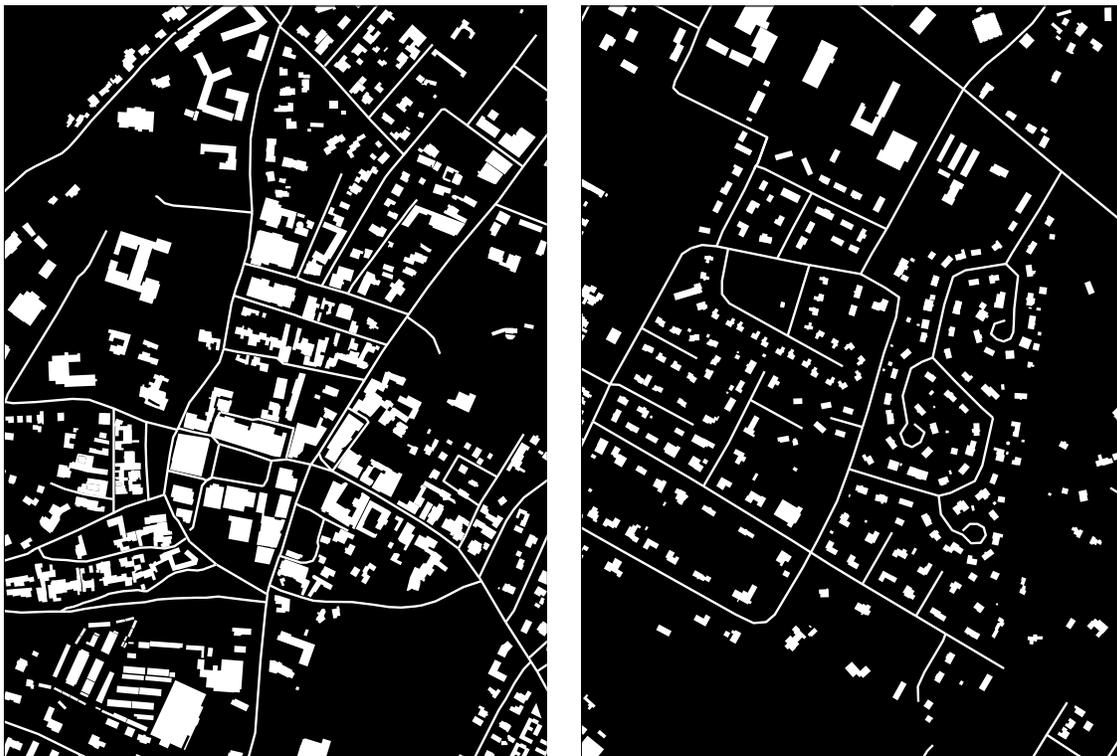
The Town of Taos was incorporated in 1934 following a devastating fire on Taos Plaza. The Town was originally incorporated with a total of 588 acres. Since then, the Town boundaries have expanded 93 times. The Town is now more than 3,560 acres, with 19 more annexations proposed in 2012. The physical expansion of development has encroached into the greenbelt, a ring of forest and irrigated agriculture and forest land that surrounds the Town. **Map #4 (The Taos Greenbelt)** shows the extent of development in the greenbelt.

"The Town is surrounded by small, mostly unincorporated, traditional communities, including Ranchos de Taos, Talpa, Llano Quemado, Los Cordovas, and Cordillera to the south; Upper and Lower Ranchitos to the west; Cañon to the east; and El Prado to the north. Most of these communities are not outgrowths of the Town of Taos, but were settled as land grant villages during the Spanish Colonial period. Since then, commercial and residential development has connected them to the Town, yet these communities take pride in their individual identities apart from each other and the Town of Taos. Residents in these areas travel into the Town of Taos for shopping and services, but still find many of their daily needs met in nearby community centers and plazas, where schools, churches, gasoline stations, and small convenience and grocery stores exist. The areas between the urban parts of the Town and these smaller communities contain mostly farms and ranches, yet agricultural and grazing uses are diminishing in the face of ever increasing development pressure."
- **Vision 2020 Master Plan. page 30.**

The trend of recent development (i.e. – sprawl) creates animosity toward new development. New development often leads to increased traffic congestion, spoiled views, and lost opportunities for providing alternative transportation, recreation, or other types of neighborhood amenities.

Development does not have to be all bad, however. What makes the difference between the type of development we like and don't like is often a matter of design. Design is more than architecture. There are many examples of appropriate architecture in Taos, but the overall design of the entire development often makes the difference. To illustrate the differences, the following diagrams show the contrast between a traditional development patterns versus a conventional development pattern. **Map #5** illustrates the building density and development patterns in the region.

The traditional versus conventional development patterns in Taos.



The traditional development pattern on the left is an image of downtown Taos. It illustrates good urban design and a development pattern based on the Laws of the Indies, the document of laws prescribed to new land grant communities by the King of Spain in the seventeenth century. The Law of the Indies outlined the standards for developing new lots as compact, centered, and defensible spaces that

preserved farm lands and water resources. The image shows the location of the plaza in the center of the neighborhood, the small size of each block, the network of streets, and the transition from high density development in the center toward lower density development leading into open space and irrigated agricultural lands. The image on the right shows conventional developments in Taos. It illustrates a series of disconnected residential subdivisions, dead end roads, and uniform density throughout the neighborhood. The development pattern of the right consumes land, requires driving almost everywhere, and offers few amenities to the neighborhood.

The setting of the Town of Taos region is generally characterized by the following:

- large amount of federal land,
- thirty percent of land within the Town boundary is undeveloped,
- rivers and acequias provide surface water to irrigated agricultural lands and re-charge the aquifer,
- conventional development erodes the traditional character and appeal of Taos,
- sprawl threatens rural landscapes and the environmental integrity of the green belt,
- world class tourism and recreation amenities in close proximity to the Town (e.g. – Taos Pueblo & Taos Ski Valley)

The 2010 Taos County Community Health Profile describes Taos as follows:

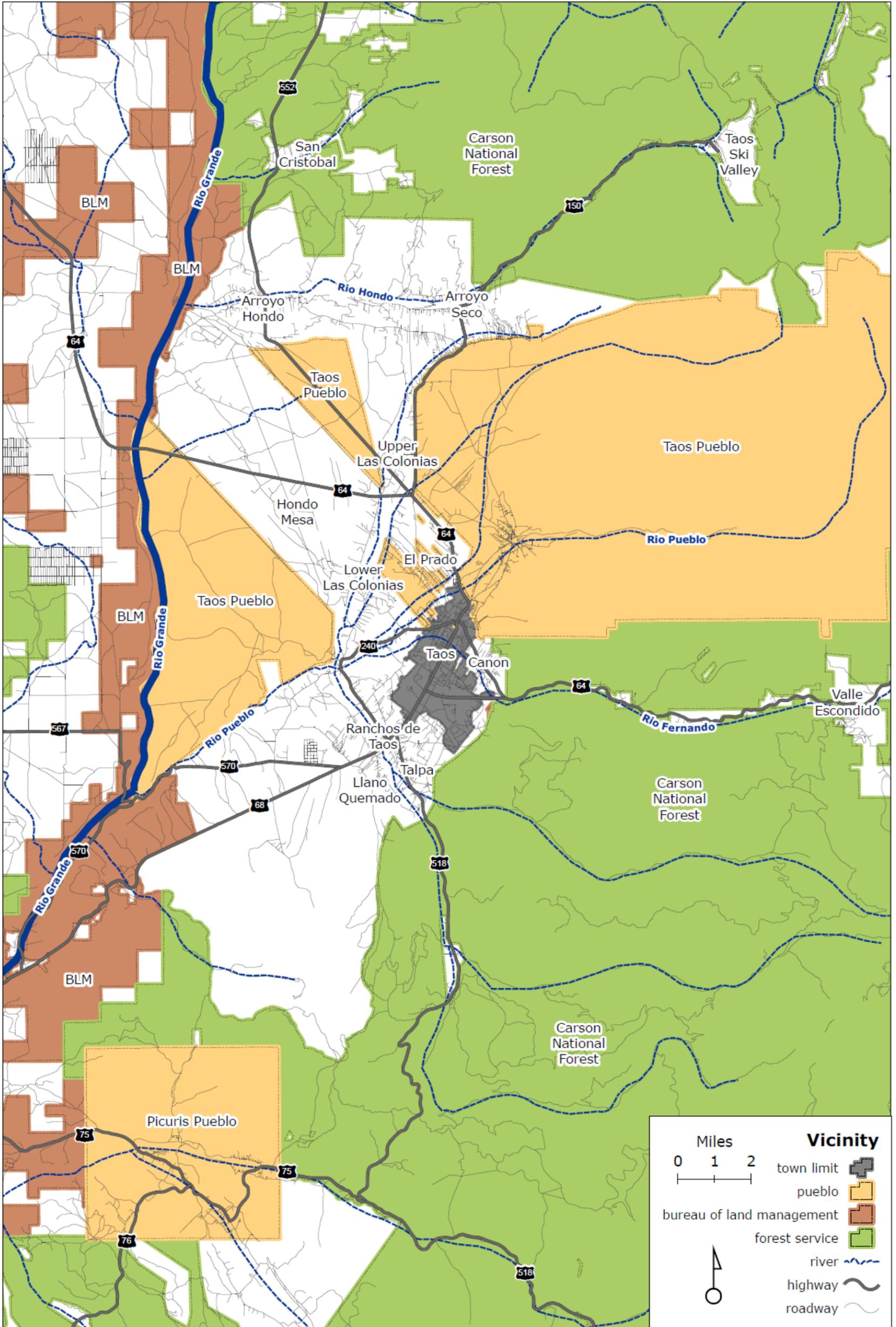
Taos County has a history of geographic isolation. The conditions created by this isolation have inspired the development of a multi-textured, resilient and creative community, as well as produced specific challenges for area residents. The layered influences of decades of colonization and integration have also presented particular challenges to the residents of Taos County. While Taoseños are proud of the tri-cultural character and colorful history of their community, the high rate of immigration into the community by a relatively wealthy and older population has resulted in the creation of distinct subcultures that are less integrated into the traditional cultures of Taos.

As a result it has been said that there are “two Taoses” – one that is enjoyed by an affluent population that takes advantage of a lifestyle that includes luxury residences, expensive restaurants, skiing, a golf course, and, a wide variety of cultural and artistic events; and, one in which over 17% live in poverty, over 30% do not have health insurance and the median income is “significantly worse” than the state average.” - **TAOS COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH PROFILE. FY 2009. Taos C.A.R.E.S. Health Council C.A.R.E.S. = Community Action Resource Enhancement Strategies.**

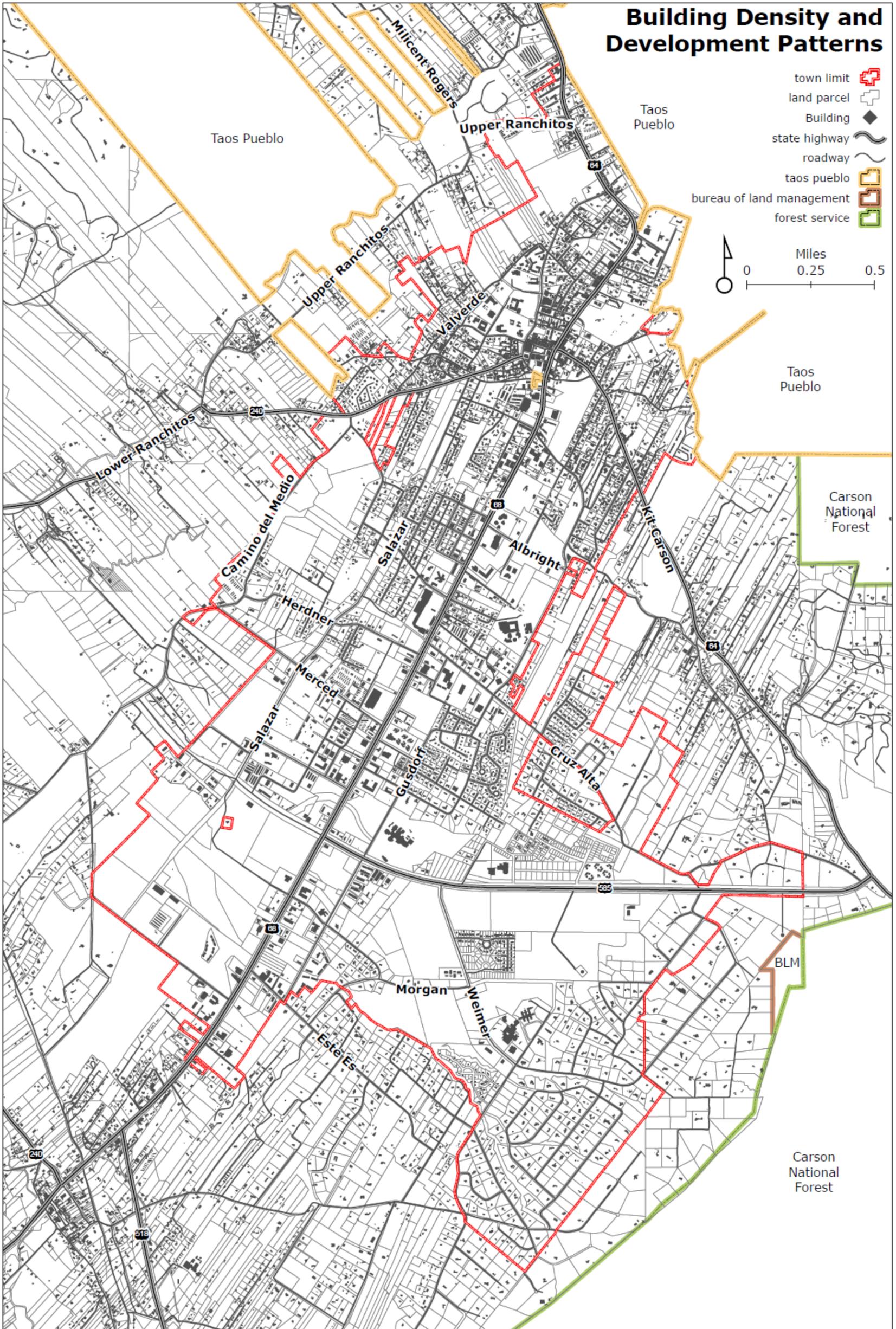
www.taoscares.com. page 13.

Taos is located in a beautiful setting, but the impacts of sprawl threaten the beauty, economy, and livability of Taos. The unity and diversity of the traditional development pattern in the historic district was lost to contemporary zoning, which requires isolation and segregation of new development.

Map #3 - Vicinity Map







Legal & Political Framework

At the heart of land use planning are the combined forces of land use law and local politics. State statutes, case law, and development codes provide a legal framework for planning, zoning, annexation, and subdivision regulations, but the political relationships between the Town and the County add another important dimension to cooperative land use planning in Taos.

Since the Extra-territorial Zone was abolished in 2006, the Town and the County do not have a formal agreement for land use planning or approving new development along the Town's boundaries. The purpose for abolishing the ETZ was to avoid the confusion surrounding the ETZ map, which often bisected properties and buildings. Administering the ETZ was very confusing for property owners and frustrating for the Town's staff. Property owners did not know if the Town or the County had jurisdiction when they needed a building permit or wanted a zone change. The ETZ also generated a situation where property owners felt they were not fully represented in land use and development decisions. Therefore, the Town and the County abolished the ETZ with the understanding that the Town would research the feasibility of annexing nine areas adjacent to the Town. The Town completed the Taos Annexation Strategic Plan in 2007, but it was never adopted by the Town or endorsed by the County. In fact, the recommendations of the Plan were largely unpopular, inciting petitions against annexation and distrust over the Town's intentions. Although many of the property owners requested additional information about the costs and benefits of annexation, the Study was set aside until for further consideration at a later date.

State statutes offer different alternatives for coordinating land use planning, zoning, and subdivisions between municipal and county governments. The statutes are based on the assumption that growth is unlimited and annexation is inevitable. This assumption is why state law gives municipalities "planning and platting jurisdiction" outside its boundaries so new development conforms to the Town's development standards for zoning, subdivisions, and infrastructure. Unfortunately, state laws are vague and often confusing, leaving municipal and county governments with little certainty as to the best legal strategy for managing growth and coordinating development. Until a formal agreement is signed by the Town and the County, property owners living near the Town boundaries are at risk of

haphazard, incompatible development and inefficient infrastructure services. The Town and the County are at risk of losing opportunities for coordinating land use and efficient infrastructure investments. Outlined below is a summary of state statutes which create the legal framework for coordinated land use planning and development between the Town and County. The laws outline what is legal, but the elected officials will determine which of the alternatives is politically acceptable.

Planning – State statute §3-19-9 requires the Town of Taos planning commission to “prepare and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality and the area within the planning and platting jurisdiction of the municipality, which in the planning commission’s judgment bears a relationship to the planning of the municipality.” Although the Town is preparing a “Comprehensive Plan,” the terms “master plan” and “comprehensive plan” are interchangeable. Therefore, (Re)vision 2020 and the associated Elements will satisfy this legal requirement.

Statute §3-19-5 states “each municipality shall have planning and platting jurisdiction within its municipal boundary.” It further states that a municipality with the population of the Town of Taos (e.g. – 5,700) has a planning and platting jurisdiction of three miles from its boundaries.

The 2002 New Mexico Court of Appeals case of West Bluff Neighborhood Association v. City of Albuquerque further defines the legal framework of land use planning, assigning the role of a comprehensive plan as “advisory” versus mandatory. The case states that “legislature has assigned to master plan for physical development of municipality the role of guide, enabling municipal planning commissions to use reasonable discretion in applying master plan’s provisions to actual decision-making processes involved in municipal development.” In other words, it is up to the local planning commission and/or elected officials to determine if a specific development project is consistent with the comprehensive plan or not; however, statute §3-21-5 states that a municipal zoning authority’s regulations and restrictions to be “in accordance with” the comprehensive plan. Therefore, the Land Use Element includes specific recommendations to update the Land Use Development Code to make the Town’s development regulations and restrictions “in accordance with” the maps, goals, and policies of the Land Use Element.

Subdivisions

– The case of City of Carlsbad v. Caviness defines a “plat” as a map or representation on paper of a piece of land subdivided into lots, with streets, alleys, etc., usually drawn to scale. Subdividing is the act of legally dividing land into two or more parcels for the purpose of selling the individual parcels.

State statute §3-19-6 requires the Town to have subdivision regulations within the planning and platting jurisdiction, but City of Carlsbad v. Caviness states the “planning and platting” statutes did not confer “zoning” powers on the municipality. However, subdivisions and zoning work hand in hand. Consequently, it is difficult for the Town to approve a subdivision within the three mile planning and platting jurisdiction without the development standards and permitted uses that are included in a zoning ordinance. Furthermore, the statutes do not distinguish between residential or commercial subdivisions.

Statute §3-20-5 also gives jurisdiction to the Town for subdivisions within three miles of the Town’s boundaries. Then in section §3-20-9, the statutes state that “any person seeking the approval of a plat of a subdivision within the plating and planning jurisdiction of both a county and municipality shall secure an endorsement of approval from both the board of county commissioners and the planning authority of the municipality before the plat is filed in the office of the county clerk.”

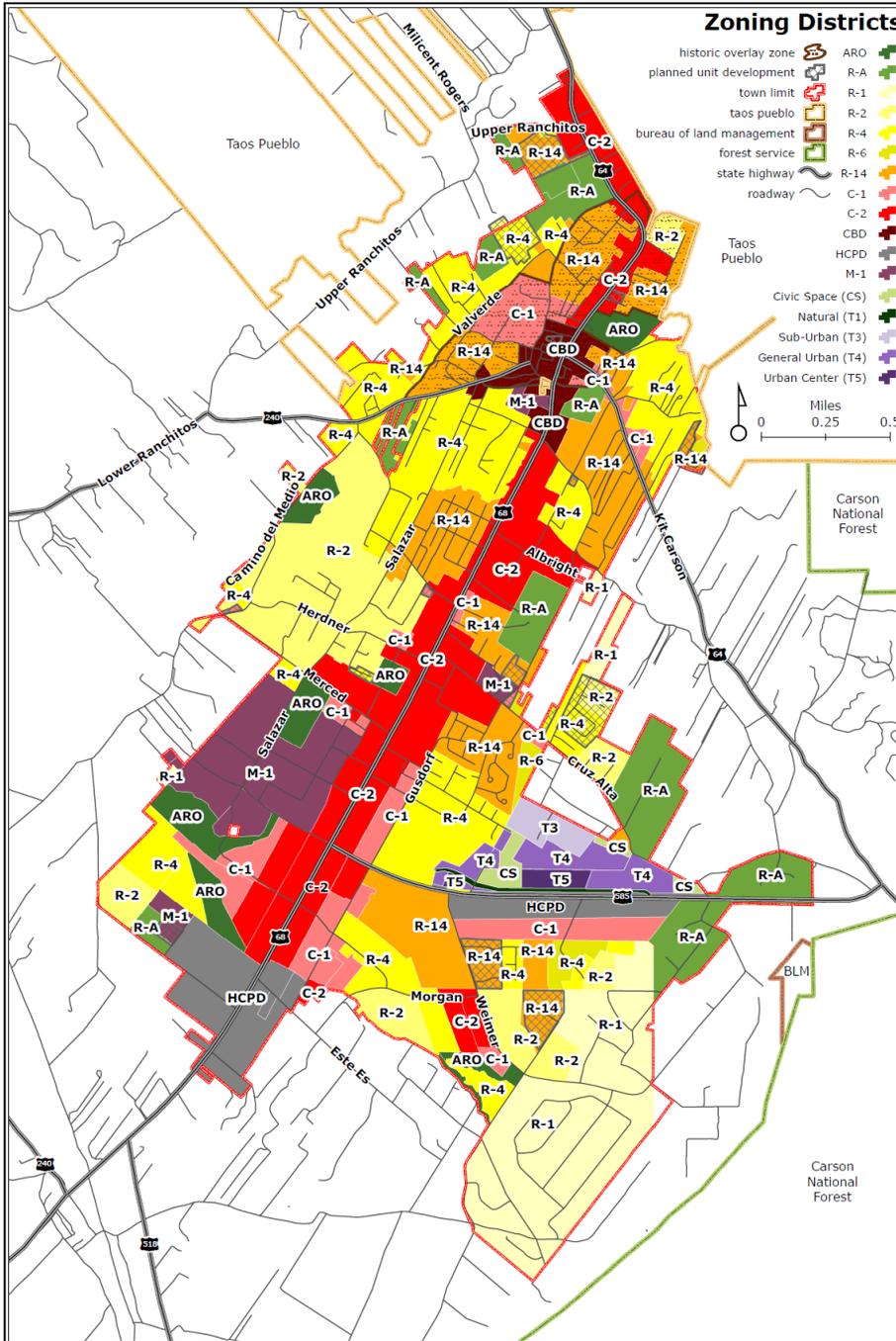
Zoning

– Zoning is a regulatory system intended to minimize the negative impacts of land development. A zoning map identifies the locations of each zone. Zoning regulations include a list of allowed uses and development standards (e.g. - units per acre, minimum lot sizes, building height, etc.) within each zone. The main purpose of zoning is to separate incompatible land uses from each other. As mentioned above, state statute §3-21-5 requires regulations and restrictions (e.g. – zoning) be in accordance with a “comprehensive plan.”

Statute §3-21-5 provides for concurrent zoning authority within one mile of the Town boundary; however, the Town and County do not have the same zoning districts in their respective zoning ordinances. The Town’s includes sixteen zones, additional overlay zones, and

provisions for special uses and conditional uses. The County's ordinance includes only the RA zone.

Section §3-21-2 gives the Town jurisdiction to zone "all or any portion of the territory within its extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction that is within...one mile of a boundary."



Map #6 (Zoning Districts). The Town's zoning map separates commercial and residential development instead of integrating them within neighborhoods.

Annexation – State statutes outline three methods for the annexation of land by a municipality. These are:

- The Arbitration Method, Sections §3-7-5 through §3-7-10 NMSA 1978, allows the municipalities to annex contiguous territory if the municipal government can declare that the benefits of annexation be made within a reasonable time frame to the desired territory.
- The Municipal Boundary Commission, Sections §3-7-11 through §3-7-16 NMSA 1978, establishes an independent commission to determine annexation of a territory to the municipality. The commission will meet whenever a municipality petitions to annex territory or a majority of the landowners of a territory petition the commission to annex the territory into the municipality. The municipality or property owners can petition the Commission to annex a territory into the Town.
- The Petition Method, Section §3-7-17, NMSA 1978, requires a petition signed by the majority of property owners by acreage in a contiguous territory supporting annexation into a municipality.

The Town is pursuing annexation of 19 areas adjacent to the Town boundary where the Town will pursue annexation according to the Municipal Boundary Commission method. Not only would these annexations clean up the Town's boundaries, but they would clarify property tax rates, zoning, 911- addressing, police jurisdiction, and potential expansions to water and sewer utilities.

Extra-Territorial Zone - Section §3-21-3 outlines the procedure for creating an extra-territorial zone (ETZ). It states that a municipality or county may enter into an agreement for the zoning of an extra territorial zoning area. It requires the adoption of a zoning ordinance and the creation of a "joint municipal-county zoning authority" to administer the ETZ.

Regional Planning – This statute (§ 3-56-2) allows counties and municipalities to form a “regional planning commission” with the members of the commission representing each of the governing bodies which are a part of the agreement. The Commission may hire a director and prepare a plan for the development of the region. The county or municipality may delegate any or all of their planning “powers and functions” to the regional planning commission. It also allows counties and municipalities to merge their respective planning powers and functions into a planning commission in accordance with the Regional Planning Act.

Development Codes – The Town’s Land Use Development Code (LUDC) provides additional legal framework for land use and development decisions. The LUDC requires the Planning & Zoning Commission “To approve, disapprove, modify, revise and update, as required, the Town of Taos master plan for the town.” However, a “master plan” (often synonymous with “comprehensive plan”) contains public policy, and because only the Town Council can approve public policy, all of the elements of (Re)vision 2020 will be approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Town Council.

The LUDC gives the authority to the Planning & Zoning Commission to implement the Town Council’s land use policies through subdivision approvals as well as the authority to review and recommend to the Town Council a wide variety of zoning decisions. The LUDC requires that any change to the LUDC must be consistent with “the direction and intent of the existing Town of Taos master plan.”

The Town and the County have several options to coordinate land use planning and ensure that land development that is adjacent to the Town represents the best interests of property owners and neighborhoods. These options include:

1. The Town could exercise the statutory requirements of §3-19-5, which delegates “planning and platting jurisdiction” to the Town within three miles of the Town’s boundaries. The maps, goals, policies, and objectives of (Re)vision 2020 would apply to all property within three miles of the Town.

2. The Town and the County could approve an ordinance that re-establishes the ETZ. This requires a zoning map for the properties within the ETZ, an ordinance that outlines the allowed uses and standards for development, and the creation of an ETZ commission to administer the ordinance.
3. Create a regional planning authority per statute §3-56-2.
4. The Town and the County could approve an agreement that outlines the relative roles and responsibilities for land use planning and administering development applications for properties near the Town's boundaries.
5. Vision 2020 supports regional planning through Task Forces organized by the Intergovernmental Council. – **Vision 2020 Master Plan. 1999. p. 3.**

Navigating state statutes as a legal framework for land use planning is a challenge. Many statutes are unclear, ignored, or without precedent, but the political challenges to land use planning are perhaps more important. Regardless of what the state statutes allow or do not allow, the Town and the County should coordinate land use planning, subdivision standards, and annexations with the overall intention of managing growth, protecting property values, preserving natural resources, and providing efficient public services. The Town and County planning departments must continue communicating about land use, zoning, and the most effective way to protect the health safety, and welfare of the communities they serve.

Planners and lawyers across New Mexico agree that the state statutes must be amended to clarify the relative responsibilities between a municipality and a county with regard to planning, subdivisions, and zoning. Regardless of the current or future status of state statutes, development in the County affects the Town and vice versa. Taos Pueblo, federal land and land grant communities are also affected by development within the Town. In the interest of land use planning, coordinating infrastructure investments, and providing equitable, coordinated development across the region, **Table #1** outlines the possible roles and responsibilities for planning, subdivision, zoning, and building permits within the Town boundaries, the one-mile concurrent zoning jurisdiction, the three mile planning and platting jurisdiction, and the County. It also outlines the land use and development jurisdictions for tribal, state, and federal governments.

Table 1. The possible roles and responsibilities of the Town and the County with regard to planning, subdivision and development review, zoning, and building permits. It outlines and acknowledges the land use planning and development jurisdiction of land grants, state, federal, and tribal government.

	Adoption	Planning	Subdivision Standards & Development Review	Zoning Districts	Building Permits
Town of Taos	The Town will adopt the Land Use Element by resolution. The Town will adopt an ordinance requiring zoning decisions to be consistent with the Land Use Element. State Statute 3-19-10 requires the Town to adopt the Comprehensive Plan during a public hearing.	The Town will work closely with Taos County, Taos Pueblo, federal agencies, community organizations, and citizens in updating the Land Use Element. The Town is responsible for writing the Land Use Element and facilitating the public review and approval process.	The Town will be responsible for administering subdivision applications according to the Town’s subdivision standards.	The Town will be responsible for designating zoning districts within the Town limit.	The Town is responsible for reviewing and approving building permit applications and issuing a certificate of occupancy within the Town limit.
Within One Mile of the Town	The Town and County will adopt the Land Use Element by joint resolution. The agreements regarding the relative responsibilities for planning, platting/subdivisions, zoning, and building permits will be approved by a Joint Powers Agreement between the Town Council and the County Commission.	The Town will work closely Taos County, Taos Pueblo, federal agencies, community organizations, and citizens in updating the Land Use Element. The Town is primarily responsible for developing the Land Use Element and facilitating the public review and approval process. The Town will incorporate the Taos County Comprehensive Plan and the Taos County Growth Management Plan PHASE I: Future Land Use.	The Town will be responsible for administering subdivision applications. Because the Town and County apply different subdivision standards, the Town will apply the more restrictive regulations when reviewing applications. The Town will provide the County with staff reports and the record of decision with regard to subdivision applications for the Taos County Planning to Director’s concurrence and signature on the plat. Appeals would be made to the Town Council.	The Town will be responsible for designating zoning districts. According to state statute, these zoning districts must in accordance with the “comprehensive plan.” The Taos County Growth Management Plan PHASE II: Implementation includes zoning districts for individual neighborhoods. The neighborhoods that have developed a Growth Management Plan (e.g. – zoning) include Canon, Las Colonias / West Mesa, and Ranchos de Taos. The Talpa and Chamisa neighborhoods are located within one mile of the Town limit but have not completed a plan.	The Town will review building plans against the development standards of the applicable zoning district (e.g. – setbacks, building height, parking, etc.) within one mile of the Town limit. The County will be responsible for reviewing and approving building plans according to building codes and will be responsible for inspections and issuing a certificate of occupancy.
Between One Mile and Three Miles of the Town	The Town and County will adopt the Land Use Element by joint resolution. The agreement regarding the relative responsibilities for planning, platting/subdivisions, zoning, and building permits will be approved by a Memorandum of Understanding between the Town Council and the County Commission.	The Town will work closely with local and tribal governments, community organizations, and citizens in updating the Land Use Element. The Town is primarily responsible for developing the Land Use Element and facilitating the public review and approval process. The Town will incorporate the Taos County Comprehensive Plan and the Taos County Growth Management Plan PHASE I: Future Land Use.	Taos County will be responsible for administering subdivision applications. Because the Town and County apply different subdivision standards, the County will apply the more restrictive regulations when reviewing applications. The County will provide the Town with staff reports and the record of decision with regard to subdivision applications for the Town’s Planning to Director’s concurrence and signature on the plat. Appeals would be made to the County Commission.	Taos County will be responsible for designating zoning districts. According to state statute, these zoning districts must in accordance with the County’s Comprehensive Plan. Taos County prepared the Growth Management Plan, PHASE II: Implementation. The Growth Management Plan includes the neighborhoods of Canon, Las Colonias West Mesa, Ranchos de Taos The Talpa, Chamisa, Upper Las Colonias, Vista Linda, and the Lower Rio Pueblo neighborhoods.	Taos County will be responsible for reviewing building permit applications, inspections and issuing a certificate of occupancy.

Beyond Three Miles of the Town (Taos County)	Taos County is responsible for planning. Taos County adopted a Comprehensive Plan by Resolution #2004-69 on October 4, 2004. Taos County also adopted the Growth Management Plan Phase I: Future Land Use by Resolution 2007-04 on March 2007.	Taos County is responsible for planning. Taos County adopted a Comprehensive Plan by Resolution #2004-69 on October 4, 2004. Taos County also adopted the Growth Management Plan Phase I: Future Land Use by Resolution 2007-04 in March 2007.	Taos County will be responsible for the development standards for subdivisions and administering subdivision applications.	Taos County is responsible for designating zoning districts. According to state statute, these zoning districts must be in accordance with the County's Comprehensive Plan.	Taos County will be responsible for reviewing building permit applications, inspections and issuing a certificate of occupancy.
Taos Pueblo	Taos Pueblo is a sovereign nation and is not required to adopt the Land Use Element.	The Town will work cooperatively with Taos Pueblo in developing and updating the Land Use Element.	Taos Pueblo is a sovereign nation and responsible for all development activity within Taos Pueblo.	Taos Pueblo is a sovereign nation and is responsible for all development activity within Taos Pueblo.	Taos Pueblo is a sovereign nation and is responsible for all development activity within Taos Pueblo.
Federal Land	The Federal government is not required to adopt the Land Use Element.	The Town will work cooperatively with the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service in developing and updating the Land Use Element.	Each federal government agency is responsible for all development activity for federal lands.	Each federal government agency is responsible for all development activity for federal lands. Development is subject to applicable federal laws.	Each federal government agency is responsible for all development activity for federal lands.
Land Grants	Land grant communities are not required to adopt the Land Use Element.	The Town will work cooperatively with land grant communities in developing and updating the Land Use Element.	Taos County will be responsible for the development standards for subdivisions and administering subdivision applications.	Land grant communities are responsible for zoning within the commonly owned land within the land grant.	Taos County will be responsible for reviewing building permit applications, inspections and issuing a certificate of occupancy.

If only a portion of a parcel falls within the one mile or three mile border, the parcel will be treated as if the entire parcel falls within the border. This should avoid unnecessary confusion regarding the proper jurisdiction for planning, platting / subdivision approval, zoning, building permits. The JPA would need to address the applicability of the state exemptions for family lot splits and other subdivision exemptions.

An alternative to a Joint Powers Agreement is for the Town Council and the Taos County Board of Commissioners to approve an Extra-Territorial Zone (ETZ). An ETZ may prove to be more efficient. To avoid the inefficiencies and confusion of the previous ETZ, the effective management of a new ETZ would require a map that clearly defines the ETZ boundaries (by parcel), designated zoning classifications, and development standards. The Town would be completely responsible for land use planning, zoning, subdivisions, building permits, and code enforcement within the ETZ boundary. The County's existing neighborhood overlay zones and neighborhood plans would be incorporated into the ETZ.

“The Town of Taos will coordinate its planning initiatives with Taos County, to ensure a more comprehensive approach to land use; commercial, institutional, and industrial development; open space preservation; and community design.” – Vision 2020 Master Plan. Community Design Element. 1999. P. 71.

Challenges & Community Concerns

The trends and challenges that impact land use and development patterns are outlined and described below. These trends and challenges are used to shape the maps, goals, policies, and objectives of the Land Use Element.

. Changes in demographics will require new development patterns.

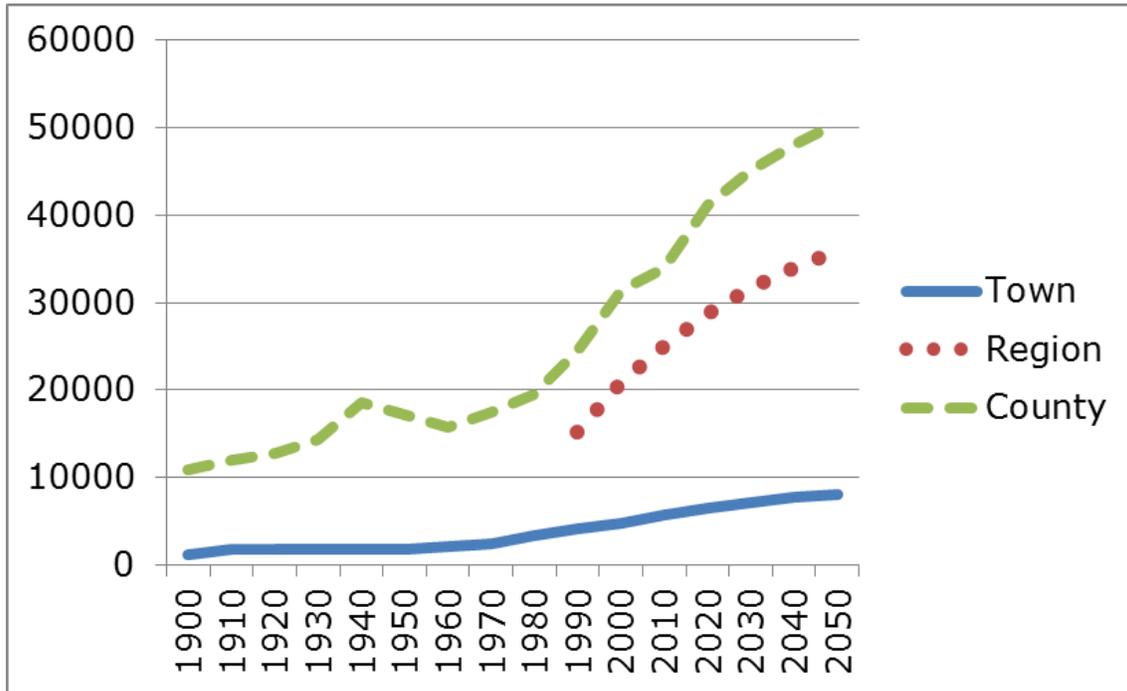
As the population changes, the demand for retail sales, services, housing, infrastructure, and neighborhood amenities also change. Business opportunities also emerge from changing demographics. The challenge for the Town is to provide quality community services which respond to the needs of the changing population.

Population –

While some communities have actually lost population, Taos has absorbed a steady increase in population, particularly for the past three decades. The attraction to Taos is understandable. There are many amenities which attract tourists who then become residents. Taos offers culture and history, art, recreation, nature, architecture, and a relaxed rural lifestyle.

Chart #2 shows the population projections for the Town of Taos, Taos County, and the Central Region of Taos County. The potential population growth appears dramatic; however, many forces will determine the actual population growth over the next few decades. These include the availability of jobs, the number of tourists who decide to stay in Taos, build a house, and the amount of disposable income they bring, the level of entrepreneurial activity of local businesses, the degree of in-migration due to “urban refugees” who seek to escape the monotony and stress of urban environments. Ultimately, the population of the future depends on our ability to protect the economic assets of Taos, including the open space, rural character, culture, and history which make Taos a great place to visit, open a business, build a house, get an education, or start a family.

Chart #2. Population Projections.



The estimate for the Town of Taos population in 2050 is 8,093. Taos County is projected to be 50,546 by 2050. The Taos County Growth Management Plan: Phase I Future Land Use estimates the total population of Taos County Central Sub-Region, which includes the Town of Taos, Arroyo Seco, Taos Pueblo, Taos Ski Valley, Arroyo Hondo, Ranchos de Taos, and El Prado, will increase to a total population 35,909 by 2050. The Central Sub-Region represented over 70 percent of the total population in Taos County in 2009. "This region has accounted for nearly 81% of the planning area's growth during the past decade and will most likely continue to see the majority of growth." - **Taos County Growth Management Plan: Phase I Future Land Use. March 2007. p. 7.**

It is important to note that the population projections developed for the Regional Water Plan were completed before the economic recession hit Taos. Nonetheless, the population of Taos County is projected to grow but at a much slower rate that it was in recent years. "The annual average change in population between 1969 and 2005 was +1.7%; the change between 2006 and 2009 was only +.5%. The total Taos County population only grew +.3% between 2006 and 2009." - **Bill Stevens. 2012.**

Table #2 (Population Data) outlines the population data by decade for the Town of Taos, The Central Sub-Region, and Taos County.

Table #2. Population Data.

YEAR	Town	Central Region	County	
1900	1225		10889	
1910	1830		12008	
1920	1832		12773	
1930	1847		14394	
1940	1864		18528	
1950	1815		17146	
1960	2163		15784	
1970	2475		17516	
1980	3369		19546	
1990	4065	15227	24487	
2000	4700	20834	31484	
2010	5716	25016	33879	County
2020	6468	28665	41208	38013
2030	7145	31667	45070	41145
2040	7669	34015	48087	
2050	8093	35909	50546	

Sources: US Census (pre 2010), the Taos Regional Water Plan (2010 and after for Taos County and Central Region), **XXXX** (2010 and after for the Town of Taos), and UNM Bureau of Business & Economic Research (Taos County in 2020, and 2030).

Table #2.1. BBER Population Data

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
Total Population	31,931	33,879	35,960	38,013	39,743	41,145	42,367
Change	BASE YEAR	1,948	2,081	2,053	1,730	1,402	1,222
Percent Change (5-Years)	BASE YEAR	6.1%	6.1%	5.7%	4.6%	3.5%	3.0%
Percent Change (1-Year)	BASE YEAR	1.2%	1.2%	1.1%	0.9%	0.7%	0.6%

The population projections from the UNM Bureau of Business and Economic Research (**Table #2.1**) also show population growth for Taos County, but at a much lower rate than the Taos Regional Water Plan estimates. Taos County grew between 2 and 4 percent each year during the 1990's, but population growth is estimated to slow down to an annual rate between 1.2% and .6% per year between 2010 and 2035.

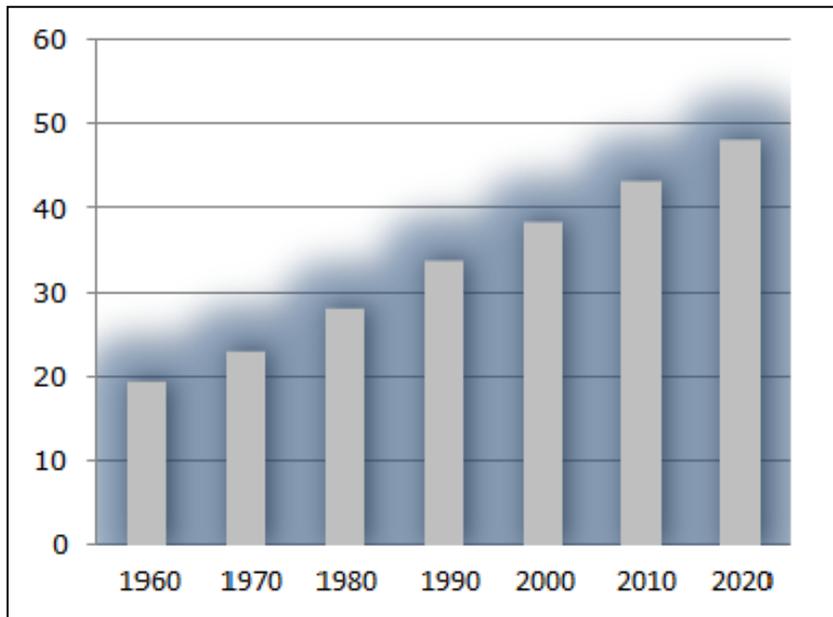


CHART 3. Average Age of Taos County Residents by Decade.
-BBER in Vision 2020. p. 27.

The average age of Taos County residents has been increasing. This trend is estimated to continue. In releasing population estimates, the

Census Bureau said New Mexico will rank 4th in the nation in 2030 in the percentage of population 65 and over (26.4 percent). Only Florida - at 27.1 percent - and Maine and Wyoming, at 26.5 percent, will have a larger segment of elderly residents. In 2000, people 65 and over accounted for 11.7 percent of New Mexico's population and those under 18 represented 28 percent. In 2010, 14.1 percent of the population will be 65 and over and that will grow to 26.4 percent - totaling 555,184 - in 2030.

The population is continuing to get older while the younger population is shrinking. The age group of those 55 and older grew +48.7% between 2006 and 2009. "The median age in the Town of Taos increased almost ten years between 1970 and 1990, a greater increase than was experienced nationally." - **Vision 2020 Master Plan. 1999. P. 27.** The age group of those between 0 and 19 shrunk -4.8% and the age group between 20 and 54 shrunk -4.7% between 2006 and 2009.

One limit to the population growth is the relative availability of jobs in urban areas. Many locals are likely to move out of Taos in search of employment in Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Denver, or Phoenix. The exodus of locals could be detrimental to the living cultures of Taos.

“Although Taos enjoys an abundance of community assets, not all are enjoyed equally by Taos County residents and so this description would not be complete without discussing the effects of gentrification. Gentrification is a general term for the arrival of wealthier people in an existing modest or low income area that results in a related increase in rents and property values, and changes in the community’s character and culture. The social, economic, and physical impacts of gentrification are often exacerbated by differences in race, class, and culture. Earlier residents may feel embattled, ignored, and excluded from their own communities. New arrivals are often mystified by accusations that their very arrival in the area and/or efforts to improve local conditions are perceived as hostile or even racist. In Taos, the influx of artists and wealthier transplants have resulted in a community filled with art galleries, cultural events and a myriad of leisure opportunities as well as upscale residential developments. Unfortunately, the benefits of these changes are often enjoyed disproportionately by the new arrivals, while the established residents find themselves economically and socially marginalized. In particular, the following types of changes have occurred in Taos:

Demographics: An increase in median income, a decline in the proportion of racial minorities, and an increase in the proportion of older residents.

Real Estate Markets: Large increases in rents and home prices and a change in land use from agricultural to commercial and luxury residential development.

Culture and Character: New ideas about what is desirable and attractive, including standards (either informal or legal) for architecture, landscaping, public behavior, noise, and nuisance. In addition, cultural values and traditions are resulting in loss, frustration and displacement.”

- TAOS COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH PROFILE. FY 2009. Taos C.A.R.E.S. Health Council C.A.R.E.S. = Community Action Resource Enhancement Strategies. www.taoscares.com. p. 42.

For the first time, the number of out-migrants exceeded the number of in-migrants to Taos County in 2007/2008. More people are leaving Taos County than are moving here, and along with them goes their income, entrepreneur activity, and demand for local businesses such as restaurants, landscapers, web page designers, massage therapists, and auto mechanics.

Employment & Business Activity -

Construction workers were hit very hard by the recession. Not only did the value of residential building permits drop decrease by -182.2% in the Town, but the number of jobs in the construction industry dropped by -41.3% between 2006 and 2009.

The unemployment rate rose from approximately 5% in 2005 to 10% in 2010.

The annual average percent of Gross Receipts Reported (GRR) rose by +6.7% from 2000 to 2006, dropped by -4.5% from 2007 to 2009. In 2010, GRR rose slightly by +0.9% (adjusted to subtract the construction of the Taos County Judicial and Administrative Complex). In 2011, the drop continued, at -3.1%.

The total amount of business activity as measured by GRR and rose at an annual average rate of +6.7% between 2000 and 2006, then dropped by -4.8% between 2007 and 2009. Retail Trade, Services, and Construction are the largest contributors to GRR. Not surprisingly, a significant amount of business activity is from tourism, but tourism was also impacted by the recession. The annual average increase in tourism (as measured by total gross receipts from amusement, gambling and recreation industries services; accommodation; full-service restaurants, and drinking places) was 10.7% between 1980 and 1994, but the average fell to an annual average of 0% increase between 1995 and 2002. For 2004 to 2005, the Tourism Indicator fell at an annual average of -1.8%.

Income & Migration -

In-migration is a measurement of the number of people who move to Taos County in a given time period.

The recent economic recession is evident in the demographic data for income in Taos County. Since the recession (2006 to 2007), the income for all of Taos County which is derived from transfer payments (e.g – government subsidies) exceeded the amount of income derived from dividends, interest and rent. In other words, the amount of disposable income (i.e. - what people spend on non-essential items) was less than transfer payments (welfare, food stamps, unemployment).

Although land use planning, zoning, and amending subdivision regulations are not considered economic development activities, completing the goals, policies, and objectives of the Land Use Element can preserve the great qualities of Taos and support a vibrant, growing economy. Particularly in a community like Taos where in-migration, tourism, construction, and retail are major contributors to the economy, it is never more important to preserve the unique character and quality of life in Taos. The open spaces, rural landscapes, acequias, recreation areas, historic districts, and urban design traditions should be preserved for the health and sustainability of the economy.

The Town would serve the elderly by designing and building higher density housing with smaller units, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods with convenient access to public services. The aging population presents opportunities for new business development and the need to re-vision how the Town designs the built environment. The elderly are less able to drive, need access to health services, and have different housing needs than younger populations.

The low-income levels of most residents also have implications for land use planning and the built environment. One of the main strategies for providing affordable housing is by increasing the allowed density of development while also providing access to recreation, employment opportunities, child care, and other public services that can be made available in mixed-use, walkable, and compact neighborhoods.

• **Infill should accommodate new growth.**

People require land for living, commerce, transportation, and recreation. As the population grows so will the demand for developed land. The current Town boundaries encompass 3,563 acres. And with a total population of 5,716 in 2010, the average resident takes up .62 acres of land. With a population projection of 8,093 by 2050, the Town will need to be 5,011 acres to accommodate the population growth. At the current rate, the Town will need to annex at least 1,417 acres of land into the Town boundaries at the current density.

At the current allowable residential density of the Town's existing zoning, there is enough undeveloped land to build between 1,919 and 3,198 additional homes. There is enough undeveloped commercially zoned land to build between 14.8 and 24.7 million additional square feet of commercial buildings and between 1.2 million and 2.0 million square feet of mixed use buildings. Although the Town can accommodate a considerable amount of new development, the Town will eventually run out of developable land, leaving no choice but to increase the allowable densities or annex adjacent property.

Map #7 identifies the undeveloped parcels and infill opportunities within Town boundaries. Undeveloped land with available infrastructure should be the focus of new development.

• The Town's infrastructure budget is in deficit.

Every year the Town Council adopts the Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan (ICIP). The ICIP is a "wish list" of un-funded infrastructure projects for a five year period. The average ICIP budget between 2007 and 2012 was \$76,793,789. The types of projects included in the ICIP range from new roadways, replacing old water and sewer lines to parks, trails, vehicles, buildings, and computers. The ICIP shows the clear deficit between the infrastructure needs and the Town's ability to afford the necessary infrastructure improvements.

Continuing the pattern of low-density development and investing in infrastructure along the fringe of Town will increase the budget deficit and lead to greater system inefficiencies, particularly with water and sewer systems.

"Low-density, dispersed development requires longer pipes, which lose more water through leakage and raise transmission costs. Infrastructure investments that support water system expansion over upgrading and maintenance of existing networks can lead to increasingly inefficient systems, greater waste, and higher capital and operating costs." - **Growing Towards More Efficient Water Use: Linking Development, Infrastructure, and Drinking Water Policies. US Environmental Protection Agency. page 3.**

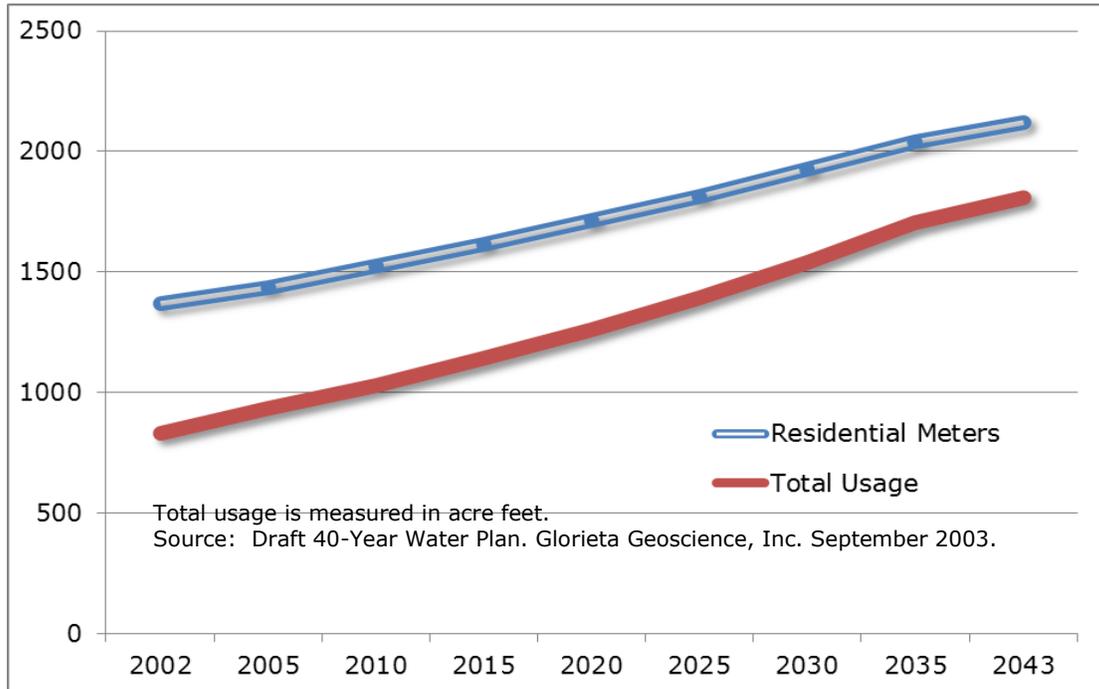
- **Water resources are threatened by unplanned development.**

Considering the environmental and economic impacts of drought and the projected population increases, it has never been more important than now to secure a sustainable water supply and protect water from unnecessary pollution. Unfortunately, the individuals and agencies that make decisions about land development are not always the same as those making decisions about water resources. There are 147 acequia associations, 2 pueblos, 32 mutual domestic water consumer associations, 4 incorporated municipalities, and 2 water sanitation districts in Taos County. Land use is primarily a function of local government while water regulations and allocations are decided among acequia associations, local, state, federal, and tribal governments as well as individuals, developers, mutual domestic water associations, and a variety of environmental organizations.

Development decisions need to be made with a full understanding of the impacts to water quality and quantity, including ground water and surface water. Increases in demand for water puts tremendous pressure on elected officials and water management agencies to resolve water adjudications and seek additional water rights, increasing the legal and political costs of water management.

There can be no doubt that the demand for water will increase as the population increases. **Chart #4 (Water Demand)** shows the projections for water use and the estimated number of residential meters that will be added to the Town's water delivery system.

Chart #4. Water Demand.



Other threats to water resources in Taos are:

- sprawl will increase construction costs and energy costs and political pressure to develop more, deeper water wells and transport water over greater distances that service fewer residences and businesses,
- increases in water pollution and erosion from storm runoff from roads, driveways, parking lots, and irrigated agriculture.
- decreases in water quality due to proliferation of septic tanks,
- According to the Taos County Comprehensive Plan, "Also the fastest growing component of Taos County water use is the estimated 7,400 individual domestic water well users. Many rural communities in Taos County have deteriorating water infrastructure systems and are generally not competitive at securing state and federal funding. The proliferation of septic tank use presents a threat to water quality and complicates Taos County water supply protection." - **Taos County Comprehensive Plan Update: Vision, Goals and Strategies. October 2004. p. 13.**

- changing patterns in the location, timing, and intensity of rain and snowfall represent threats to water quality and quantity,
- the City of Albuquerque and the City of Santa Fe have water deficits.

According to the draft of the 2011 Town of Taos 40-Year Water Plan prepared by Daniel B. Stephens & Associates, "the overall water quality near Taos is acceptable." However, the 40-Year Water Plan also highlights the fact that non-point source pollution, including leaking underground storage tanks, septic tanks, and "urbanization" are threats to water resources. The plan further states, "Collectively, septic tanks and other on-site domestic wastewater disposal systems constitute the single largest known source of groundwater contamination in New Mexico." - **2011 Town of Taos draft 40-Year Water Plan. Daniel B. Stephens & Associates. page 22.**

In terms of the Town's available water rights, the draft 40-Year Water Plan states, "The Town needs to transfer water rights to address offset requirements associated with several of its current permits." Offsets require that the Town's pumping of ground water does not impact surface water. The plan includes the following estimates of water demand:

- 2011 water demand = 950 acre feet / year
- 2020 water demand = 1,100 to 1,200 acre feet / year
- 2050 water demand = 1,300 to 1,800 acre feet / year

The Town's current permitted consumptive use water right is 1,464 acre feet per year. Therefore, based on the demand estimates, the Town will need to acquire additional water rights before 2050. Considering the political and legal obstacles to transferring water rights, conservation will be more critical as a strategy for protecting water resources and ensuring an adequate water supply to meet the estimated demand.

- **The transportation system should include alternatives for those who do not drive.**



photo by Matthew Foster. 2011.

Many possible solutions to Taos' traffic congestion problems have been proposed, including a relief route circumventing the Town, allowing regional traffic to "bypass" the Town and move on to their ultimate destination. Although a relief route would alleviate some traffic congestion on Paseo del Pueblo Sur, the Town must use multiple strategies to reduce traffic

congestion. Taos cannot build itself out of traffic problems. In reality, widening roads only temporarily reduces congestion. New road capacity increases the use of the road. Property values along the road increase, attracting more development and traffic.

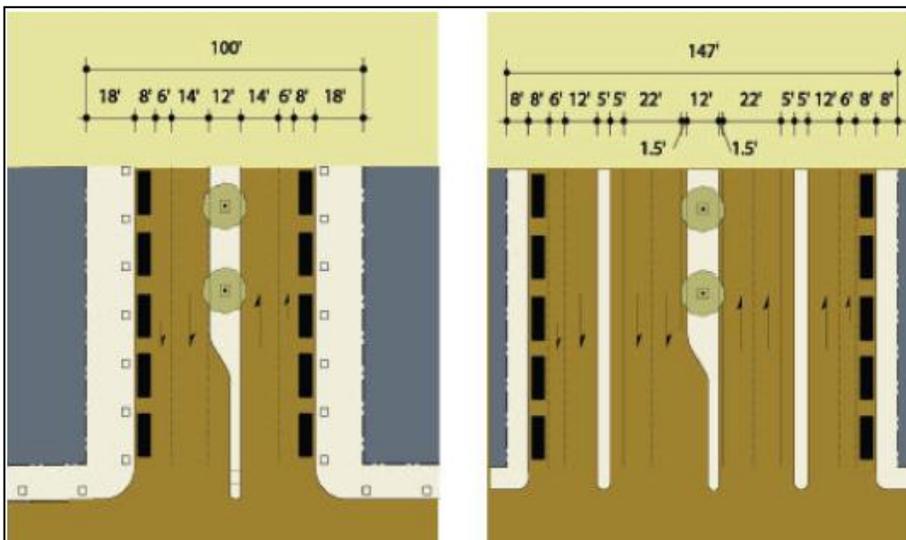
Although there are many practical reasons for driving (e.g. – weather, disability, small children, and time constraints), there are a number of reasons why most people are forced to drive everywhere. The separation of land uses and the lack of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure make it safer and more comfortable to drive than to walk or ride a bike. Nationwide, people are driving much more than ever. "The number of vehicle miles travelled by light-duty motor vehicles (passenger cars and light-duty trucks) increased 40 percent from 1990 to 2007, as a result of a confluence of factors including population growth, economic growth, urban sprawl, and low fuel prices over much of this period." - **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Inventory of US Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks. 1990-1007. USEPA Report 430-R-09-004.**

“As the population of the Town and surrounding communities has grown, traffic volumes have increased significantly. Levels of service for key roadway segments and intersections throughout the existing road network have decreased, especially during the past five years, due to the limited capacity and lack of connectivity of the primary arterials.” - **Taos Congestion Relief Study. Phase 1B Report. DETAILED EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES. Gannett Fleming West. 2002. p. 8.**

Another trend contributing to traffic congestion (and poor public health) is occurring every day at the schools. Enos Garcia Elementary, Taos Middle School, and the Taos Charter School all participated in the Safe Routes to School (SR2S) program in 2010. One part of the SR2S program is to conduct a tally of the students to determine their mode of transportation to and from school. The tally showed that a vast majority of students either drive or take the bus to and from school. The tally also revealed that most students live a considerable distance from school, making walking or biking more difficult. Safety factors such as traffic speed, traffic volume, and the lack of safe street crossings were frequently mentioned by parents as barriers for not allowing their children to walk/bike to/from school.

The trend toward greater traffic congestion must be reversed if Taos is to maintain a respectable quality of life, protect natural resources, promote public health, and contain infrastructure expenses. Although most of the specific strategies and recommendations for resolving traffic congestion will be included in the Infrastructure Element of

(Re)vision 2020, the trends can be largely resolved with comprehensive land use planning.

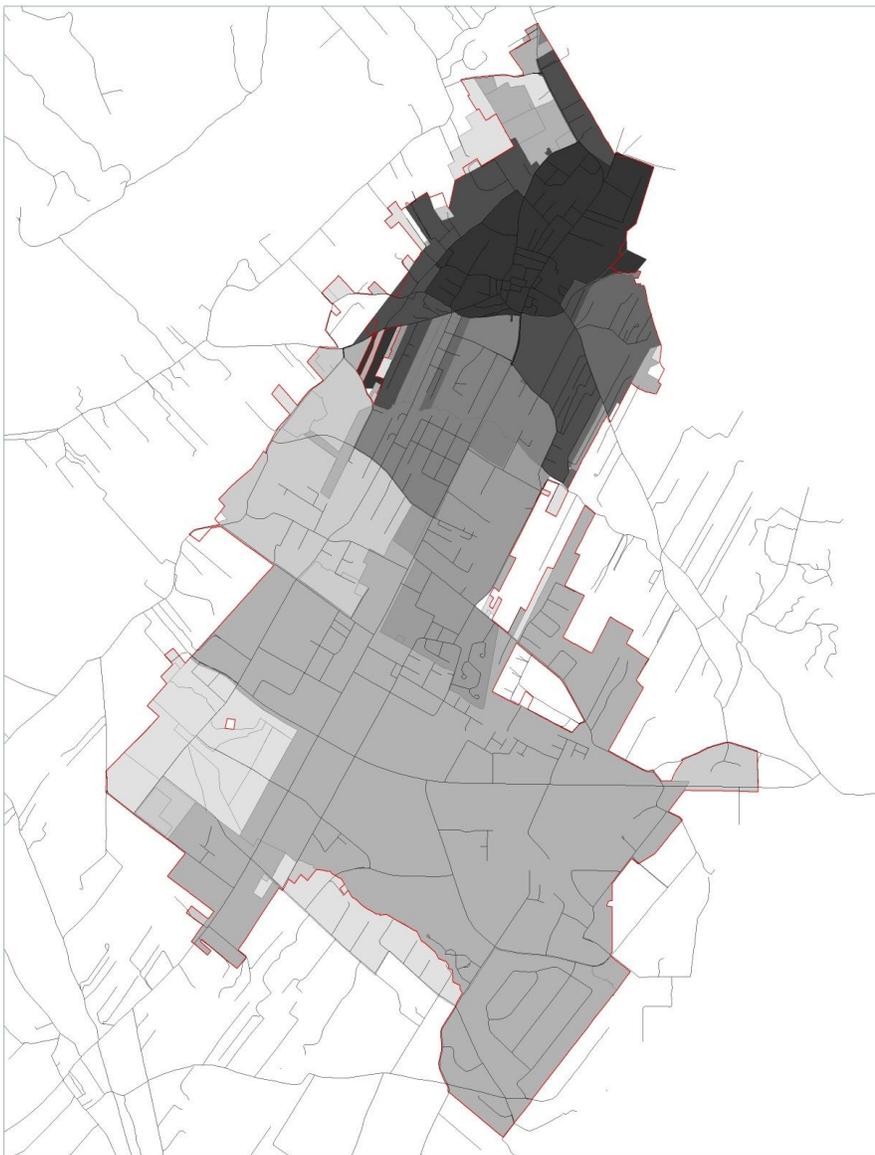


Cross sections of complete streets which accommodate multiple users.

- **Taos SmartCode. PlaceMakers. 2007**

• Sprawl is unsustainable.

Land development results in permanent impacts to the natural environment, including air and water resources. The low density development across our landscape damages wildlife habitat, diminishes public health, and erodes the unique character of Taos. Traditional communities such as Ranchos de Taos and Cañon have been losing their rural character due to suburban sprawl. The environmental, human health and aesthetic impacts will worsen if new development occurs in the same pattern.



Map #8 shows the growth of the Town boundaries. The darkest polygon shows the Town boundaries when it was originally incorporated in 1934, then the slightly darker polygons show the growth of the Town boundaries in ten year increments.

The amount of undeveloped land gives us an unprecedented opportunity to re-vision how Taos develops.

Brookings Institution National Research:

- Residential and commercial development in the next 25 years will eclipse anything seen in previous generations as the nation moves to accommodate rapid population growth,
 - About half the homes, office buildings, stores and factories that will be needed by 2030 don't exist today,
 - "To serve that population, almost 60 million housing units will have to be built. About 20 million of these units will replace destroyed or aging homes. In addition, half of the largest metropolitan areas will have to add as much or more commercial and industrial space as existed in 2000. Phenomenal growth in the South and West has turned deserts and soybean fields into cities. These Regions, which face water limitations, will experience the greatest surge in construction in the next 25 years. If development patterns don't change, subdivisions will continue to sprout on farmland farther from metropolitan areas, requiring more roads and sewer lines."
 - The U.S. will need 59 million new housing units by 2030 (2.2 million per year),
 - "For generations, Americans favored single-family homes on larger lots. Development spread to where land was cheaper but within commuting distance to jobs. Communities must decide whether they want to develop policies consistent with those preferences or constrain them. There are signs that people want more choices. Frustration with long commutes is mounting. Downtown housing is enjoying a revival. Even suburbs are creating city-styled town centers that combine stores, offices, condos and townhouses in a walkable environment. But change is coming slowly and we are going to wind up with anywhere between 60% to 70% of development occurring where it always occurred since WWII...on the outer edge."
- **Arthur C. Nelson, *Toward a New Metropolis: The Opportunity to Rebuild America*, Brookings Institution, Washington, DC. 2004.**

“With the population of near 6,500 over the Taos market area including the Pueblo, projected for about 1980 we can expect such developments which will stretch the ‘shoe string’ type of growth; inconvenient, unattractive, and usually uncontrollable.” - **Town of Taos Comprehensive Plan. Franke & Cornell. 1961.**

“If the Town allows generic development types along its main entrance into the historic core, the classic qualities that have made Taos a destination for artists, intellectuals, and seekers, as well as a very special place for its historic families, will be diminished. Over time, this could have a significant negative impact on the town’s core industry, tourism, as well as detracting from the qualities that have made Taos so special over the centuries.” - **Taos Smart Growth Implementation Assistance: Concepts for the Paseo del Pueblo Sur Corridor. US Environmental Protection Agency & ICF Consulting. 2006. p. 10.**

The visual blight of sprawl development is another trend that must be corrected. Outside of a few zoning districts such as the TND District and the Historic Overlay Zone, the design and character of new development can have disastrous results to the image and character of the community. Several plans and reports have alerted the Town to this trend, and each recommends a new set of development standards that create and preserve the rural character and urban design traditions of Taos.

Development patterns have permanent and damaging impacts to public health. Although the Town is not primarily responsible for public health or education, the Town can require land use and development patterns that promote greater public health, education, and physical activity. Research clearly shows the relationship between land use and development patterns and public health. To reverse the trends, the community needs to have greater access to recreation and safe, fun, healthy activities.

According to the New Mexico Youth Risk and Resiliency Report for Taos County, in 2009:

- 36.5% reported watching television for 3 or more hours a day
- 23.4% reported playing video games 3 or more hours a day
- 54.9% reported 3+ hours total screen time daily (TV, video or computer not related to school)
- 73.4% did not have daily PE at school

• **New development should enhance existing neighborhoods.**

The Town has sponsored a number of public events in the last several years with the intent of discussing urban design, zoning, transportation, and future development patterns in Taos. The public has had many opportunities to share their ideas and concerns about the location and design of future development. One opportunity came in December 2005 when the Town was awarded a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Smart Growth Implementation Assistance program. The EPA sent a team of planners, an architect, a transportation engineer, and an economist to study the development opportunities and traffic patterns along Paseo del Pueblo Sur. The study recommended design alternatives for the roadway and proposed many solutions for reducing traffic congestion, but perhaps more importantly, the public had the opportunity to share their vision for future development in Taos. In terms of land use and development issues, there was a strong agreement among those that participated that Taos should:

- preserve open space
- have a mix of housing types
- provide parks and urban open space
- ensure longevity of good Taos urban design and architecture

Citizens from all over Taos had another opportunity to share their vision during a five day charrette held in 2007. The purposes for holding the charrette were to introduce the SmartCode to the community, generate a common vision for the future development of Taos, then to create a land use master plan and development code based on the vision. Several focus group meetings were held with elected and appointed officials, developers, community groups, and the general public. Town officials and the team of consultants entered the charrette knowing that Taos needed new tools for implementing the vision.

The community's support for mixed-use neighborhoods is also apparent in the numerous policies and recommendations of Vision 2020. In fact, mixed use neighborhoods are the places in Taos which are cherished the most. They are the Taos historic districts, Ranchos de Taos, Canon, and Arroyo Seco. The desire is to replicate these traditional neighborhoods with new development.

Nation-wide market research also supports these preferences. According to Smart Growth America and National Association of Realtors, "6 out of 10 prospective homebuyers chose a higher-density, mixed use community." - **Smart Growth America and National Association of Realtors. 2004 American Community Survey: National Survey on Communities, Washington, DC, October 2004.**

Also.....

Today's fastest growing households are:

- young professionals
- empty nesters
- single parents
- couples without children
- senior citizens

They create demand for:

- the live/work/walk experience
- apartments, condos and townhouses

Higher-density development offers homes that are within reach of vital community members such as:

- teachers
- nurses
- fire fighters
- police officers
- retail salespeople

Demand for higher-density homes will hit new highs by 2015 due to an influx of:

- 78 million downsizing baby boomers
- 78 million children of the baby boomers graduating from college
 - 9 million new immigrants
 - service and municipal employees priced out of the neighborhoods where they work

- **Arthur C. Nelson, Toward a New Metropolis: The Opportunity to Rebuild America, Brookings Institution, Washington, DC., 2004.**

• Rural open space & farms are at risk to new development.

In late 2011, the Hutton Group, a development company from Tennessee, submitted an application to the Taos County Planning Department to seek approval of a Special Use Permit to construct an 8,200 square foot Family Dollar store on vacant property located immediately adjacent to the Overland Sheepskin buildings in El Prado.

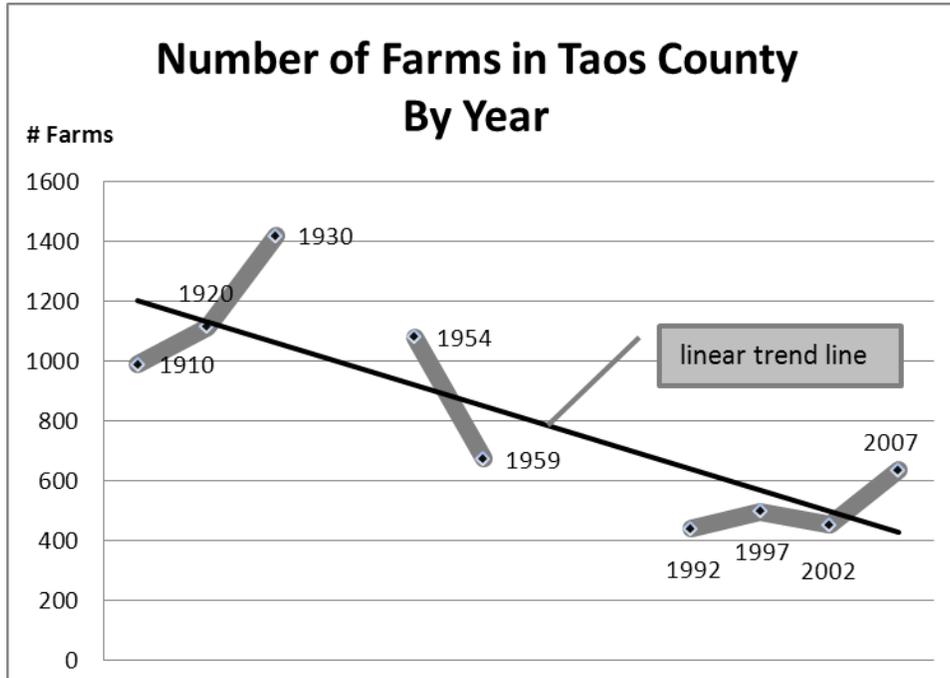


The development proposal and the immediate opposition from the community highlighted the political intensity surrounding land development on rural open space. Both the County and the Town need better tools for protecting rural open space and farms from inappropriate development.

Across the United States, critical agricultural land is being developed at a rate higher than population growth. "The US Department of Agriculture analysis concluded that developed land in the contiguous United States increased 34 percent between 1982 and 1997. During the same 15 year period, population grew by about 15 percent. Thus, our footprint is getting bigger: land consumption occurred more than twice the rate of population growth."- **EPA Watershed Academy Web**, <http://cfpub.epa.gov/watertrain/index.cfm>

Local data related to farmland development is sparse and inconsistent, but what can be quantified is outlined in **Table #3** shows the trend in the number of farms in Taos County is illustrated in Chart N. The trend is clearly downward.

Table #3.



There was a decrease of 53,100 acres of farm land between 1954 and 1959 in Taos County. There were 420 farm workers in 1949 and only 180 in 1959. - **Source: US Census of Agriculture. Various Dates.**

The American Planning Association Policy Guide on Agriculture Land Preservation (1999) recommends a comprehensive approach to protecting rural open spaces and agricultural land. The approach must include zoning, reform tax reform, supportive businesses and local economic development policies, environmental stewardship, and technical and financial support from a host of local partners that can maintain a critical mass of rural lands to feed and sustain the community.

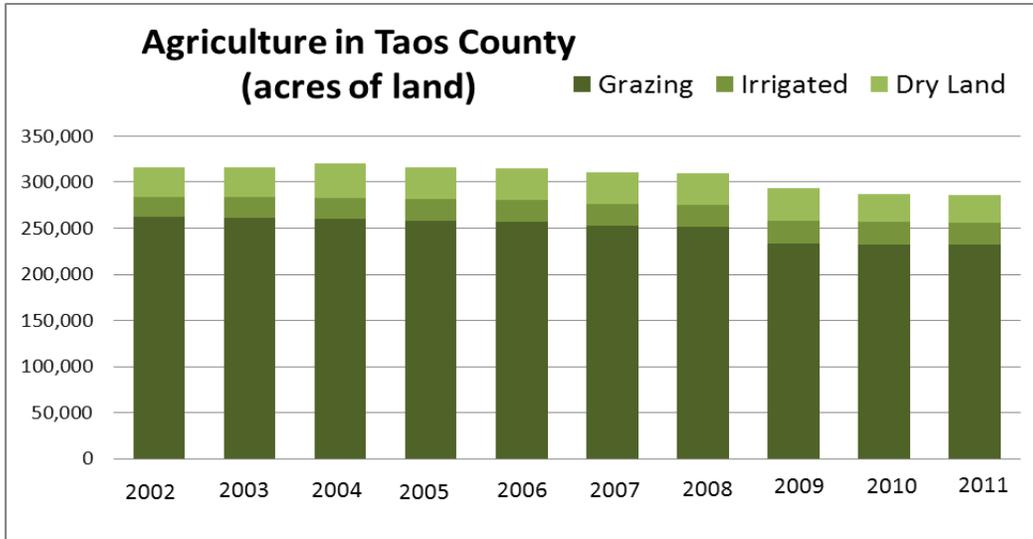
While the land use and development trend is toward converting irrigated agriculture to other uses, there are tremendous opportunities in enhancing the local agriculture industry. Strong partnerships exist among the many stakeholders that already work together to increase the community's food security, create jobs, protect water resources, and reverse the trends in public health and nutrition. In 2010, for

example, the Town contracted with Collaborative Green, a Taos-based consulting firm, to study the opportunities in developing a sustainable food system in Taos. The report states, "More and more people are moving in the direction of localized food. Localization means that people consume local, unprocessed food grown in the state, they purchase NM Processed foods, buy food from local producers and grocery stores that carry local foods, and eat out at local restaurants that offer locally prepared food." – **The Taos New Mexico Food Systems Report. Collaborative Green. 2010. p. 16.**

"Food security is when at all times, people have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Poor health outcomes disproportionately affect those populations that struggle with food security. The issue of food security is important when addressing the increasing rates of diabetes, obesity, and other health conditions such as pregnancy among adolescents. During the period from 2004 to 2006, New Mexico had the second highest rate of food insecurity in the United States." - **TAOS COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH PROFILE. FY 2009. Taos C.A.R.E.S. Health Council C.A.R.E.S. = Community Action Resource Enhancement Strategies. www.taoscares.com. p. 272**

Although irrigated agricultural land is vulnerable to development, the amount of land assessed for agriculture by the Taos County assessor is somewhat stable. However, Taos County recognizes the difference between lands that are assessed as agriculture for tax purposes and the amount of land that is actively used for harvesting food or grazing horses, sheep, goats, or cattle.

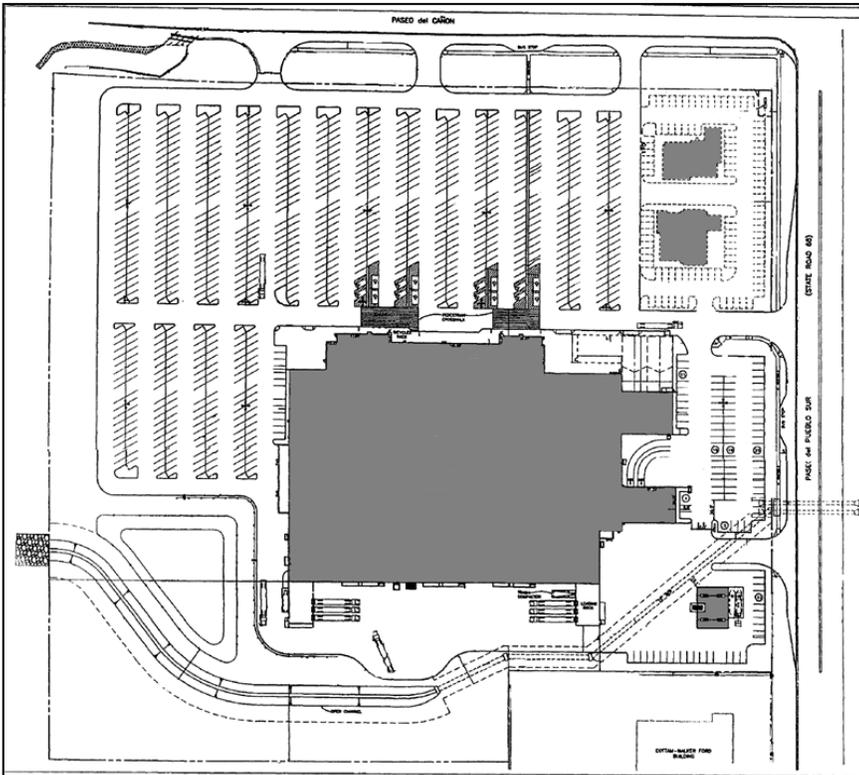
Table #4. Agriculture in Taos County.
Source: Taos County Assessor Office



- ## Increased population will attract another “big box”

Whether it is a Super Walmart, Target, LOWE’S, or Home Depot, a big box national retailer will move to Taos. Unfortunately, the hideous design of big boxes and the questionable economic benefits are at odds with the Town’s goals. Nonetheless, the population growth will eventually attract another big box. Regardless if the box is 30,000 or 80,000 square feet, the current development standards for “large scale commercial” developments in the LUDC only decorate a big box with “Pueblo style” architecture, require a bike rack or native landscaping. The design of large scale commercial development must be more civilized and contribute to the character and fabric of the community. The design must eliminate the visual blight of the parking lot, properly address the massing and fenestration of the building, and consider the contribution the development makes to the future of the neighborhood.

The site plan for the Walmart Supercenter that was proposed in 1999 is a typical big box design. The Town responded to the proposal by conducting a survey of the community and eventually amending the LUDC to limit the size of commercial buildings to 80,000 square feet; however, the LUDC does not properly address the design of such a large development nor does it require any new development to consider its context, particularly how the development enhances the neighborhood or relates to surrounding properties.



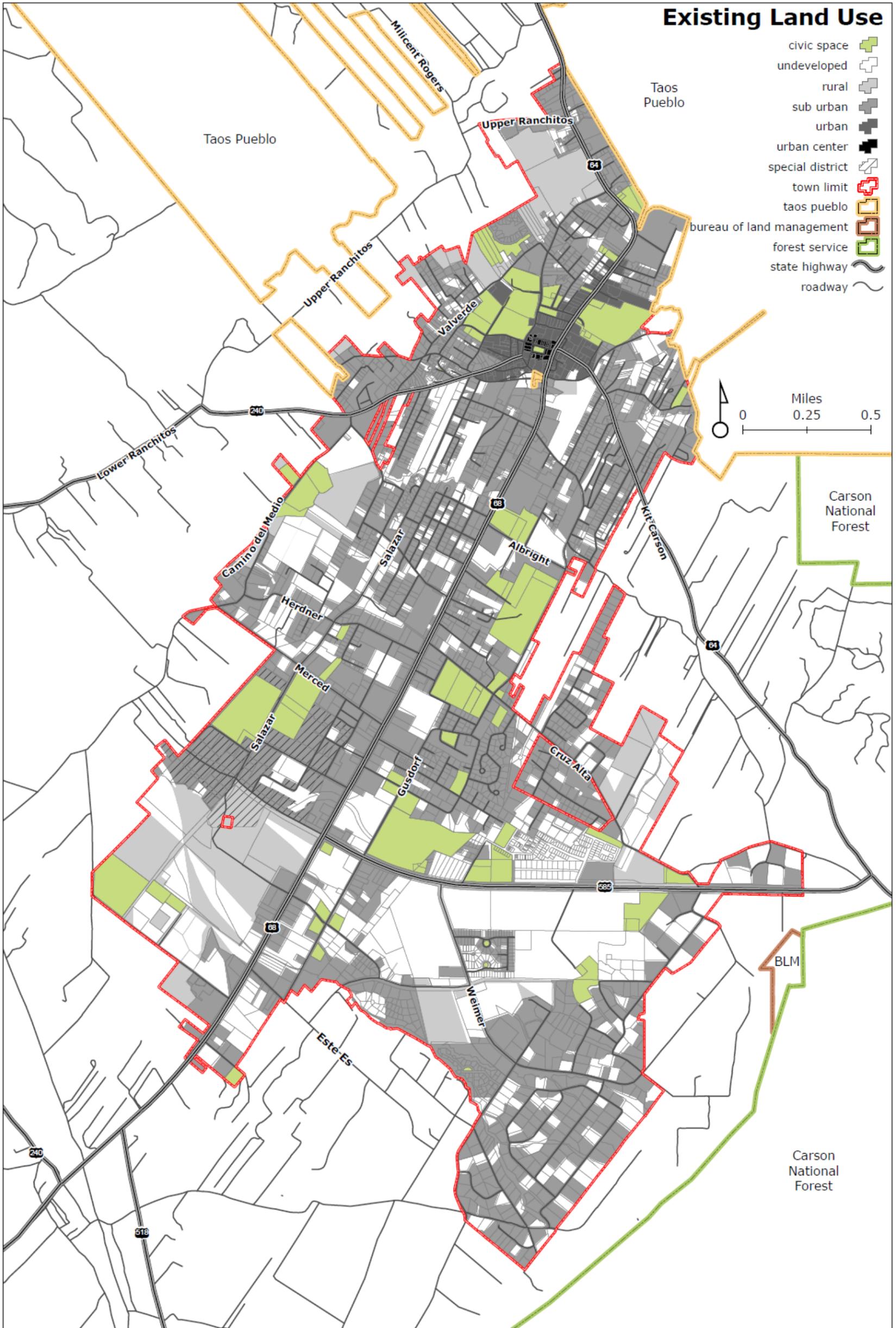
Big box developments are typically designed with a vast expanse of parking, limited and rarely used pedestrian facilities, minimal landscaping, and disregard to the character of neighborhood. The only amenities are the parking lot, drainage facilities, and “pads” for future development of fast food, gas stations, or other national retailers.

The 1999 Site Plan for Super Wal-mart.
Source: The Taos News

Summary

The Town will re-direct these trends and challenges toward land development patterns that are more financially, environmentally, and socially sustainable. The Town will also utilize all of the planning and regulatory tools at its disposal to encourage higher density development where infrastructure can support it. Conversely, the Town will prevent development in rural areas that are gifted with natural and scenic resources. These tools range from zoning regulations and financial incentives to a variety of education efforts, master plans, and design assistance.

If the trend of low density, single-use development (e.g. – sprawl) continues, the Town will not only run out of developable land, but it will be less capable of providing essential services for those who need them the most, including the elderly, children, and those living in poverty.



The Vision

Taos is a socially and culturally diverse community. Forming a common and completely cohesive vision of Taos is a fluid and dynamic process. The common challenge to the entire community is to accommodate new growth while preserving the small town character that defines Taos. Visioning is a never ending process where elected leaders and residents must always ask themselves:

- Where do you take friends and family when they come to Taos?
- What places do you avoid?
- What places bring special memories?
- What places truly define Taos?
- What places would make you feel a sense of loss if they were razed or dramatically altered?

“In an area of mass conformity, the individual character of Taos should be preserved as a valid statement of its location and past history and incorporated into future development which will utilize this distinction for the benefit of the community to always improve Quality of Life for all.” – **Town of Taos Comprehensive Plan. 1986.**

The vision statements from the Vision 2020 Master Plan and the Taos County Comprehensive Plan helped formulate the more specific goals, policies, and objectives for land use and development. The vision statements from each document are outlined below:

- **Town of Taos Vision 2020 Master Plan**

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

The Vision 2020 Master Plan vision statement that is specific to land use is:

“Growth and development protect and enhance the natural resources, unique landscape, historic character, distinct neighborhoods, and economic opportunities of the Taos Valley.”

- **Taos County Comprehensive Plan**

The Taos County Vision statement is:

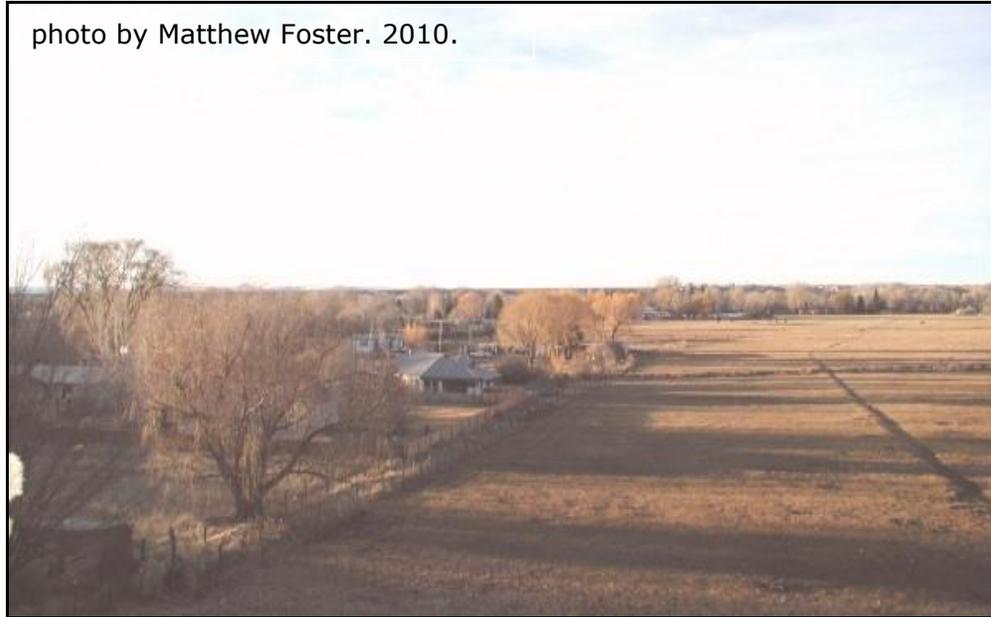
“Taos County is comprised of diverse and traditional communities, with strong land and water connections and a rich cultural heritage. Our neighborhoods are places where generations of families can live, work and be involved in the Taos community. We treasure our rural and agricultural traditions rich with diverse and multi-cultural heritages. We will strive to sustain our cultures and traditions through preserving our historical roots, creating vibrant neighborhoods, encouraging viable locally based economic development, caring for our natural resources, and protecting the health, safety and prosperity of all Taos County citizens, as we improve our quality of life for future generations.”

- **Community Preference Survey**

The vision statements from Vision 2020 and Taos County are inspiring and valid. As a part of the continuing visioning process, the Town completed a Community Preference Survey between 2007 and 2012 to illicit specific comments and feedback from the community. The survey included 16 questions and 27 images. The complete survey is included in the **Appendix**. Each respondent was asked to rank the 27 images as to the appropriateness to Taos now and in the future. The possible responses to each image were:

- +4 = Extremely Appropriate
- +3 = Very Appropriate
- +2 = Appropriate
- +1 = Somewhat Appropriate
- 0 = Neutral
- 1 = Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2 = Inappropriate
- 3 = Very Inappropriate
- 4 = Extremely Inappropriate

The most popular image was this image of the "greenbelt." The average score was +2.92. Does this image show residential development encroaching on farmland or is it the open farmland and rural character of the landscape that people voted for?



This image below received the second highest ranking as to its appropriateness for Taos. Some of the written comments about the image were:



- "As town center expands, this is the look that new construction should have. Very Nice."
- "Love the liveliness of the street and the bike lane. The center line of trees is also great."
- "Yes!!"

The average score was +2.59, where a rank of +3.0 is "very appropriate."

The image below received the lowest ranking as to its appropriateness for Taos. Some of the written comments about the image were:



- "No consistency in design. Seems to be for cars only."
- "Roads, buildings, etc. pretty unattractive as you enter the heart of town."
- This could be better. We look so run down."
- "Don't like."

The average score for this image was -1.03, where a rank of -1 indicates "somewhat inappropriate" for Taos. It is unfortunate that this image is the gateway to the Taos Historic Overlay Zone and is ranked as the least popular image of all 27 included in the survey. This location should express a strong sense of local pride and represent the great architectural traditions of Taos. It should welcome people to the historic district.

The survey shows that the quality and appearance of development is very important, particularly on issues of density, landscaping, traffic, and architecture. Not only does quality design and traditional architecture become an economic asset, but they become a source of community pride and personal identity.

The strongest issues that emerged in the written portions of the survey are:

- a need for more trees and native landscaping,
- the desire for preservation of rural open spaces and views,
- adding bike lanes to roadways,
- a concern for safety and existing gang activity,
- while many responded that Taos is a very desirable place to live, many also expressed a strong desire to move out of Taos for greater employment opportunities.

Of the 16 questions, the most important issues that received the highest average score were:

- “Water Resources Planning and Conservation” (+2.97)
- “Environmental Protection and Land Conservation” (+2.90)
- “Maintenance of Culture and Traditions” (+2.77)

(Re)vision 2020 honors the public input that was generated during the Vision 2020 planning process.

Many of the comments and concerns uncovered during that process are still valid. In fact, Vision 2020 included a Community Image Survey. The vision is consistent with the results of the Vision 2020 Community Preference survey conducted as a part of the (Re)vision 2020 process.

“As part of the Vision 2020 Planning Process, area residents participated in a Community Image Survey to identify the open spaces, streetscapes, and commercial and residential developments they would most like to see in Taos. Residents highly favored the use of traditional Pueblo and Spanish colonial architecture for new residential and commercial development. They also supported higher-density developments in the more urban areas of town. Everyone agreed that views to Taos landmarks, such as Taos Mountain and the Rio Grande Gorge, are extremely important to the community. Open space, including everything from private agricultural land to public parks, were also highly valued, but opinions varied on how much access people should have to these lands. In terms of roads, residents generally preferred treelined, wide roads with sidewalks in the more developed areas of town, and wanted to preserve non-paved and curving roads in rural areas. Comments from other phases of the Vision 2020 Planning Process showed that residents preferred the narrow streets in the Historic District, and wanted to see new roads built similarly in order to slow down traffic and to enhance community character.” – **Vision 2020 Master Plan. 1999. p. 66.**

Vision 2020 included an analysis of three land use scenarios. Each scenario was accompanied by a land use map. The Preferred Land Use Scenario of Vision 2020 is described by:

- "natural resource protection depicted
 - direct development to areas with existing infrastructure
 - ensure that economic development and affordable housing goals could be met,
 - the Plan recognizes the need to increase density in developed areas with existing infrastructure."
- **Vision 2020 Master Plan. 1999. P. 37.**

The goals, policies, objectives and maps of the Land Use Element are highly consistent with the Preferred Land Use Scenario and further the vision statements as they are articulated in Vision 2020.

- **The Negative Vision**

Although the community has expressed a positive vision for the future of Taos, many people describe the vision in negative terms.

The negative vision is a useful reference and should be used to evaluate the merits of specific development proposals. Does a new development make Taos look and function like Espanola? If so, how? - sprawl, traffic congestion, impact to water and valuable land resources, visual blight?



This image had an average score of - 1.77 (between "somewhat inappropriate" and "inappropriate" for Taos). It resembles Espanola.

There is a clear and strong consensus that Taos should not develop into another Espanola, and Espanola should not turn into another Santa Fe, and Santa Fe should not become Albuquerque, and so on.

Goals, Policies & Objectives

The relationship between goals, policies, and objectives create a hierarchy for making decisions and taking action. Although many planners disagree about the definitions of goals, policies, and objectives, the goals, policies, and objectives of the Land Use Element are defined as:

Goals are broad statements that describe the desired results and accomplishments of what is envisioned for the community. A goal reflects the common values and aspirations of the community. Whether the goal is aimed at affordable housing or natural resources conservation, the goal guides decisions and sets direction for immediate action.

Policies describe the intentions and interpretations of a goal in further detail. A policy is not mandatory on the part of the Town, but it implies a firm commitment. In the process of making land use and development decisions, policies can be in conflict with each other, and the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Town Council must use discretion and judgment in balancing the competing needs of the community and evaluating alternatives. The more applicable and specific policies should be given greater consideration over less applicable and more generic policies.

Objectives are specific and measurable. They outline a sequence of actions and considerations that must be taken to accomplish the policies associated with a goal. A good objective includes a schedule for when the objective(s) will be completed and identifies who will be responsible for completing the objective. Objective statements bridge the gap between the goals and policies and how to accomplish them.

Table #5 (Implementation) outlines each objective according to the corresponding goal. The table identifies the proposed schedule for completing the objective, the responsible party, the resources needed, and the deliverable(s) or indicators of success.

The goals and policies of this Land Use Element are intended to supplement and not replace the goals and policies of sections 16.4.050.2 (Statement of Goals) and 16.04.050.3 (Statement of Policies) of the Land Use Development Code.

For example:

In a hypothetical development proposal, the Planning & Zoning Commission is reviewing a development application to change the existing zoning of 26 acres from a low-density residential zone to a medium density residential zone. The location of the project is in an area identified by the Comprehensive Plan for agriculture and rural zoning, not for medium residential development. The Comprehensive Plan includes a policy to protect agriculture land and the rural character of the Town. However, the Comprehensive Plan also includes policies to promote clustered subdivisions and increases in open space dedications. The developer is proposing to cluster the homes away from the most irrigable lands and to restore the existing but abandoned acequias. The development plan includes an area for a common garden and tree orchard. The developer tells the Planning & Zoning Commission that he is talking with the local affordable housing organization to subsidize at least four of the units to be available to low-income families, but has not made a commitment. Although there are positive aspects of the proposed development and are consistent with the plan's policies, it is still located in irrigable agriculture land. The developer is asking the Town Council to change the priority of a new roadway project in the Capital Improvements Plan so the new development will have adequate road access by the time the subdivision is built. However, the Comprehensive Plan also includes a policy that new developments should pay for the necessary infrastructure. The development puts the policies in conflict with each other. All other standards for subdivisions are met, and the Planning & Zoning Commission needs to balance the intentions of each policy and use discretion to make a decision to approve the subdivision, deny it, or place conditions on the developer to comply with all the policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Goal #1

Natural resources are protected from development.

Policies

1. Natural resources not only sustain our lives but they define the rural character and quality of life in Taos. Additionally, many cultures in Taos define themselves by their divine relationship to nature. The Town affirms that natural resources must be protected because of their cultural, environmental, and economic benefits.
2. The Town recognizes that open space, forests, wetlands, and watersheds clean water and reduce air pollution through natural processes. The infiltration of rain and snow into the ground cleans the water and allows the underground aquifers to recharge the water supply.
3. Natural resources are most productive when they are preserved and managed as an inter-connected network of "green infrastructure." The network consists of open space and wildlife corridors, watersheds, farmlands, acequias, parks, wetlands, and arroyos. The Town acknowledges and accepts the responsibility to protect and restore natural resources at the regional level and will take a leadership role in facilitating regional cooperation among all levels of the community to preserve natural resources.
4. The Town will evaluate new development for its impacts to natural resources. Accordingly, the Town will encourage natural resources conservation through sustainable design and innovation during the initial phases of site selection, design and development planning.
5. The Town believes that the proliferation of septic tanks and domestic water wells pose a threat to water quality and human health. The Town will encourage existing developments to hook up to the Town's centralized water and sewer systems to minimize the potential environmental impacts of unregulated domestic wells and septic tanks.
6. Land development and building construction has long lasting impacts on natural resources; therefore, the Town will encourage water and energy conservation in new development and construction.
7. The Town will encourage water conservation through public education and outreach initiatives.

8. "The Town will continue to evaluate its water rights in comparison to demands and will update projections periodically to account for changed conditions." - **Draft 40-Year Water Plan. Daniel B. Stephens & Associates, Inc. 2011. August 31, 2011. page 42.**

Objectives

1. PROVIDE PUBLIC EDUCATION AND DESIGN ASSISTANCE.

The Town will regularly update the Planning, Zoning, and Buildings Department web page to include all applications, standards, maps, reports, and links to local, regional, and national planning and building organizations.

Developers, engineers, and architects need to be more aware of the sustainable design alternatives that exist in the Land Use Development Code. The Planned Unit Development Overlay, Traditional Neighborhood Development District, and the Rural Historic Landscapes Overlay all allow greater flexibility in the design and development process to promote sustainable development and natural resources protection. These zoning alternatives will be presented to developers during meetings of the Development Review Committee. The Planning, Zoning, & Buildings Department will offer design assistance to developers who express an interest in designing their development according to the standards of these zoning alternatives.

Additionally, the Planning, Zoning, and Buildings Department will offer design assistance to builders and architects to ensure compliance with the requirements of the High Performance Building Ordinance.

The Town will provide adequate financial support for staff training and continuing education in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Accredited Professional (LEED AP) and the Home energy Rating System (HERS) Rater credentials.

Public education and design assistance will be on on-going process. The web page will be updated by the end of 20__.

2. AMEND THE HIGH PERFORMANCE BUILDING ORDINANCE (HPBO) TO IMPROVE THE REVIEW PROCESS FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS UNDER THE LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN BUILDING DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION (LEED BD + C).

The HPBO requires an applicant to submit the LEED checklist with the building permit application but it does not require the applicant to submit a site plan, floor plans, or other mandatory documentation to support the checklist. All of the supporting materials are to be submitted prior to requesting a Certificate of Occupancy, leaving the applicant and the Town vulnerable to miscommunication and missed opportunities for improving the building’s performance. LEED BD+C allows points to be confirmed at the design phase or at the construction phase, allowing the staff and the design team to be more explicit and focused on the design strategies, standards, documentation requirements, and potential synergies between strategies. Therefore, the HPBO will be amended to require the applicant to submit the applicable and necessary documentation and the design phase prior to receiving a building permit, then the applicant will be required to submit all other necessary documentation for those points that are applicable to the construction phases prior to receiving a Certificate of Occupancy.

The HPBO also allows an applicant to submit building plans that comply with an alternative standard than the LEED BD+C. The Amendment will include a list of acceptable and comparable high performance building programs to allow applicants to select from a list of alternatives. Two alternatives to consider are Green Globes and the Living Building Challenge.

The amendment to the HPBO will be completed by the end of 20__.

3. ADOPT A GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE MAP AND ASSOCIATED LAND DEDICATION AND RIPARIAN PROTECTION ORDINANCES.

The current open space dedication requirement contained in the LUDC allows developers with a certain size and type of project to choose if they will utilize a portion of their property as public or private open space. They also have an option to pay a fee “in lieu of” the open space dedication. The fees are used for open space acquisitions, recreation programs, and capital improvements. However beneficial an open space dedication might be, it is often disconnected from other open space or is not accessible to the general public.

Open space should be dedicated according to a comprehensive “green infrastructure” plan. The plan will include a map that identifies properties with environmental, scenic, or recreational value to the entire community. These plans must be closely coordinated with the neighborhood plans so each neighborhood can have access to open space and each neighborhood will be connected to each other. The map will identify the possible trail connections and riparian corridors between properties, thereby creating a network of green infrastructure.

Vision 2020 is very specific about some properties which should be preserved as open space. It states,

“Open Space

- Preservation of the agricultural lands that comprise the Ranchitos and Cañon Greenbelts.
- Preservation of small, public open spaces within the more densely developed areas of Town. Specific properties identified for preservation in the Vision 2020 process include the Mitchell property, the Couse property, the open space north of the Taos County Courthouse, and the wetlands area on the east side of Camino del Medio, just south of Paseo del Cañon West. The meadows near the Overland Sheepskin in El Prado were also identified for preservation, although they lie outside of the Town of Taos and ETZ limits. Park land and open space areas were also identified in the Weimer Foothills area, near the future Youth and Family Center, along natural drainages, and on lands currently zoned as Agriculture Recreation Open Space (ARO) in the LUDC. Parks and open spaces should be dispersed throughout the Town and the ETZ to provide maximum and equitable access to Taos area residents.”

- **Vision 2020 Master Plan. 1999. p. 39.**

The open space dedication requirement of the LUDC will be updated to require a developer to dedicate the green infrastructure that is identified on the green infrastructure map. If a property is not on the map, the developer will be required to pay a fee to offset the costs of developing open space within the same neighborhood where the land development is located. The ordinance will also require set-backs from riparian areas and arroyos.

This type of ordinance requires an extensive degree of public education, legal scrutiny, and outreach to be successful. The economic and environmental costs and benefits of the ordinance must be clearly understood by the property owners affected by the ordinance as well as the general public. Elected officials and Town staff must be fully aware of the legal issues in order to fight illegitimate “takings” claims and to understand the requirements for implementing the ordinance during the building

permitting and inspection process. The ordinance(s) must address at least the following issues:

- the allowable uses and land improvements within riparian buffers, for example:
 - allowing gates and other irrigation system improvements within the buffer to allow the operations and maintenance of acequias,
 - allowing certain agricultural activities within the buffer,
 - allowing trails and security fencing,
 - allowing porous pavement or gravel parking lots.
- designating buildings and other structures within the buffer as “legal non-conforming” uses and prohibiting them from expansion or reconstruction if destroyed by flood or fire,
- restoration requirements for native vegetation, if any, and the minimum and maximum set-back requirements,
- addressing up-stream water pollution sources and open space uses that are outside of the Town’s jurisdiction,
- storm drainage best management practices and allowed storm drainage facilities that protect water quality / impervious surface requirements,
- conformity with state laws, subdivision regulations, and existing Town policies for storm drainage and development within the FEMA floodplain,
- preserving the economic value of the property to avoid “takings”; implementing a transfer of development rights program or density transfer process within the same property or between two separate properties,
- variance procedures and criteria,
- creating a legally defensible and fair in-lieu-of fee structure,
- guidelines for riparian crossings such as trails, utility lines, or roadways.

A green infrastructure plan and the related ordinances will enhance the quality of life and improve property values, leading to more economic development opportunities for Taos in the long run. It will also protect natural resources prior to development, avoiding the higher costs of retrofitting parks, trail, and riparian buffers into existing development.

The Green Infrastructure Map will be completed and approved no later than 20__. **The corresponding ordinances will be completed no later than 20__.**

4. ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CLIMATE ADAPTATION PLAN.

The Town worked with the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps and the Climate Solutions University to prepare a draft of the Taos County Climate Adaptation Plan. The Plan recommends climate adaptation strategies to the Town and other communities in Taos County, preparing for the already apparent and eminent impacts of global climate change. The plan recommends the formation of an Action Team to conduct a majority of the work outlined in the plan. The Town will participate in the Action Team to help carry out the specific objectives of the Plan.

The recommendations of the plan focus on protecting water, air, and forest resources, economic development, and the built environment. These issues are being addressed in various Elements of (Re)vision 2020. The specific recommendations related to water, air, and forest resources will be included in the Natural Resources Element.

The Town will update and adopt the Climate Adaptation Plan and appoint a staff member to serve on the Climate Adaptation Action Team no later than 20___. The recommendations of the Climate Adaptation Plan will be incorporated into each Element of (Re)vision 2020 as each element is completed and adopted by the Town Council.

5. UPDATE THE 2011 GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) EMISSIONS INVENTORY.

The Town completed a comprehensive inventory of the greenhouse gas emissions in 2011. The population demographics that were used for the inventory were based on the 2000 US Census. The inventory needs to be updated to include the 2010 population demographics that will create a more accurate inventory of GHG emissions.

According to the inventory, "Present day policies and continuing improvement in clean energy technology suggest the GHG emissions could decrease by 50 percent or more by 2030. Such decrease is attainable with substantial population growth. However, this growth would need to exclude new, major industries that would be reliant on the heavy use of fossil fuels. The decrease in emissions can be driven by:

- Increase building energy-use efficiency,
- Increased use of passive solar, solar thermal, and geothermal pump installations,

- Increased fuel efficiency and fuel switching for passenger and commercial vehicles,
 - Reduced vehicle miles travelled using several planning and policy options; and
 - Increased generation of electricity using energy sources such as solar, wind, geothermal and biomass power that are responsible for relatively minor GHG emissions.”
- **Greenhouse Gases Emissions Profile and Forecast: Taos & Vicinity, New Mexico 2009-2030. page. 10.**

The GHG emissions inventory provides extensive data that is critical to protecting air quality. The inventory puts air quality concerns in the broader context of land use and transportation policies.

The GHG Emissions inventory will be updated no later than 20__.
The recommendations of the inventory will be incorporated into the applicable element of (Re)vision 2020 as they are prepared and adopted by the Town Council.

6. UPDATE, ADOPT, AND IMPLEMENT THE DRAFT TOWN OF TAOS 40-YEAR WATER PLAN.

The Town hired a water resources consultant to prepare the 40-Year Water Plan. Still a draft, the plan summarizes information on water rights and compares the Town’s current water rights with the projected demands for water. The plan also analyzes the Town’s water systems, water supply, and the historical water demand. It recommends various strategies for ensuring the future water supply for the next 40 years. The Town is responsible for providing a reliable, sustainable water supply and should adopt and implement the plan.

Updates of the plan will consider requirements for new development to include water conservation plans and a water budget with subdivision applications, including design and best management strategies to capture runoff, re-use water, and recharge the aquifer.

The plan states that the average per capita demand for water in all sectors (residential, commercial, and municipal) was 192 gallons per day, leaving room for an aggressive conservation program. The plan should outline the responsibilities, deadlines, and outcomes of the water conservation strategies.

The Land Use Plan and proposed annexations will also be included in the analysis to determine future water demand. Drought scenarios will be analyzed to determine the need for reserving and storing water during drought conditions.

“In addition to careful management and long term-planning, the Town will require new wells, water rights, and related infrastructure in order to meet future demands and supply new service areas.” - **Draft 40-Year Water Plan. Daniel B. Stephens & associates, Inc. 2011. August 31, 2011. page 59.**

The 40-Year Water Plan will be completed and approved no later than 20__.

Goal #2

Agricultural land is in productive use and protected from inappropriate development.

“Agricultural land also supplies products with little market value, but enormous cultural and ecological importance. Some are more immediate, such as social heritage, scenic views, open space and community character. Long-range environmental benefits include wildlife habitat, clean air and water, flood control, groundwater recharge and carbon sequestration.” - **American Farmland Trust. Fact Sheet. Why Save Farmland? January 2003.**

Policies

1. The Town recognizes the complex obstacles to preserving irrigated agriculture. The obstacles are financial, political, legal, and cultural. It takes a strong coalition of dedicated partners to revitalize the agriculture industry in Taos. In other words, if local farmers cannot earn a decent living, then their land is vulnerable to development pressures. Therefore, the Town will seek out partnerships with farmers, ranchers, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA's), acequia commissions, and community organizations to create an economic climate where agricultural businesses will thrive. Furthermore, the Town realizes that most of the productive agricultural land in Taos has already been developed and that the Town must work cooperatively with Taos County to make policies and objectives most effective.
2. The Town will create a regulatory environment that preserves and protects agriculture and ranching, including amendments to the Land Use Development Code.
3. The Community Economic Development Element supports agriculture as a specific industry for economic development activity. The element specifically encourages the sale and manufacture of gourmet and organic foods. The Town will support gardening and animal husbandry as a source of recreation and a source of locally grown, healthy food.

4. Ecotourism and agri-tourism represent opportunities for business development and preserving agricultural lands. The Town will encourage business and entrepreneurial land uses within rural areas that will help capture more income generated by value-added products and more innovative businesses.
5. The Town will support land owners and community organizations in acquiring conservation easements and purchasing development rights.
6. The Planning & Zoning Commission and the Town Council will not approve zoning applications that convert fallow or active agriculture and ranching lands to residential or commercial development.

Objectives

1. AMEND THE LAND USE DEVELOPMENT CODE TO PROTECT AGRICULTURAL LANDS AND ENCOURAGE AGRICULTURE AND GARDENING.

The LUDC will be amended to address the following:

Right to Farm – The Town will adopt a Right to Farm ordinance. The ordinance will protect lands that are designated as “rural” and, depending on the activity, it will protect gardening, composting, and certain types of animal husbandry in “sub-urban” areas identified in the Land Use Plan. Land owners will be protected from complaints from neighbors that seek to restrict or eliminate normal agricultural or gardening activities. This type of ordinance states that as long as the farmer is operating within the requirements of the ordinance, they are allowed to continue their activities and cannot be considered a nuisance. Right to farm laws are intended to protect farmers and ranchers from nuisance lawsuits and can protect the property owner from lawsuit from neighborhood who move in after the farming operation was established. Composting, for example, is a specific use that will be protected by the ordinance.

“Many stakeholders have concluded is that Taos is missing, at a minimum, two critical elements in its agriculture infrastructure. The first element is a food storage, processing, and distribution locus, ideally encompassing a year-round marketplace for locally owned food, as well as a bakery and a restaurant. The second missing element is ready access to capital in all forms: grants, loans, and venture capital.” – **The Taos, New Mexico Food Systems Report. Collaborative Green, LLC. May 2010.**

Agriculture Zoning – This amendment will allow contemporary forms of gardening and agriculture (e.g. – cold frames and greenhouses) in “urban” and sub-urban areas identified on the Land Use Plan. Agricultural zoning should allow biomass, wind, and other renewable energy generation operations because they allow additional revenue for the property owner and are often compatible and even complimentary with agricultural uses.

Zoning is the most restrictive of all the strategies, but it limits development and use of the property to agriculture and related facilities. It includes large lot requirements with only one residence allowed per lot. Any uses that are not compatible with farming are not allowed (e.g. - residential subdivisions). Some agriculture zoning is area based, meaning that only a portion of the entire property can be developed for residential while the balance of the property is only developed for agriculture (the larger the property, the larger the percent of the property that must be dedicated to farming, for example). Agriculture zoning can be used to create a concentration of agriculture lands within the community to avoid farming on isolated lands where neighbors are likely to experience nuisances associated with farming (noise in the early morning, smells from livestock). Maintaining the critical mass will provide an adequate amount of farming activity to support local agriculture serving businesses such as tractor repair, fencing supply, gates and corrals, hay and alfalfa production.

The LUDC amendments will allow an appropriate amount of animal husbandry in residential zones provided that anticipated impacts of noise, smell, etc. can be mitigated with sheltering, buffering, and proper management and site design for the proposed uses.

“The Town of Taos will encourage produce stands and small value-added agricultural businesses through its zoning regulations.”

– Vision 2020 Master Plan. Economic Development Policies. p. 62.

Cluster Zoning – This zoning strategy requires or allows development to be clustered together on small lots to protect irrigable agricultural lands. The property owner typically retains ownership of the protected lands or puts it in a conservation easement on it is owned and managed by the homeowners association.

Clustered zoning is a technique used to conserve rural and agricultural landscapes while preserving land values and increasing open space. A clustered development allows a greater density of development on a smaller portion of land; it includes shorter, narrower roads, less impervious surfaces, lower infrastructure costs, and opportunities for shared civic spaces and a “sense of place.” The increases in undeveloped land within the property provide more opportunities for farming and gardening, increased wildlife habitat, vegetation, and improvements to water quality.

Agri-tourism Zoning - The Town will amend the LUDC to allow agri-tourism uses within the rural zones. The amendment will address the allowed uses, conditional uses, adaptive re-use and permitting of building renovations (for an office use), parking and lighting requirements, hours of operation, kitchen and cooking / food services, retail sales, and similar issues that protect the character of the rural zones from inappropriate impacts. Agri-tourism uses may include a bed and breakfast, a rodeo facility, equestrian academies, campgrounds, equipment repair and maintenance, and temporary uses such as festivals, retreats, weddings, camping, etc. Others include garden centers, commercial composting, “pick your own” food markets, food processing, ranch stays, and farmers markets.

The LUDC will be amended no later than 20__.

2. ADOPT A FOOD SECURITY MASTER PLAN

The food industry is heavily dependent on transportation, fossil fuel, hormones, and genetic engineering. The local food supply could not feed the community if there were a catastrophe in energy or transportation. The natural gas outage in the winter of 2011 alerted the community to our vulnerabilities. In response to this potential crisis, the Town will create and adopt a master plan for local food production. The focus of the plan is to provide the local capacity for Taos to generate its own food supply.

The Master Plan will be adopted no later than 20__.

“The preservation of open space and agricultural lands is central to Taos' economy, quality of life, spiritual, and cultural core.”

– Vision 2020 Mater Plan. 1999. p. 38.

3. ADOPT AN ACEQUIA RESTORATION PLAN.

The Town completed a restoration plan for the acequias in the Historic Overlay Zone in 2011. The plan included an assessment of existing conditions, detailed maps, design standards, set-back requirements, and a proposal for an interpretive trail, water features, and potential funding sources. This plan will be expanded to all the acequias within the Town. The plan will include recommendations for amending the LUDC to require a developer to restore an acequia located on their property prior to receiving a building permit or development approval. The restoration would satisfy the open space dedication requirement, if applicable.

The Restoration Plan will be adopted no later than 20__.

4. FACILITATE ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES THAT SUPPORT THE FULL SPECTRUM OF THE AGRICULTURE SYSTEM IN TAOS, INCLUDING THE GROWING, HARVESTING, PROCESSING, PACKAGING, TRANSPORTING, MARKETING, CONSUMING, AND DISPOSING OF FOOD.

There are numerous organizations in Taos that are passionately involved in the agriculture industry. Tierra Lucero, the Taos Valley Acequia Association & Acequia Commissions, the Taos Farmer's Market, many CSAs, Taos Pueblo Red Willow Center, Taos County Economic Development Corporation, Taos Chapter of the New Mexico Green Chamber of Commerce, De La Tierra a La Cosecha, the Food & Agriculture Council of Taos, Agriculture Research Education & Implementation, Taos Community Foundation, Taos School District, Holy Cross Hospital, Farm to Table, Shared Table, religious organizations, and more.

The Town will act as a full partner with these organizations to facilitate business development and will use the full range of options under the Local Economic Development Act to support their efforts. The Town will dedicate staff to participate in steering committees, boards, or other organized efforts to enhance the agricultural industry. The Town Council will appoint a staff member to act as liaison and resource person or, if appropriate, as a volunteer or member of an advisory committee.

“American democracy is rooted in an agricultural past and founded on the principle that all people can own property and earn a living from the land. The ongoing relationship with the agricultural landscape connects Americans to history and to the natural world.”

- **American Farmland Trust. Fact Sheet. Why Save Farmland? January 2003.**

“Fertile soils take thousands of years to develop. Creating them takes a combination of climate, geology, biology and good luck. So far, no one has found a way to manufacture them. Thus, productive agricultural land is a finite and irreplaceable natural resource.”

- **American Farmland Trust. Fact Sheet. Why Save Farmland? January 2003.**

The Town will actively participate in an on-going basis.

5. ADOPT A TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR) PROGRAM.

A TDR program could be an effective tool for conserving agriculture lands and encouraging development in areas designated for higher density. A TDR program requires a map which identifies the “sending” areas and the “receiving” areas. It also requires an ordinance to outline the process for transferring the development rights and establish how the program will be administered. TDRs are permitted by law Chapter 3, Article 18 NMSA 1978.

The TDR program would be more feasible if it applied to all properties within Taos County where there is more irrigated agriculture and environmentally sensitive lands that need to be preserved. Because the development rights are bought and sold between private land owners, adding more properties to the program would increase the “market” for development rights. However, it may also be effective within the three-mile planning and platting jurisdiction. There are many properties within Cañon and other communities

surrounding the Town which do not meet the minimum lot size for building a house. The state Environment Department requires any lot to be more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre to install a septic tank and leach field. If a property is less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre, the owner's only alternatives are to install a very expensive vault (which must be pumped), purchase an easement from a neighbor who has more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre, or organize the neighborhood to construct a centralized treatment system. Under a TDR program, the owner volunteers to transfer their development rights to a "receiving area" and would place a conservation easement on their property. The easement would be managed by a land trust. The development rights would be sold to property owners within the "receiving area" to allow a higher density than allowed by the zoning ordinance. A TDR could be a win-win, allowing property owners to earn money from their property while conserving rural landscapes.

The Taos County Growth Management Plan endorses a TDR program.

"In the long term, one of the most effective growth management strategies will be developing a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, in which property owners in the donor (or sending) areas will be compensated for purchase of their development rights by developers, while still maintaining ownership of their land." - **Taos County Growth Management Plan. Phase 1: Future Land Use. March 2007. p. 41.**

There are limits to the amount of land that could be conserved under a TDR program. TDRs require a robust real estate market to generate the demand for new development. And according to Tom Daniels, "A major obstacle to the creation of an effective program has been local zoning. A local government's by-right zoning may allow ample development opportunities for developers who choose not to acquire TDRs, and the local elected officials may choose to grant greater densities through bonuses zoning without requiring that developers acquire and apply TDRs." - **Zoning Practice. American Planning Association. December 2007. Issue #12. p. 2.**

The TDR program will be approved no later than 20__.

Goal #3

The Town develops as a collection of complete and compact neighborhoods.

Policies

1. The Town believes that everyone should live in a great neighborhood, and the neighborhood unit should be the organizing principle for land use planning.
2. Neighborhoods should be compact and complete. A compact neighborhood is organized around a central public space with diverse commercial activity and opportunities for social interaction. A complete neighborhood offers a variety of housing types for a variety of income levels and families (e.g. – single-family, apartments, duplexes, and live/work units). Public services and businesses are accessible to meet the daily needs of its residents.
3. A neighborhood should be designed and developed to offer transportation alternatives, including a roadway network with adequate sidewalks, transit stops, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian amenities such as benches, shade trees and engaging shop fronts; transportation networks, including transit routes and bicycle facilities, should be planned in coordination with land use. Transportation networks should connect neighborhoods to each other and connect individual neighborhoods to the region.

Goal Six of the Community Design Element of Vision 2020 states that “Neighborhoods are the building blocks for creating a Town fabric unique to Taos and its region” (p. 68). Objective One of Goal Six is to “Support and encourage neighborhood self-identification in order to develop self-determination for the broader community.” – **Vision 2020. p. 68.**

4. Civic spaces such as parks, playgrounds, and plazas should be embedded in neighborhoods and not isolated from day to day activities. Each neighborhood should include the appropriate size, type, and location of civic spaces. Civic buildings and public places should be provided within each neighborhood at a location that reinforces community identity. They

should be built in a highly visible and accessible location in the heart of the neighborhood – at the terminus of a street, on a hill, or in the neighborhood plaza.

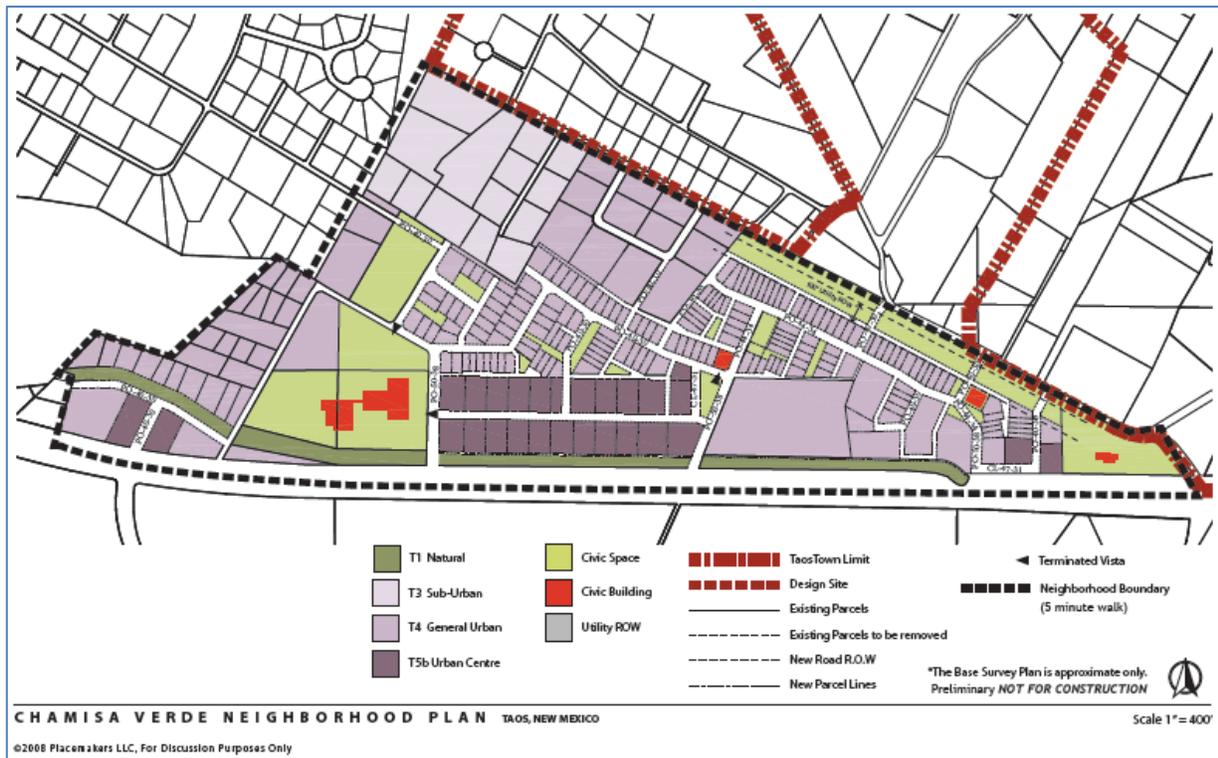
5. Not every property is associated with a neighborhood, and the Town understands that not all property owners desire mixed land uses or higher density in their neighborhood. Living in a compact and complete neighborhood should be a choice and not a forced decision. Some “neighborhoods” have adopted covenants and restrictions which limit the use of property within their subdivision. Some covenants mandate limited density (e.g. – one home per 2 acres) or in some cases regulate the size and architecture of each residence (e.g. - at least 1,200 square feet, a grass lawn, and “Pueblo” style architecture). The Town recognizes the legal status of covenants & restrictions and will integrate the requirements into neighborhood plans and zoning codes whenever possible.
6. The Town affirms that sprawl is the enemy of responsible local government. However, the Town further affirms that sprawl can and should be repaired with neighborhood plans.
7. When setting priorities for preparing neighborhood plans, the Town will give priority to existing neighborhoods over undeveloped areas.
8. The local economy relies heavily on tourism, and one of the major tourist destinations is the historic downtown of Taos. The attraction to the downtown is derived from the unique architecture and historic buildings, the diversity of shopping and restaurants, museums, social, cultural, and civic institutions, social events, and the pedestrian friendly atmosphere. As such, the downtown historic district is an ideal model for neighborhood planning. The Town also recognizes that the attraction to downtown has been lost for local residents and a master plan is necessary to revitalize the downtown for the use and benefit of locals.
9. Large scale commercial development should be integrated into the existing neighborhood through careful consideration of surrounding land uses, transportation networks, natural corridors, and urban design traditions. The Town Council affirms that encouraging large scale commercial development is a contradiction to the Town’s traditional development patterns and commitment to supporting local businesses. Furthermore, the Town Council rescinds the policy within the Economic Development Element which recommends amending the LUDC to “revisit limitations of big box development with possible creation of a big box zone.”

Objectives

1. ADOPT NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS.

The Town Council adopted the Town's first neighborhood plan in 2008. **Map #9** illustrates the proposed zones, lots, thoroughfares, and civic spaces within the Chamisa Verde Neighborhood Plan.

Map #9. The Chamisa Verde Neighborhood Plan
Source: PlaceMakers. 2008.



A neighborhood plan should include at least 40 but no more than 160 acres in order to accommodate diverse land uses and development densities, commercial developments, and civic spaces such as parks and plazas. The neighborhood boundaries should be defined by major roadways, arroyos, or rivers. The locations and sizes of existing roadways, subdivisions, natural features, and infrastructure may require a larger neighborhood boundary. The neighborhood plan should include the existing and proposed land uses, existing and proposed roads, water, and sewer utilities, and the locations and types of civic spaces. The Land Use Plan Map identifies potential boundaries and land use districts for neighborhood plans. Adopting a neighborhood plan would automatically amend the Land Use Plan Map.

The Town will complete one neighborhood plan every two years.

2. ADOPT FORM BASED CODES FOR NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS.

The adoption of the Chamisa Verde Neighborhood Plan was followed by the Town Council's adoption of the Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) District zoning ordinance. The TND District is a form based code that was developed during the Smart Code charrette in 2007. The ordinance that applies the TND District to the Chamisa Verde Neighborhood requires Town Council approval of the Land Use Element (see Town Ordinance 09-01) before applying the TND District zoning to any other neighborhoods. Another option for adopting a form based code is the Clustered Land Development (CLD). The CLD uses the same development standards, zoning districts, and form-based design requirements as the TND. The main difference between the TND and the CLD is that the CLD requires at least 50% of the total area within the neighborhood plan to be zoned for rural uses or undeveloped open space. The Land Use Plan Map designates areas at the fringe of the Town boundaries as CLD where the rural character and natural resources are more sensitive to development.

Form based codes are founded on the idea that the physical form of the community, not the specific uses of land, is the most intrinsic and enduring characteristic of the community. The form based code, which requires a certain physical outcome from a development project, does a better job at promoting the design traditions of the community.



photo by Matthew Foster. 2011.

The design and development standards of the TND and CLD Districts are based on the traditional patterns found in the Town's historic buildings and streets. The zoning requirements of the Urban Zone of the TND and CLD Districts are based on the historic buildings on Ledoux Street, such as the Harwood Museum of Art.

Adopting a form based code will require extensive public participation. The Planning & Zoning Department will meet with property owners in the neighborhoods that express an interest in the TND the CLD. Each property owner should have a full understanding of the costs and benefits of rezoning their neighborhood to the TND or CLD District.

“The Town of Taos will identify larger sized parcels which are suitable for mixed use, zone them appropriately, assign percentages based on use, and phase their development, using bonuses to encourage desired densities.”

– Vision 2020 Master Plan. Land Use Policy #9. p. 42.

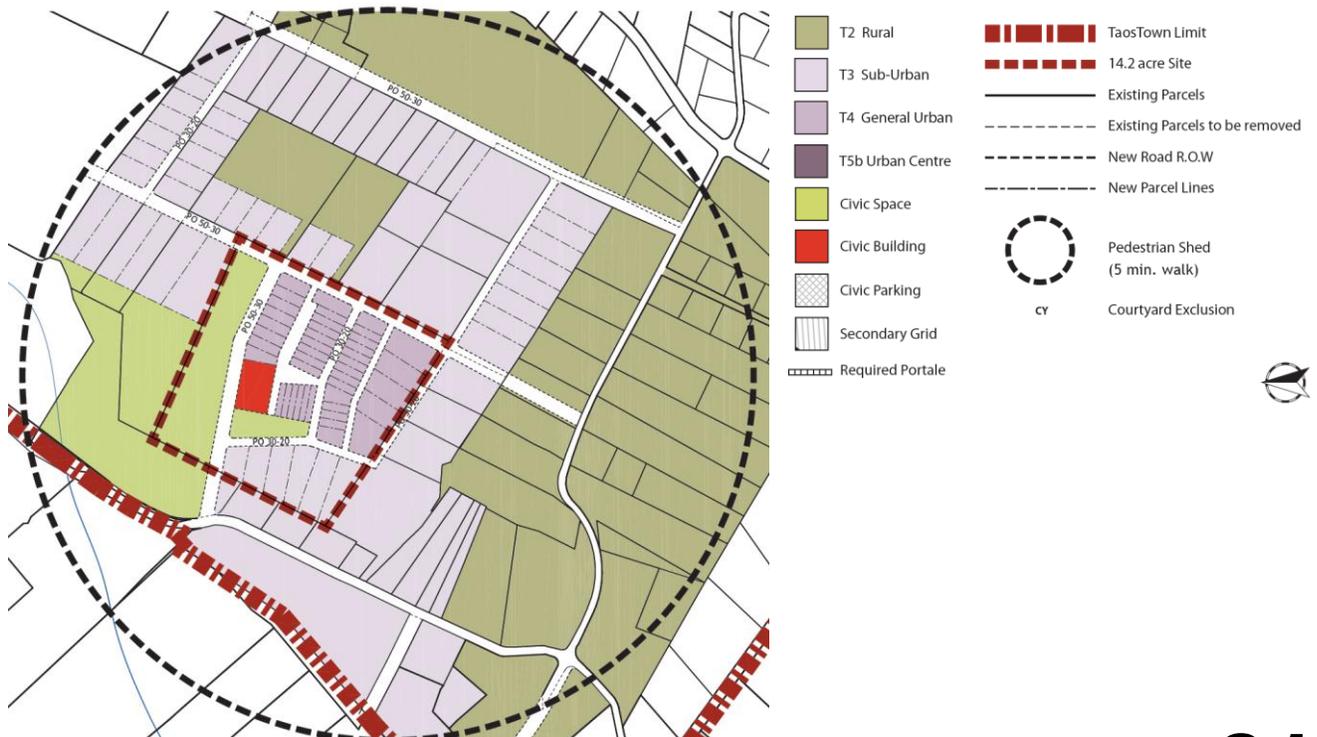
The Town’s consultant, PlaceMakers LLC, prepared **Map #10** and **Map #11** for two locations of larger, undeveloped property to demonstrate the development pattern of the TND and CLD Districts. The illustrative plan for the Goodman Property TND illustrates the possible locations for buildings, thoroughfares, parking lots, landscaping, and civic spaces. It also includes an 80,000 square foot retail development to illustrate how large scale commercial development can be integrated into a walkable, compact neighborhood plan. Increased density is critical to the financial feasibility of commercial and public land uses within the TND. “Densities of 8 to 12 homes per acre can create compact low-rise centers that can support a lively business district, mixed uses, and public transit nodes. 1,000 to 2,000 new houses and apartments within a 10-15 minute walk can support new retail areas.” - **Massachusetts Citizens Housing and Planning Association; Byrne McKinney & Associates and Goody Clancy Architecture, Planning and Preservation.** The Fred Baca Park CLD identifies the central location for civic spaces and the allocation of Rural, Sub-Urban, and Urban zoning districts within the neighborhood.

Map #10. The Illustrative Plan of the Goodman Property TND.



- | | |
|--|--|
| A Market Plaza | H Small Plaza / Outdoor Dining |
| B Civic Pavilion | I Plaza |
| C Restaurant Box with Outdoor Patio on South Side | J Civic Building |
| D 80,000sf Box | K Courtyard Housing |
| E Green with Playground | L Green with Enhanced Drainage Way and Playground |
| F Mid-Size Box for Pharmacy, etc. | M Retail Box Parking @ 4/1000 sf |
| G "Garden Plaza" on Garden Center side of Big Box | N Typical Residential Lots (see Page 5) |

Map #11. The Zoning Districts of the Fred Baca Park CLD.



The TND or CLD Districts can be applied to any area of Taos provided that the planning requirements of section 16.16.230 of the LUDC are met. The Land Use Plan Map will serve as the guide for determining neighborhood boundaries, land uses, transportation patterns, and civic spaces.

Not all property owners or neighborhood associations will want a form based code to regulate development in their neighborhood. There may be conflicts between the mixed use allowances and form based code requirements and the allowed uses and design requirements of the subdivision's covenants and restrictions; however, for those that want a higher degree of predictability in the form and character of new development, adopting a form based code is a good option.

3. AMEND THE LUDC TO REPAIR SUB-URBAN SPRAWL.

Some neighborhoods have fallen to sub-urban sprawl. Fortunately neighborhood planning is an effective strategy to repair sprawl and create compact and compete neighborhoods. Neighborhood plans should be equipped with specific amendments to the LUDC to repair sub-urban sprawl. These amendments may include:

1. density bonuses for dedicating rights-of-way that connect roadways, land dedications for civic spaces; allow a guest house or casita "by right" in the rear yard,
2. reduce parking requirements; allow on-street parking to be counted towards parking requirements; plan transit stops with higher density,
3. allow mixed use developments and live-work units by right; allow different building types "by right" (i.e. - courtyard houses, townhomes, side-yard houses),
4. require residential and commercial subdivisions to plan and design for future roadway connections; coordinate phased developments and site planning with adjacent property owners,
5. update the Traffic Access Manual to include a complete streets design policy; re-design and retrofit roadways and intersections for multi-modal transportation, particularly for enhanced pedestrian and bicycle mobility, handicapped accessibility, and safety,
6. encourage and incentivize the development of liner buildings and small scale infill within underutilized parking lots and large rear yards,
7. design and develop usable civic space and open space; identify properties that can be developed as civic spaces and civic buildings.

4. ADOPT A DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN.

In 2009 the Town received designation by the State of New Mexico Main Street Program as an Art & Cultural District (ACD). The ACD designation provides the Town with technical support and financial resources to manage and promote arts and cultural events and planning for downtown revitalization. The ACD is managed by a Board of Directors and an ACD Director. The ACD Director provides marketing and promotions assistance to members of the Taos Project, the downtown merchants association. The ACD has already completed a number of plans and reports:

1. The Resource Team Report which analyzed the major assets of the community and made broad recommendations for development of the ACD. The Resource Team Report was completed over a three day period of focus groups and community meetings, which were well attended, with over 250 participants.
2. The very prestigious National Endowment for the Arts "Your Town: The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design" Charrette grant that is awarded to only two (2) communities a year. The Taos ACD worked collaboratively with UNM's Design Planning Assistance Center to spend two and a half days with thirty six (36) community members from all walks of life to examine the current status of and possibilities for the Taos ACD starting at the Taos Plaza and working outward to the limits of the ACD. The results of the charrette outline mostly physical improvements that could be pursued by the Town in partnership with private entities that will greatly assist with the revitalization of the historic district and the heart of the ACD.
3. The Town Council approved the Arts & Cultural District Plan in February 2012. The plan outlines specific strategies for the ACD's organizational development and financial sustainability, financing for long-term economic development, downtown infrastructure and capital improvements, planning and urban design branding, marketing and promotions for the ACD, and cultural programming. Completion of the Arts & Cultural District Plan enabled the Town to receive additional funding for the Downtown Master Plan.

The Town was awarded a \$70,000 grant in April 2012 from the New Mexico Main Street for the completion of the Downtown Master Plan. The Downtown Master Plan will be a detailed analysis of the technical feasibility and cost estimates for the capital improvements that are recommended in the Your Town Charrette and the Arts and Cultural District Plan. The Downtown Master Plan will also include a thorough analysis of public and private

parking lots, the utilization of parking spaces, and the alternatives for managing each lot to provide revenues to the Town and provide better pedestrian access to businesses. The recommendations of the parking plan will be considered in the larger context of making the downtown a friendly environment for pedestrians. But what are the necessary preconditions for any place to be a pedestrian friendly? It must have.....

1) the proper physical infrastructure

- a. sidewalks that are regularly maintained and cleaned (at least 6 feet wide in a place like the Plaza); free of obstructions such as sign posts, utility poles, etc.; the alleys on the south side should be improved as pedestrian walkways into the parking lots on the south (behind La Fonda and in front of the old Modern Business Products building)
- b. outdoor seating for restaurants
- c. night lighting for security and visibility
- d. landscaped areas for snow removal
- e. informative and attractive signage
- f. trash collectors and trash removal schedules
- g. redesign and re-construct the Plaza itself to improve pedestrian access and circulation (remove many of the walls, hard surfaces, and steps – this will require an extensive re-design of the storm water system)

2) fun and authentic activities, events and attractions

- a. Taos plaza live, car show, fiestas, Runway Vigilantes, gallery openings and exhibits, block parties, tax free promotions, etc.
- b. restaurants with patio seating
- c. rehabilitate the courthouse and the plaza theater
- d. mixed uses (add residential and live/work developments)
- e. businesses stay open later of on evenings with special events

3) efficient traffic circulation

- a. parking management for the existing public lots (also to determine if the Plaza really needs a parking structure and/or to determine how the Town can better manage the current public lots)
- b. parking meters (keep existing meters, remove them all, replace with mid-block stations that take accredit card, other options?)
- c. eliminate employee parking in prime retail spaces
- d. turning circles / round-a-bouts on intersections
- e. clearly designated handicapped parking spaces
- f. designated loading and unloading spaces (related to signage)

4) safety

- a. security lights in parking lots and street lighting
- b. police bicycle and foot patrol
- c. signage above
- d. pedestrian crossings (pavement markings, signage, etc.)
- e. police presence at the sub-station at the public bathrooms

The Downtown Master Plan will be completed no later than 20__.

About the Arts & Cultural District

What is an Arts and Culture District?

- An Arts and Cultural District (ACD) is a recognized, branded, mixed-use, compact area in which a high concentration of arts and cultural facilities serve as the anchor.

What is the intent of an Arts and Culture District (ACD) designation?

- The formation of a district is intended to:
 - Support arts and cultural-based economic development
 - Form collaborative working relationships in a formal structure
 - Create and enhance an economic market niche
 - Leverage and enhance a community's creative economy
 - Target a specific district's artists, artisans, cultural entrepreneurs and cultural institutions

What are the benefits of receiving an ACD?

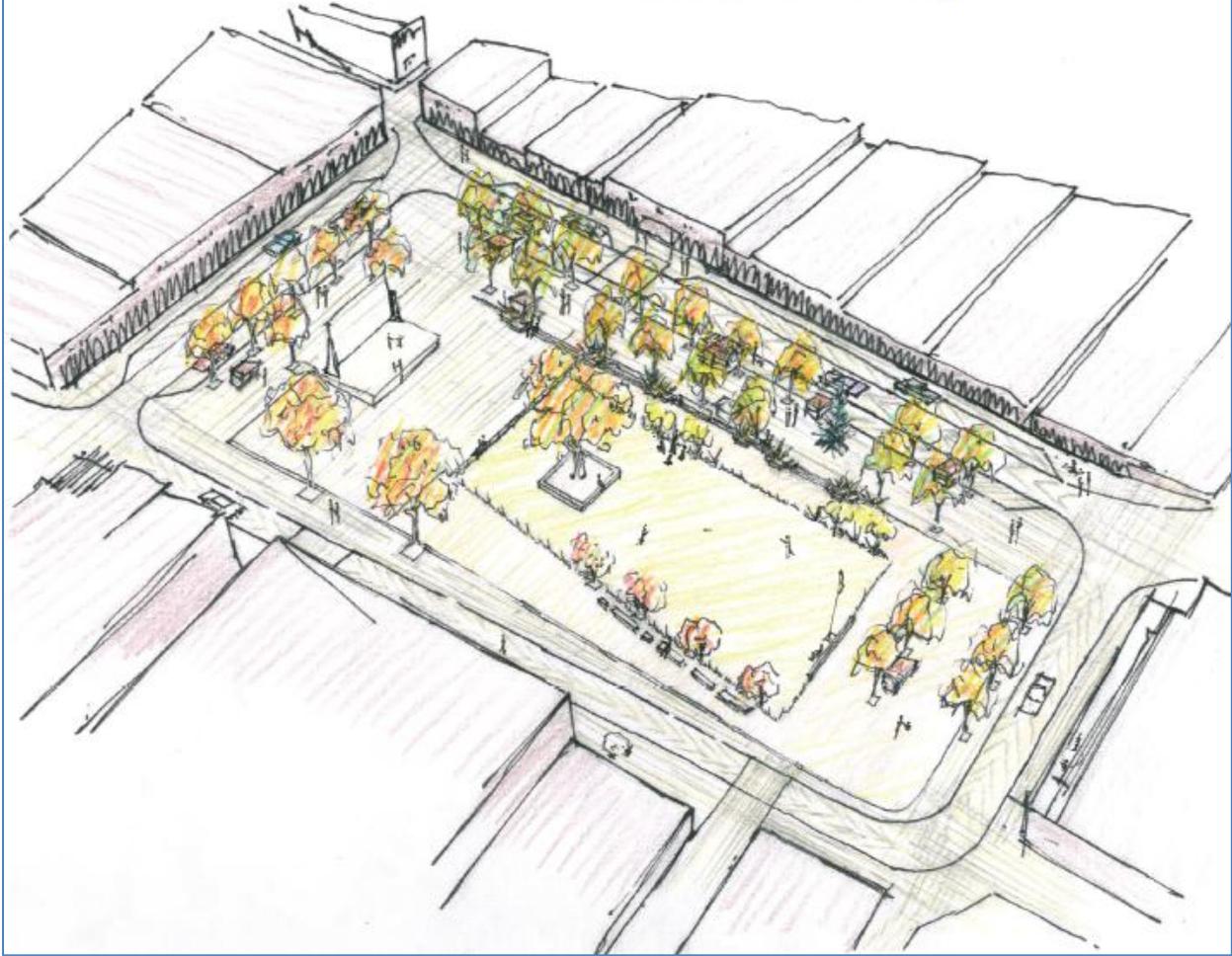
- The Taos ACD received two years of start-up services from the state Arts and Cultural District Council made up of cooperating statewide partners to:
 - Further define the Arts and Cultural District using Arts and Cultural assets as catalysts for downtown revitalization and community economic development
 - Promote and assist with the development of the Arts and Cultural District based on partnerships, to achieve financial sustainable for the ACD
- Assistance with receiving Federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits and **doubling** of the New Mexico Historic Property Tax Credit
- Incentives for creating live/work spaces
- Specialized technical assistance in the field of planning and economic development
- Tourism Department support for marketing and promoting the ACD
- Access to the Main Street Capital Outlay Fund, New Mexico Historic Preservation Loan Fund, Cooperative Advertising funds, and the Main Street Revolving Loan Fund
- Potential locating of a Museum of New Mexico Foundation *New Mexico Creates* shop
- Potential access by participating artists and craftspeople to sell their creations on the Museum of New Mexico Foundation's e-commerce site
- New Mexico Finance Authority planning grants
- District featured on Economic Development Department website (www.offtheroadnm.com)



- **What are the criteria selection and expectations for the ACD?**
 - The area has a special coherence that is distinguished by physical and cultural resources that play a vital role in the life and development, including economic and cultural development, of a community
 - The District will focus on:
 - a cultural compound
 - a major art institution
 - art and entertainment businesses
 - an area with arts and cultural activities or cultural or artisan production
 - the promotion, preservation and educational aspects of the area and culture of the community
 - Contributing to the community through interpretive, educational, and recreational uses

The ACD Board of Directors governs and sets policy for the Arts and Cultural District based on its mission which includes cultural and heritage tourism and support of the workers, crafts people, artisans, and cultural enterprises and institutions within the district boundary.

Autumn Tuesday



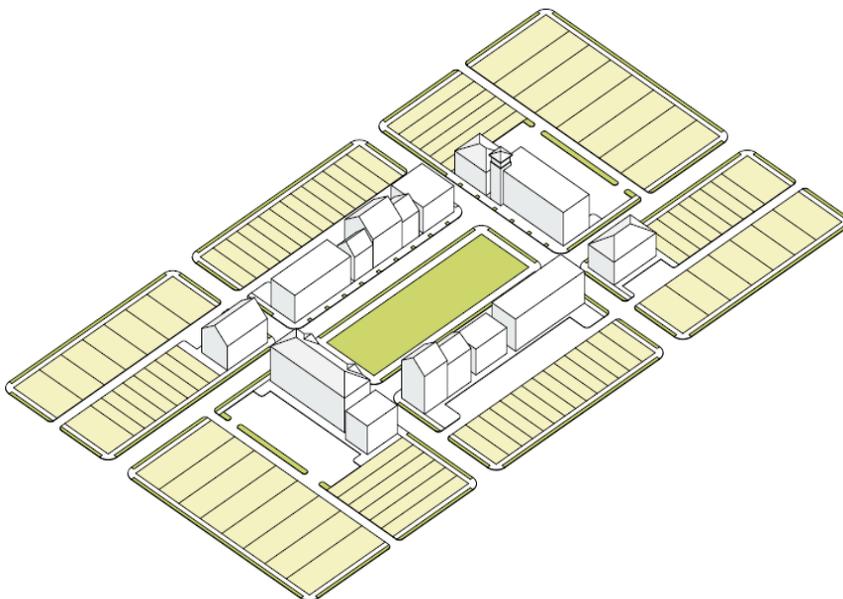
The Your Town Charrette resulted in this conceptual redesign of the Plaza. This illustration shows Taos Plaza on a typical Tuesday in Autumn.

5. AMEND THE LUDC'S DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR "LARGE SCALE" (E.G. - BIG BOX) DEVELOPMENT.

The Economic Development Element includes a policy toward big box development. The policy states that the Town will "Revisit limitations of big box development with possible creation of a big box zone." The Land Use Element rescinds this policy. The intention of the policy was to allow big box retail businesses to locate in Taos as a means of preventing locals from shopping out of Town. While the Town wants to promote local retail shopping, the Town also wants to commercial buildings to demonstrate the unique character of community.

"The area will profit most if the same standards of preservation to protect the character, architecture, and traditions are applied throughout. The standards to apply to residential, commercial and industrial developments. The greatest danger lies in undue commercialization, gaudy signs, and any slight indication that the visitor is not welcome." - **Town of Taos Comprehensive Plan. 1963.**

"Big box" retail as it is typically developed across the country is contrary to the Town's goal of developing as complete and compact neighborhoods. Therefore, the Town will amend the LUDC to require the development proposal of a big box to be accompanied by a TND Neighborhood Plan and a corresponding TND zoning ordinance.



This image shows what large scale retail developments could look like if developed according to the design standards of the TND District. It is clearly consistent with the Town's design tradition.

The LUDC amendment will not increase the maximum square footage above 80,000 square feet.

The Town will amend the LUDC for provisional permits (see LUDC Section 16.20.020.2) only after extensive public input and an analysis of the full economic, social and environmental impacts of allowing the provisional permit for large scale commercial developments. The Town will:

1. Meet with land owners of properties that are most likely to be developed as “big box” retail; discuss the planning and zoning requirements of the TND,
2. Conduct public informational meetings to gather public input regarding the positive and negative impacts of big box,
3. Present the comments and concerns to the Planning & Zoning Commission, the Historic Preservation Commission, and the Town Council; request direction from the Town Council,
4. Customize the TND development standards; prepare the draft ordinance and conduct public hearings.

The ordinance should consider at least the following:

- Standards for subdivisions, mixed use requirements, new roadways and alleys, transit access, and minimum block sizes,
- Standards for appropriate design, size, and number of signs, as most big boxes include gigantic and unsightly signs,
- Prohibitions to overnight parking, particularly for recreational vehicles.
- Requirements to protect water resources from pollution originating in parking lots and rooftops,
- Conditions related to the aesthetic impacts of outdoor storage, employee areas, shopping cart storage, loading docks, temporary sales for outdoor displays and landscaping materials, etc.,
- Dedication requirements for public spaces such as a plaza, trail, or neighborhood park,
- If the new development replaces an existing building (e.g. – the existing Wal-Mart on Paseo del Pueblo Sure), a feasible plan for the adaptive re-use or demolition of the existing building (e.g. – a “white elephant” ordinance),
- Architectural standards for articulating the building facades, glazing, massing, and disguising the parking lot(s).
- Encouragement for the developer to build separate yet integrated buildings for potential stand-alone departments such as a pharmacy, jewelry, grocery, or apparel.
- The ordinance will not expand the maximum square footage of 80,000 square feet for commercial buildings.

The Town will adopt the ordinance no later than 20__.

Goal #4

Special districts are planned, designed, and developed according to their unique impacts, needs, and opportunities.

Policies

1. The Town recognizes that not all land uses are compatible within complete and compact neighborhood environments but are still essential to the economy. Intense and unique land uses should be concentrated into a special district. Some examples include an industrial district, an airport, a college campus, or a regional sports complex. A special district is necessary to meet the needs of the entire region, not only the immediate neighborhood. However, light industrial uses have little or no impact outside of the building in which they are contained, and therefore can be embedded within neighborhoods so residents have easier access to employment opportunities.
2. **The Town's affirms the need for industrial uses.** Some specific uses that are classified as "industrial" include the storage and sales of building and construction materials, heavy equipment storage and repair, "junk yards" and industrial processes that cause odor, smoke, vibrations, or other offensive impacts outside of the building where it is used. While the Land Use Development Code and the Zoning Map include the M-1 (light manufacturing) zone, this area should be planned, designed, and developed to accommodate the more intense impacts of heavy industry.
3. The Taos Regional Airport is essential for the fully functioning of the community. It provides quick access to Taos for tourists and businesses. Additionally, many pilots simply enjoy the freedom of flying. The airport expansion will increase safety and enhance economic opportunity; however, the Town fully recognizes the impacts that the airport has to surrounding communities and will minimize and mitigate the impacts in full cooperation with Taos Pueblo, Taos County, the Federal Aviation Administration, and property owners.

Objectives

1. **ADOPT A MASTER PLAN FOR INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS.**

The Town's M-1 zone consists of 185 acres. The area is an assortment of land uses, including single-family residences, live/work units, and retail. The Vista Grande High School and the Eco Park are also located in the M-1 zone. Before additional uses are developed and to avoid further incompatibility, the Town will create a master plan for the industrial district to facilitate the industrial economy and manage the impacts of industrial land uses. The proper transitions from heavier industries to light industry and existing residential uses will be planned and designed to minimize non-conforming uses and provide for adequate infrastructure.

Other industrial areas within the Town's planning and platting jurisdiction also deserve the benefits of a master plan. These areas include the intersections of NM 64, 522, and 150 (also known as the "old blinking light") and the waste water treatment plant area in Los Colonias.

The Town will complete the master plan no later than 20__.



The Light Manufacturing Zone includes the Filemon Sanchez Park, the Taos Recycling Center, and the Town of Taos Public Works Department and storage yard.

2. ADOPT A MASTER PLAN FOR THE TAOS REGIONAL AIRPORT.

The Town will work closely with the Airport Advisory Board, Taos Pueblo, Taos County Planning Department, and the Las Colonias / West Mesa Neighborhood Association in preparing a master plan for future improvements to the Taos Municipal Airport. The 2013 – 2017 Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan includes several planned improvements for the 832 acres (+/-), including:

1. Crosswind Runway & Fencing
2. Civil Air Patrol Hanger
3. T-Hanger Pad & General Aviation Parking Ramp
4. T-Hanger Pad
5. New Terminal Building for Crosswind Runway
6. Crosswind Runway Hangers
7. Taxiway Lights
8. NavAid Relocation
9. Snow Removal Equipment Building for Kodiak Snow Plow and Tractor

The airport has unique needs and impacts to surrounding properties that must be fully understood and mitigated. The land surrounding the airport is within the Town's Planning and Platting Jurisdiction, however, the County has already completed a neighborhood overlay zone for the area. The Town will coordinate with the Las Colonias / West Mesa Neighborhood Association in preparing the Master Plan.

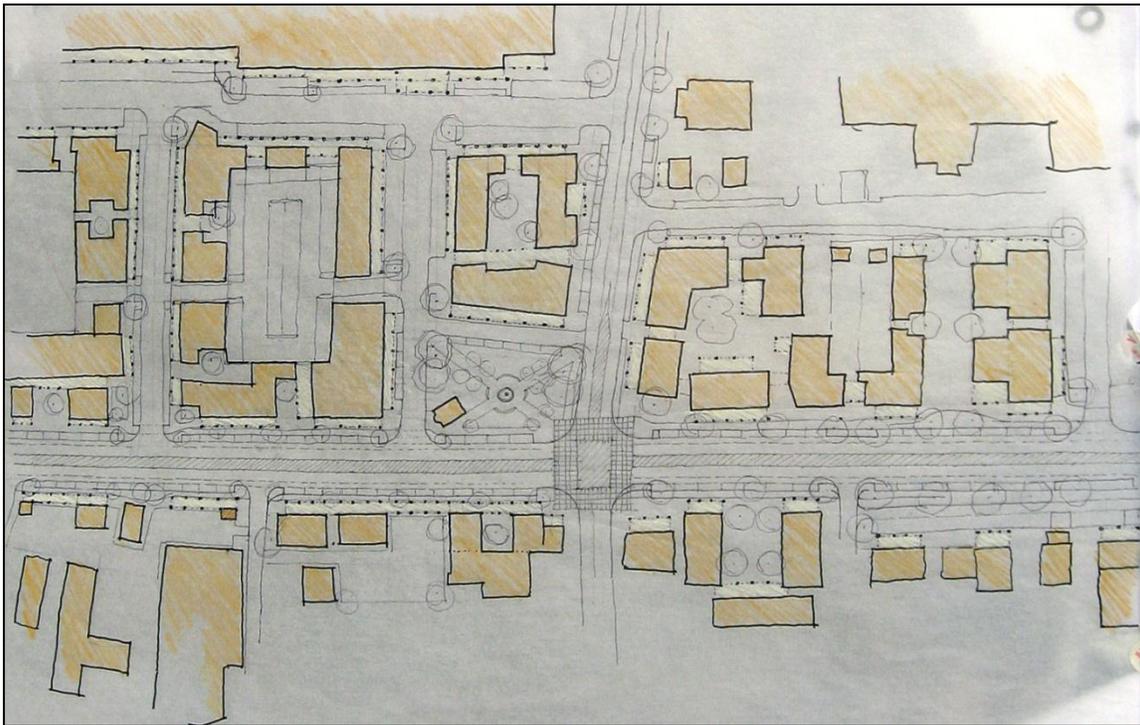
The Town will complete the master plan no later than 20__.

Goal #5

Development pays for itself.

Policies

1. The Town believes that tax payers should not be responsible for the infrastructure costs necessitated by private developments. Land developers and builders should be required to pay for the full cost of all necessary infrastructure to service their development, including water and sewer line extensions, roadway improvements, storm drainage facilities, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and acequia restoration.
2. Infrastructure improvements should encourage infill development and redevelopment of underutilized land. Infill and redevelopment accommodate more growth in an already developed area rather than using undeveloped land on the periphery of the community. Encouraging infill development will take priority over outward growth.



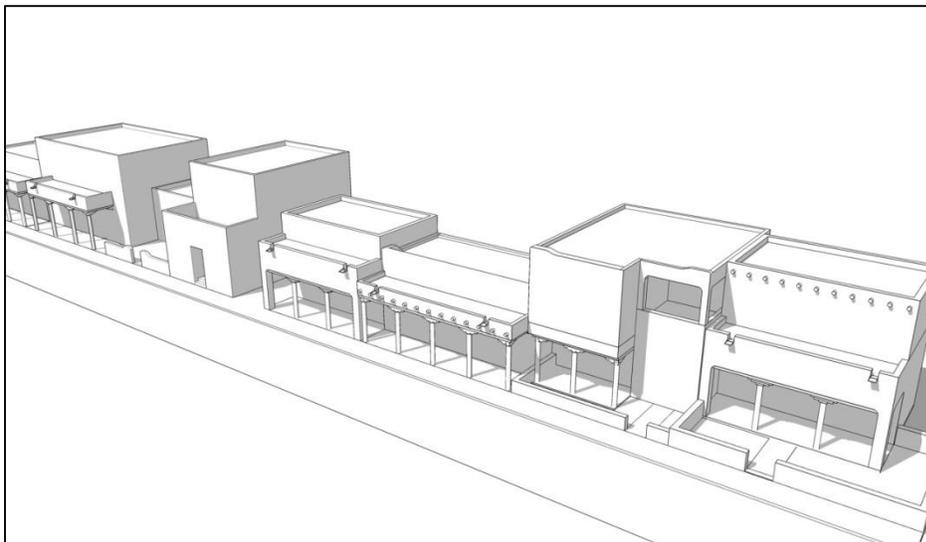
This rendering depicts infill development at the intersection of Paseo del Pueblo Sur and La Posta. Infill not only takes advantage of existing infrastructure, it can create memorable places with distinctive quality and urban design. - PlaceMakers. 2007.



This series of images demonstrate the power of infill in creating memorable places with lasting value. The image on the top shows Paseo del Pueblo Sur as it appears today. As new infill and re-development occurs and the roadway is redeveloped, the character of the street is transformed into a vibrant and appealing place. - PlaceMakers. 2007.



3. Unless there is a verifiable threat to the health or safety of the community, the Town's policy is to repair existing infrastructure prior to constructing new infrastructure. The annual Capital Improvements Plan budget and the 5-year Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan will prioritize repairs and upgrades to existing infrastructure in areas already developed over new construction, particularly if the new infrastructure is located on the fringe of the Town. This policy encourages infill and re-development. The values of redevelopment and infill properties are likely to increase as a result of higher infrastructure capacity. The higher property values will encourage land owners to develop, reducing development pressure on surrounding areas that possess open space, pristine views, and irrigated agriculture.
4. The Town will encourage the development of liner buildings to increase infill opportunities, mask unsightly parking lots, and create a safe and interesting environment for pedestrians.



This illustration shows the architectural diversity of liner buildings that conform to local architectural traditions.
- PlaceMakers. 2007

5. Annexing property that already receives Town services is another way that development can pay for itself; however, the Town, County, and property owners need to be fully informed about the costs and benefits of annexation. Town Council Resolution 09-04 (adopted in July 2009) articulates the Town's policies toward annexation. The annexation policies state that County islands located within the Town's boundaries complicate jurisdiction and provision of public services; it is of mutual interest and benefit for the Town of Taos and Taos County to jointly plan for the limits of the incorporation of the Town of Taos; and that an annexation policy for the Town of Taos is essential to the orderly development of the community and for land use planning in general.

Article 1 states "The Town shall not initiate the annexation of land through the arbitration method or by petition of the Municipal Boundary Commission without notifying the Chair of the Taos County Board of Commissioners prior to taking such action."

Article 2 states, "The Town of Taos Department of Community and Economic Development shall provide notification to the Taos County Director of Planning and Taos County Manager of any citizen petition to annex property into the municipal boundary of the Town of Taos prior to any formal action by the Town of Taos Planning and Zoning Commission."

The Community Economic Development Element outlines the Town's current annexation policy specific to providing water and sewer services to properties situated outside of the Town boundaries. It states, "The policy of the Town has been to allow properties outside of the municipal boundaries to receive water and/or sewer service provided that the Town Council approves the connection and that the recipient pay a fifty percent premium on the service or 1.5 times the standard rate. This practice does not capture the true costs of providing the service outside of the municipal boundary. A better practice would be to require annexation or approval of an annexation development agreement that includes a premium payment until the property can be annexed, prior to receiving Town services. A pre-annexation development agreement functions as a deferred annexation petition that guarantees that the property will annex to the Town once the Town limits reach the property and requires that any development on the property meet the Town standard. Annexation is a concern in the community and has not been supported by a very vocal portion of the community and aggressive annexation should not be pursued, however the practice of providing services to properties outside of the municipal boundary without requiring annexation or an annexation development agreement should be reconsidered."

The El Valle de los Ranchos and the El Prado Water and Sanitation District provide domestic water and sewer services to areas adjacent to the Town boundaries. In some circumstances it will be more economical for one of these organizations to provide water and sewer services or may already have plans to extend services. Regardless, the Town will discuss the feasibility of providing water and / or sewer services to these areas prior to formally annexing properties within the service areas of these organizations.

6. While the Town respects the rights of property owners to develop their property within the limits of the law and to earn a reasonable return on investments. The Town also believes that not all infill properties should be fully developed due to their historic, scenic, environmental, or cultural values to the community.



The Town's policy is to work closely with property owners to explore all possible methods for preserving sensitive land that is vulnerable to development pressure.

The Couse Pasture on Quesnell.

These methods may include clustered zoning, conservation easements, TDRs, or open space dedications. Furthermore, market research shows that real estate developments often retain a higher land value when they are developed next to permanently protected open space and recreation amenities. Vision 2020 identifies these candidate properties as the Couse Pasture, the Mitchell Property, the Cunnygham Property located immediately north of the Taos County Judicial Complex, and the wetlands area on the east side of Camino del Medio, just south of Paseo del Cañon West.

Objectives

1. AMEND THE LAND USE DEVELOPMENT CODE TO INCENTIVIZE INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT.

Infill is the “development that occurs on previously undeveloped lots within existing developed areas.” Redevelopment is defined as “development of a site that has been previously developed and is typically covered with impervious or compacted surfaces.” - **Using Smart Growth Techniques as Stormwater Best Management Practices. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. EPA 231-B-05-002. December 2005. pp. 37 & 48.**

In 2007, the Town completed an inventory of all existing land uses within the Town boundaries and the former Extra-Territorial Zone. Although some development has occurred since 2007, twenty-four percent of all the land was classified as “undeveloped.”

Infill and redevelopment of land will:

- Recycle used land,
- Reduce development pressure on rural land,
- Avoid expenses for new infrastructure,
- Encourage walking and transit, thereby reducing vehicle miles traveled and traffic congestion; improve air quality
- Improve water quality,
- Use less energy,
- Clean-up contaminated properties.

The Town will amend the LUDC to offer specific incentives for infill and redevelopment:

- Provide density bonuses (e.g. – increase the minimum allowable lot coverage),
- Reduce or waive utility hook-up fees,
- Permit construction by right instead of requiring public hearings,

- Reduce parking lot requirements; allow and encourage shared parking (require a formal agreement to address number of spaces and maintenance and snow removal),
- Give the Code Administrator discretionary authority to approve a minor (e.g. – 10%) reduction in set-back requirements,
- Prepare and approve a map that identifies the specific properties that are eligible for these incentives; approve the map and incentives at a public hearing and neighborhood meetings to facilitate public participation,
- Allow landscaping in-lieu-of parking spaces or impose a fee in-lieu-of parking spaces; use the fees for storm water pollution protection and mitigation.

The Town must be flexible in applying development standards where there is discretion allowed so that redevelopment is financially feasible for the property owner. Stormwater, parking, and setback standards can complicate a redevelopment project to the point where it is more feasible for the owner to do nothing or seek another greenfield location for their development.

The Planning and Zoning Department will present the proposed amendments and map to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Town Council no later than 20__.

“By one estimate, for every acre of land redeveloped brownfields, we save 4.5 acres of open space.” - **Getting to Smart Growth II: 100 More Policies for Implementation. Smart Growth Network and the International City/County Management Association. pp. 52-53.**

2. IDENTIFY PUBLIC FINANCE ALTERNATIVES TO PAY FOR INFRASTRUCTURE.

A wide variety of public finance strategies will be researched to determine the most effective strategy to pay for infrastructure, transit, trails, renewable energy generation, acequia restoration, civic spaces and land conservation within each neighborhood. These alternatives will include:

- Impact Fees,
- Metropolitan Redevelopment Area,
- Tax Increment Development Districts,
- Business Improvement Districts,
- Economic Development Local Option Gross Receipts Tax,
- Quality of Life Local Option Gross Receipts Tax,
- Grants & Loans, and
- PACE Programs,

A full outline and analysis of each alternative and its potential applications will be presented to the Town Council no later than 20__.

3. ANNEX PROPERTIES WHICH ARE RECEIVING TOWN SERVICES; IMPLEMENT THE 2007 ANNEXATION STRATEGIC PLANNING STUDY.

The Town of Taos has a legal responsibility to pay for public services in areas that are annexed. Vision 2020 recommended annexation of several areas located within and adjacent to the Town of Taos. Since 1999 when Vision 2020 was adopted, several properties have been annexed and the Town and Taos County have abolished the Extra-Territorial Zone. This Land Use Element replaces the recommendations of Vision 2020 with regard to annexation to reflect the most current information and political climate. Also, the Town completed the Annexation Strategic Planning Study in 2007 while new infrastructure has expanded. The Community Economic Development Element includes an annexation policy which states "The Town of Taos will examine the possibility of annexing those properties where services are provided by the town in order to capture the revenues generated on those sites that will directly support the provision of said services."

Annexation is a complex legal, financial, and political issue.

There are many circumstances where the Town and property owners would benefit from annexation. There are also reasons why annexation could be a bad idea.

Reasons for the Town to annex property:

- If the Town already provides infrastructure and community services but does not get fair share of property taxes or gross receipts taxes,
- The Town can protect water resources by providing domestic water and centralized sewer service,
- A boundary “clean-up” will resolve issues of police protection and confusion about zoning, building permit processes, and code enforcement.

Reasons for the Town to not annex a property:

- Additional costs for infrastructure improvements and maintenance,
- Additional costs for police and fire protection,
- Additional administrative costs for planning, zoning, building permits, and code enforcement.

Reasons for property owners to be annexed:

- Property owners can vote in municipal elections,
- A possible reduction in fire insurance rates depending on distance to a fire station and water services available for fire suppression,
- Avoid the on-going expenses of pumping the septic tank and maintaining a well,
- Greater certainty of jurisdiction with regard to planning, zoning, building permits, code enforcement, etc.
- The neighborhood association or property owner prefers to develop property under the Town’s zoning classifications and development review process.

Reasons for property owners to not be annexed:

- Potential additional property taxes,
- Potential loss of investment of well and septic system.

The GIS Technician in the Planning and Zoning Department researched every annexation since the Town was originally incorporated in 1934. The research found several discrepancies between the survey plats, legal descriptions, and ordinances, resulting in a perplexing and highly irregular Town boundary. To resolve the discrepancies, the Town is pursuing annexation of 19 areas through the Municipal Boundary Commission. The 19 areas consist of 181 separate properties. Annexing these areas will clean up the Town's boundaries and resolve the current ambiguity with regard to police protection, eligibility for municipal elections, and a wide variety of municipal services such as building permits, zoning review, and code enforcement. These properties are identified on **Map #12 (2011 & 2012 Boundary Correction Annexations)**.

The 2007 Annexation Strategic Planning Study included 9 areas for consideration. These areas are identified on **Map #12 (2007 Annexation Study Areas)**. A summary of some of the considerations and recommended priorities related to each of the areas are outlined in the **Table #6 (Annexation Considerations and Priorities)**.

The Town will annex the boundary correction properties no later than 2013. Other properties will be annexed according to their priority as outlined in Table #6.

Table #6. Annexation Considerations and Priorities

Area	Community Response (from November 2006 public meeting and individual communication with property owners)	Existing Land Use	Preferred Land Use (from November 2006 public meeting and individual communication with property owners)	Relative Capital Costs to the Town for Providing Infrastructure	Priority / Schedule
Morada	none	civic & rural residential /	low density rural and agriculture	low	high priority / annex by 2013
Mabel Dodge	positive	convention center (e.g. – commercial) sub-urban residential	extend the historic overlay zone to preserve historic character of existing historic buildings	low	high priority / annex by 2013
Jeantete	none	sub-urban residential	Preserve existing land uses	low	high priority / annex by 2013
Las Haciendas	mixed need more information	sub-urban residential	Unknown	moderate	Moderate priority / Annex by 2015
Este Es	mixed need more information	sub-urban residential & agricultural	rural residential and some mixed use	high (water, sewer, and roadway improvement completed in 2012)	high to moderate / annex boundary corrections by 2013, others by 2015
Ranchitos	mostly against need more information	rural to sub-urban residential and agricultural	rural residential and agricultural	high	low priority / annex by 2020
Chamisa	mixed need more information	residential and agricultural	rural residential	moderate	moderate priority / annex by 2015
Wiemer	opposed need more information	residential	residential	high	low priority / annex by 2020
Cañon	very opposed	mixed commercial, residential, agricultural	rural, historic, agricultural	high	do not annex
Cañon Infill (east of Gusdorf and south of La Posta)	none	rural residential and agricultural mostly undeveloped	Unknown	moderate	moderate priority/ annex by 2015

Goal #6

Development decisions are predictable, transparent, and inclusive.

Policies

1. Planning is most effective when there is clear community support for the plan and transparency in development decisions. Transparency in the planning process increases accountability for elected officials, appointed officials, and staff who are expected to implement the plan. The Town affirms that the entire community deserves the most accurate and timely information about land use and development decisions; therefore, all ages and cultures will be included in designing public outreach and education efforts a means to accommodate diversity while promoting equity and community.
2. The Town believes that the neighborhood is the basic organizing principle of land use planning and encourages the formation of neighborhood organizations. Neighborhood planning will be participatory and inclusive, allowing those most affected by development decisions to determine the character and magnitude of development that occurs within their neighborhood.
3. The Town will utilize the most popular and accessible formats of public participation and education, including email notices, print and radio media, web pages and blogs, social media, public hearings, charrettes, and open house events. The Town will be proactive in providing planning information to the public rather than assume the public will receive information by coincidence.
4. The Town recognizes that land use planning and development decisions have impacts beyond the Town's boundaries. No single government entity has full legal jurisdiction, political power, or funding capacity to implement all of the goals, policies, and objectives of (Re)vision 2020. There are many factors that influence development decisions, including market forces and economic trends, budget limitations, and county, federal, state, and tribal plans and regulations. The Town's policy is therefore to collaborate with Taos County, Taos Pueblo, federal and state agencies as well as local community organizations in land use planning and development decisions.

Town Council Resolution 09-04 (adopted in July 2009) articulates the Town's policies toward land use planning in the Planning and Platting Jurisdiction with specific regard to Taos County. The resolution includes Article 3 relating to the Land Use Element. Article 3 states, "The Town of Taos Department of Community and Economic Development shall work with the Taos County Planning Department to develop those portions of the comprehensive land use element of the Town of Taos Comprehensive Plan that include the area within the Planning and Platting Jurisdiction provided under NMSA 1978 3-19-5 A (2). That portion of the land use element of the Town of Taos Comprehensive Plan exterior to the Town municipal boundary and within the Town's Planning and Platting Jurisdiction shall be submitted to the Taos County Board of Commissioners for their approval or suggested changes before it is adopted by the Town Council of the Town of Taos."

Objectives

1. ADOPT THE LAND USE PLAN AS AN ORDINANCE.

The ordinance will require any application for a zone change to be consistent with the allowed zones identified on the **Land Use Plan (Map #14)** and the **Zoning Matrix (Table #7)**; otherwise, the applicant or stakeholder would have legal recourse to appeal the decision. Adopting the Land Use Plan as an ordinance will give land owners greater predictability in the type of developments that can be permitted in their neighborhood. It will also give the Town the ability to be proactive in changing the zoning so that future development accomplishes the goals of (Re)vision 2020. It also increases the Town's ability to plan for infrastructure, open space, and recreation facilities.

The ordinance will specify that any amendment to the Land Use Plan will require a preliminary and final public hearing before the Planning & Zoning Commission and at least one hearing before the Town Council. An amendment may be initiated by the Planning & Zoning Department, the Planning & Zoning Commission, the Town Council, or the public.

The ordinance will be adopted no later than June 20__.

2. **ADOPT AN ORDINANCE THAT REQUIRES CONSISTENCY BETWEEN PLANS AND BUDGETS.**

The public deserves a high level of predictability in the outcomes of a plan. The public spends countless hours at meetings during the planning process. Property owners should feel confident about what can or cannot happen on adjacent properties.

“The idea that local land-use decisions should be consistent with an independently adopted local comprehensive plan is a fundamental concept of planning practice.” -

Brian W. Ohm. *Practice Consistency. ZONING PRACTICE. November 2005. American Planning Association.*

The consistency requirement is an excellent way to achieve predictability and accountability.

The consistency requirement is a legal requirement that development decisions be consistent with an adopted plan. The consistency requirement can be implemented in many ways. For example:

- Staff reports for a proposed development would include a “finding of consistency,” requiring an evaluation of the proposed development against the goals, policies, and maps of (Re)vision 2020.
- Annual budgets adopted by the Town Council would need to be consistent with (Re)vision 2020. For example, the projects included in the annual Capital Improvements Plan would have to be consistent with the projects identified in the 5-year Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP). And the projects identified in the ICIP would have to be included in (Re)vision 2020.
- All plans adopted by the Town Council (e.g. - master plans, neighborhood plans, etc.) would include an analysis of consistency with (Re)vision 2020.

Many planners and lawyers are concerned that the consistency requirement increases litigation, but on the contrary, the consistency requirement will most likely decrease litigation because it will require more predictable decisions. It ensures that development decisions are not arbitrary or capricious, but they are grounded in the public interest and the articulated goals and policies of (Re)vision 2020. The following plans will be included in the ordinance:

1. Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan. It will no longer be a wish list, but a reliable document that increases predictability and gives focus and priority to projects so they are more likely to receive full funding,
2. Annual Budget, including the Capital Improvements Plan,
3. Neighborhood Plans,
4. Master Plans that are specific to particular geographic areas (e.g. – the Historic District) or specific topics (e.g. –renewable energy),
5. Investments to extend public utilities and roadways.

The ordinance will state very clearly that the Town Council will not approve a plan or budget if it is not found to be consistent with the goals, policies, and maps of (Re) vision 2020. The ordinance will also determine which plans are required to have an appropriate level of consistency. For example, a plan may be explicit in furthering the goals, policies, and objectives of (Re)vision 2020. The Green Infrastructure Plan is an example of a plan that is explicitly consistent with (Re)vision 2020 because it is specifically identified as an objective. Other plans which are not specifically identified in (Re)vision 2020 may be found to be highly consistent although they are not identified as an objective. Some plans may not be explicitly consistent but are nonetheless supportive or at least not contradictory.

The Town Council will adopt the resolution no later than 20__.

3. UPDATE THE LAND USE ELEMENT AT LEAST EVERY FIVE YEARS.

The plan will be more manageable and relevant when updated regularly. Updates will reflect the most current goals, policies, and objectives of the Town Council. The update to the Plan will be accompanied by a brief report. The report will include, at minimum, the following:

1. The number of objectives that have been accomplished, including a revised list of objectives to be implemented over the following five years,
2. The effectiveness of each policy,
3. The problems or new opportunities that have emerged,
4. The data that needs to be updated,
5. The recommended changes and updates to maps and other data.

An amendment to the Land Use Plan will be approved only by an ordinance of the Town Council, with all property owners within 300 feet of the property to be notified by certified letter. The request for amending the Land Use Map will be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission at a public hearing.

The Town will update the Land Use Element every 5-years.

4. CREATE A COMPREHENSIVE AND SEARCHABLE DATABASE THAT UTILIZES GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS) FOR DECISION SUPPORT AND MONITORING DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS AND CODE VIOLATIONS.

GIS is a very powerful tool for implementing (Re)vision 2020. It should be used to evaluate the infrastructure impacts of development projects, prioritize land conservation programs, evaluate infrastructure investments, refute "takings" claims, and generate maps and produce data for the public and other government agencies. GIS can be integrated with a searchable database so the staff can review prior approval dates of nascent development projects, identify code violations, create public notification letters, and a variety of time and location sensitive issues.

The database will be operational no later than 20__.

5. PREPARE A JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT (JPA) WITH TAOS COUNTY WHICH ESTABLISHES THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COLLABORATIVE LAND USE PLANNING IN THE REGION.

Both the Town and County share a need to manage growth in Taos Valley. State law permits the Town and County to agree to which government will be responsible for planning, platting, and zoning within three miles and one mile of the Town boundaries. Table #1 offers a starting point for discussions between the Town and County. Managing development according to Table #1 may prove unwieldy and contrary to the goal of making development decisions more predictable, inclusive, and transparent. An alternative to the JPA is for the Town and County to approve an extra-territorial zone and to appoint individuals to an extra-territorial zoning commission.

The Town will provide Taos County with a draft agreement by the end of 20__.

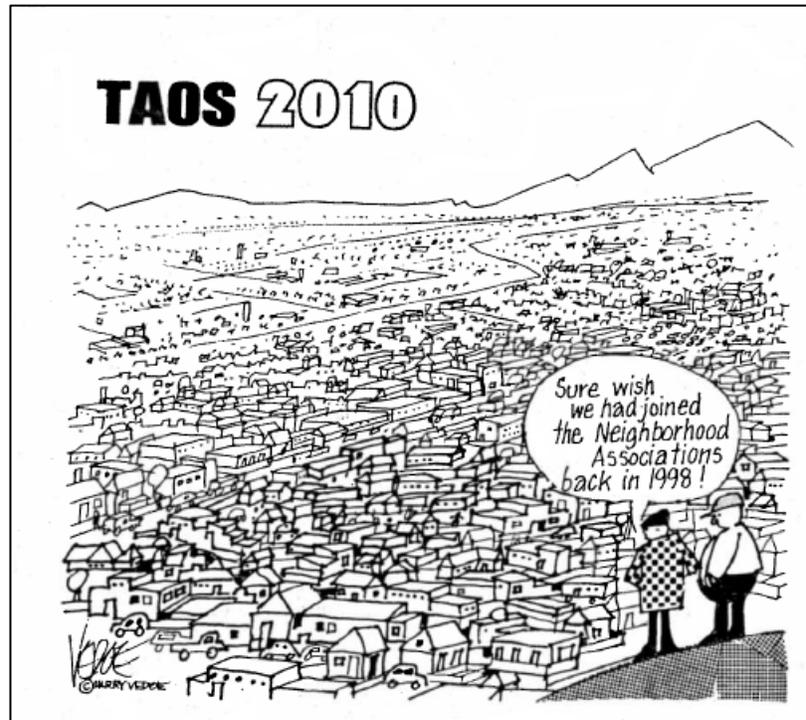
6. FORM NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS.

Vision 2020 fully supports the formation of neighborhood plans and neighborhood associations.

The Community Design Element Policy of Vision 2020 states,

“The Town of Taos will facilitate the creation of and provide resources for neighborhood associations within the Town Limits.”

– Vision 2020 Master Plan. p. 73.



– Taos News. February 8, 1998.

“Neighborhood Planning

“Neighborhood associations will be encouraged to tailor land use regulations to meet their needs, either by creating neighborhood overlay zones or by coordinating with Town staff during updates of the Land Use Development Code. For areas of the Town and ETZ that do not have neighborhood associations, Town of Taos Planning Department Staff will collaborate with community members on planning initiatives. Vision 2020 Implementation will occur through the work of Town residents, working in conjunction with Planning Staff.”

– Vision 2020 Mater Plan. Community Design Element. p. 76.

The intent for forming neighborhood associations is not to add another layer of bureaucracy to the Town's development process. The intent is to give property owners and residents an additional venue for learning about development proposals and to express their concerns and preferences for new development within their neighborhood. Developers would be required to present their proposal to the neighborhood residents and property owners at a location within the neighborhood where the development is proposed. Depending on complexity and magnitude of the development, this initial neighborhood presentation could serve as a preliminary public hearing. Some of the developments and applications that would require a neighborhood presentation include a special use permit, a conditional use permit, zone changes, provisional permits, Planned Unit Development, Traditional Neighborhood Development, Rural Historic Landscapes Overlay Zone, residential and commercial subdivisions, commercial construction, and proposed text amendments to the Land Use Development Code, and future updates to (Re)Vision 2020.

Town Council will adopt a resolution recognizing each neighborhood association. The level of formal organization will be determined by the property owners and neighborhood residents. The staff of the Planning & Zoning Department will provide maps, proposing boundaries, demographic data, plans, studies, reports, and contact lists of property owners within the neighborhood. The formal boundaries of each neighborhood association may or may not synchronize with the proposed boundaries of the Land Use Plan, but a neighborhood association may cover more than one neighborhood unit or only portions of others.

The Town will adopt the neighborhood association resolution at the same time the neighborhood plan is prepared and adopted, which are to be completed once every two years.

Table #5. Implementation

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	SCHEDULE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY OR PARTIES	RESOURCES NEEDED	DELIVERABLES OR INDICATORS OF SUCCESS
1. Natural resources are protected from development.	1. Provide public education and design assistance.				
	2. Amend the High Performance Building Ordinance (HPBO) to improve the review process for commercial buildings under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design - Building Design and Construction (LEED BD + C).				
	3. Adopt a green infrastructure map and associated land dedication and riparian protection ordinances.				
	4. Adopt and implement the recommendations of the Climate Adaptation Plan.				
	5. Update the 2011 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory.				
	6. Update, adopt, and implement the draft Town of Taos 40-Year Water Plan.				
2. Agricultural land is in productive use and protected from inappropriate development.	1. Amend the Land Use Development Code to protect agricultural lands and to encourage agriculture and gardening.				
	2. Adopt a Food Security Master Plan.				
	3. Adopt an Acequia Restoration Plan.				
	4. Facilitate economic and business development initiatives that support the full spectrum of the agriculture system in Taos, including the growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, marketing, consuming, and disposing of food.				
	5. Adopt a Transfer of Development Rights program.				
3. The Town develops as a collection of complete and compact neighborhoods	1. Adopt neighborhood plans.				
	2. Adopt Form Based Codes for Neighborhood Plans.				
	3. Amend the Land Use Development Code to Repair Sub-Urban Sprawl.				
	4. Adopt a Downtown Master Plan.				
	5. Amend the LUDC's development standards for "large scale" (e.g. - Big Box) development.				

SECTIONS LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK

4. Special districts are planned, designed, and regulated to meet the unique needs and character of the district.	1. Adopt a Master Plan for the industrial districts.				
	2. Adopt a Master Plan for the Taos Regional Airport.				
5. Development pays for itself.	1. Amend the Land Use Development Code to incentivize infill and redevelopment.				
	2. Identify public finance alternatives to pay for infrastructure.				
	3. Annex properties that are receiving Town services; implement the 2007 Annexation Strategic Planning Study.				
6. Development decisions are predictable, transparent, and inclusive.	1. Adopt the Land Use Map as an ordinance.				
	2. Adopt an Ordinance that requires consistency between plans and budgets.				
	3. Update the Land Use Element at least every five years.				
	4. Create a comprehensive and searchable database that utilizes Geographic Information System (GIS) for decision support and monitoring development applications and code violations.				
	5. Prepare a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) with Taos County which establishes the roles and responsibilities for collaborative land use planning in the region.				
	6. Form neighborhood associations.				

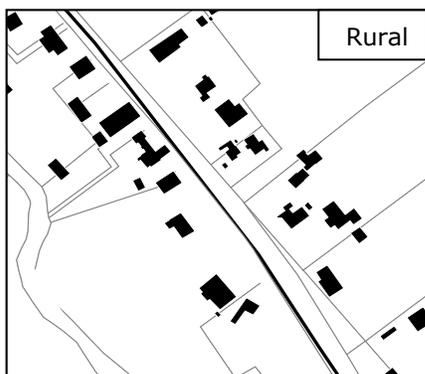
SECTIONS LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK

Land Use Plan

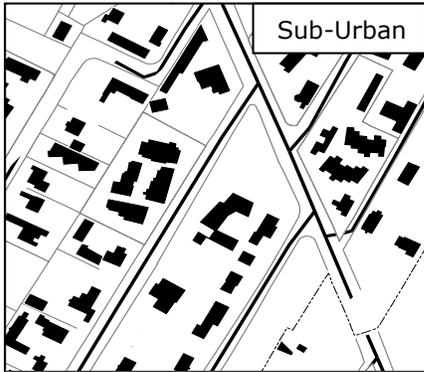
The Land Use Plan organizes the Town into neighborhoods. Each neighborhood will have a unique identity as it grows and evolves. Natural corridors and transportation networks will connect neighborhoods and define neighborhood boundaries. Each neighborhood includes a spectrum of land uses. The spectrum runs from the development preserve to rural, sub-urban, urban, and urban center. Instead of defining parcels as residential, commercial, or industrial, the Land Use Plan distinguishes each land use by its character. This method of defining each land use allows a more meaningful analysis of how each neighborhood should (or should not) develop. It recognizes that each neighborhood should develop as mix of land uses instead of homogenous subdivisions and commercial strips.

Map #15 (Existing Land Uses) shows the existing land uses within the 3-mile planning and platting jurisdiction. The land use pattern does not reveal complete neighborhoods. On the contrary, it illustrates the vast amount of sub-urban subdivisions which encroach on rural communities. **Map #14 (Land Use Plan)** identifies each neighborhood. Each neighborhood includes the following land uses:

Development Preserve - The development preserve is (or should be) protected from development because of the environmental value. It includes conservation easements, wetlands, rivers and riparian habitats, arroyos, floodplains, and acequias. These lands provide critical environmental services to the community. They protect water resources, air quality, provide habitat for wildlife, scenic beauty, and recreational opportunities (e.g. – hiking and landscape photography).

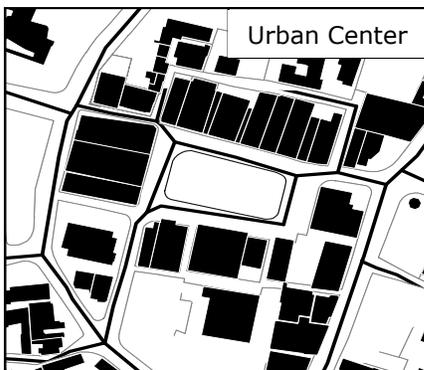


Rural - Rural land uses are defined by low-density, single family detached residences with large set-backs where residences are mixed with agriculture and ranching. Barns, stables, and storage are common. It also includes occasional commercial, civic, and industrial uses such as gas stations, churches, sand and gravel mining, and bed & breakfast operations. Large lots and suertes are common.



Sub-Urban - Includes medium-density, single-family detached residences with typical lot sizes between ½ acre and ¼ acre. A guest house or a casita apartment may be found on the same lot as the primary residence. Some commercial uses and multi-family residential development may be found, but typically only on intersections. It includes some home occupations and live / work units.

Urban - Includes a larger variety of higher density single-family residential units as well as multi-family residential developments; duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, courtyard housing, and live / work units are present; a wider variety of commercial developments and community services are available on intersections.



Urban Center - Includes high intensity commercial activity, retail, and office developments mixed with multi-family residential uses. It includes townhouses, apartments and attached buildings; buildings often have shared walls with the parking lot located behind the building. Buildings surround and define a public plaza.

Civic Space – A civic space is a property that is owned, developed, and managed for public use. It may include public buildings such as a school or a library, or a fire station. It also includes parks, plazas, playgrounds, and cemeteries. The increased density in the Urban Center land use requires increased access to civic spaces (plazas, formal gardens, active play and passive play parks & playgrounds) due to smaller private yards. Different types of civic spaces are appropriate for each type of land use. For example, a small plaza or a small playground is appropriate for an Urban land use. Undeveloped open space is most appropriate for Rural land uses. A park or sports field is most appropriate in the Sub-urban land uses.

TND & CLD - The Land Use Plan also designates the larger and undeveloped areas as the Traditional Neighborhood Development District or the Clustered Land Development. These areas should be developed as compact, complete neighborhoods under the form based code requirements of the TND or the CLD. **Table #7** defines and describes the basic TND and CLD requirements. See the LUDC for the full definitions and planning requirements to zone a neighborhood to the TND or the CLD.

Table #7. The TND and CLD

TND District		CLD District	
DEFINITION			
A type of urban neighborhood that allocates a mixture of land uses and is limited in area by walking distance or density. An example of a TND is downtown Taos.		A type of rural neighborhood that allocates a mixture of land uses, and is limited in area by walking distance but not density. An example of a CLD is Arroyo Seco.	
APPROPRIATENESS			
The TND District is most appropriate for larger areas of undeveloped land that is surrounded by existing development.		The CLD District is most appropriate for rural areas that are at risk of being overcome by sub-urban sprawl.	
ALLOCATION OF LAND USES			
Development	no minimum	Preserve	no less than 50% of Preserve and / or Rural
Preserve			
Rural	no minimum	Rural	no less than 50% of Preserve and / or Rural
Sub-Urban	between 10% and 30%	Sub-Urban	between 10% and 40%
Urban	between 30% and 60%	Urban	between 5% and 20%
Urban Center	between 5% and 30%	Urban Center	not permitted

Rezoning property to the TND or CLD will require the Town Council's approval of a neighborhood plan. The Land Use Development Code (see section 16.16.230) includes the specific requirements for a neighborhood plan to qualify for the TND or CLD zoning.

One of the objectives of the Land Use Element is for the Town Council to adopt the Land Use Plan as an ordinance. Under such an ordinance, the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Town Council would only approve a proposed zone change if the proposed zone is permitted under the Zoning Matrix. For example, a property can only be zoned to an RA zone if it is located within the Rural Designation. Likewise, if a property cannot be re-zoned to R-4 if is located in the Rural Designation.

If the Zoning Matrix does not allow the desired zone, a land owner must update the Land Use Plan to change the land use during a public hearing of the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Town Council. The proposed changes to the Land Use Plan must not cause the land uses within the neighborhood to fall outside of the parameters for the allocations of land uses as identified in Table #6.

Table #8. Zoning Matrix

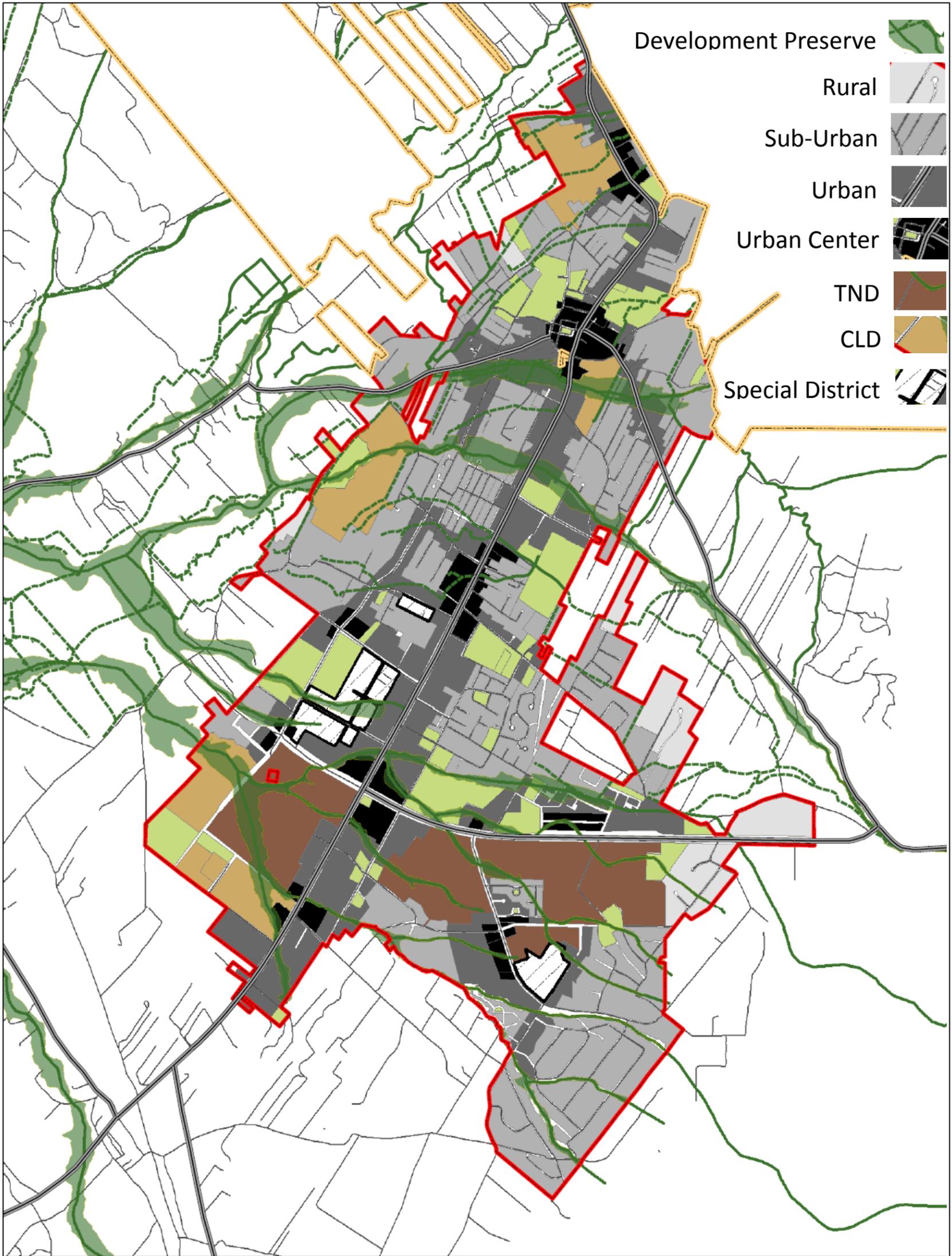
		Land Use Designation				
		Rural	Sub Urban	Urban	Urban Center	Special District
Zone	ARO	x				
	RA-20	x				
	RA-10	x				
	RA-6	x				
	RA	x				
	R-1	x	X			
	R-2		X			
	R-3		X			
	R-4		X			
	R-6		X			
	R-14		X**	X		
	C-1		X**	X		
	C-2			X	X	
	CBD				X	
	HCPD				X	X
M-1					X	
PUD	X	X	X	X	X	

** allowed only on intersections of existing or proposed thoroughfares, provided that the proposed development is supported by a traffic study

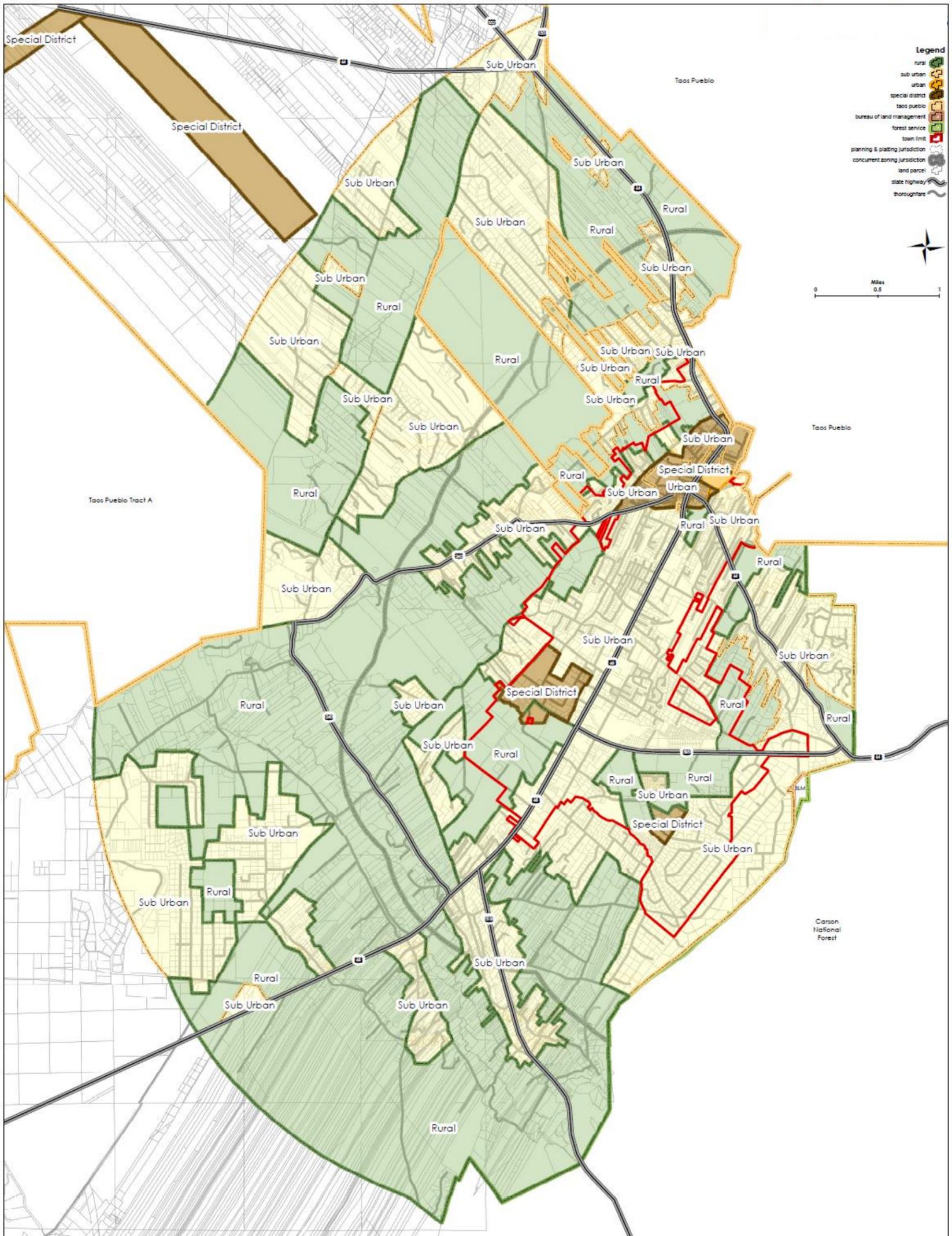
The following criteria were used to designate the land uses in the Land Use Plan:

1. existing land uses & corridors
2. existing density & parcel size
3. adopted plans (e.g. – Chamisa Verde Neighborhood Plan)
4. existing infrastructure
5. natural resources
6. smart growth principles
7. public input

The intent of the Land Use Plan is to preserve the character of rural areas, to protect residential subdivisions from encroachment of commercial developments, and to encourage higher density in areas of Town that can accommodate it.



Map #15. Existing Land Uses Within Three Miles of the Town



Conclusion

The Land Use Element represents many challenges for Taos. It calls for legal protections against inappropriate developments in rural landscapes, it recognizes the need for consistency between plans, budgets, and development decisions, and it calls for greater collaboration between the Town and the County for a more sustainable development pattern in the region. Another challenge presented by the Land Use Element is the recommendations for higher density development. The arguments against density are understandable. Many people oppose density because it can ruin views, cause traffic, and damage natural resources. But the benefits of increasing the development density far outweigh the costs, provided that the density is located in the right place and it is designed properly. The Land Use Element will certainly accomplish these requirements if it is implemented in a timely and deliberate manner.

Some of the benefits are higher density development are:

- It promotes affordable housing (national and regional trends show a growing market for higher density),
- It creates a critical mass of housing (consumers) for neighborhood commercial development (grocery store, video rentals, pharmacy, restaurant, coffee shops, etc.), and community services (day care, parks, post offices),
- It creates opportunities for transit (bus stops), and reduces dependency on cars for youth and elderly while reducing the amount of time we spend in our cars,
- It relieves pressure in the real estate market to develop land in rural communities where suburban development is undesirable and not sustainable,

Density, if properly designed, can:

- Help balance the Town budget
- Transform declining neighborhoods into lively places
- Reduce traffic congestion
- Provide housing options within financial reach of working people
- Preserve land for parks and outdoor recreation

Accomplishing the goals of (Re)vision 2020 requires a deliberate and collaborative effort by the entire community. Everyone has a role to play:

The role of Town staff:

- **Commit time and research to accomplish the objectives**
- **Reach out to the public and elected officials for meaningful discourse**
- **Provide regular updates to the community regarding the plan**
- **Seek training and technical assistance whenever available**

The role of elected and appointed officials:

- **Change the regulatory climate**
 - Update zoning and land use regulations to be consistent with (Re)vision 2020
- **Change the economic climate**
 - Provide density bonuses
 - Incentivize the type of development we want
- **Change the dialogue**
 - Educate citizens – density brings new amenities, new jobs, new tax revenues, new opportunities
- **Change the political climate**
 - Build citizen support for higher-density growth by creating a community-based vision for growth
 - Assure citizens you will insist on quality

The role of the business community:

- Attend **planning meetings**
- **Lobby** for zoning changes that allow higher density and mixed uses
- **Locate** businesses near public transportation and existing infrastructure
- **Encourage employees** to actively support proposals for higher-density housing near jobs and transportation

The role of the public.....

- **Get educated** about the importance of compact, mixed use development and spread the word.
- **Get involved** early in comprehensive community planning.
 - Urge local leaders to support a community-based vision for the future
- **Attend planning meetings** and insist on:
 - Quality design that fits in with the community
 - A proven track record of success
 - An integrated transportation system

With federal and state budgets diminishing, the Town will need to find its own sources of funding for infrastructure and public services. It becomes more important for the Town to be ever more efficient with its investments. The Land Use Element establishes the long term goals, policies, and objectives for land use and development, leading to better investments and more efficient government. It includes the Land Use Plan which clearly identifies the specific areas that are intended for higher density development and those areas intended for preservation; it gives land owners, businesses, and residents a sense of confidence in the future development of their neighborhood. Most importantly, it keeps the Town accountable for development decisions.

Everyone in Taos has a strong connection to the land. These connections are as diverse as the people. The connections are formed by:

- history and tenure
- spirituality and inspiration
- natural beauty and natural resources
- art and muse
- seeds and soils
- sports and recreation
- politics, jurisdiction, and sovereignty

The landscapes, cultures, and history make Taos an attractive place for visitors from all across the world. Many people who visit Taos decide to stay, build a house, and retire. Others have lived in Taos all their lives and intend to stay forever. Every person that moves to Taos and every child born here contributes to the local cultures and bring new demands to local government. The need for managing growth, balancing budgets, and preserving the unique character of Taos is never more apparent than now, and the decisions made now impact the livability of Taos far into the future.

APPENDIX

Community Preference Survey

The Taos Index

Town of Taos Community Preference Survey



Thank you for completing the Town of Taos Community Preference Survey. Your answers will be used to examine land use and community design policy at the Town of Taos. Please keep the following in mind as you complete the survey:

- 1) Please evaluate the characteristics of the images as opposed to evaluating the quality of the photos or time of year (winter vs. summer). There is no right or wrong answer. Go with your "gut" feeling.
- 2) The images are intended to illustrate conceptual ideas. They do not represent specific proposals for specific places.
- 3) View the images with an open mind.
- 4) If you have a specific comment or want to clarify your vote, please provide a comment in the space beside the questions.
- 5) **Circle only one** letter or number for each question!

Date: ___ / ___ / _____ **Name or Group (optional):** _____

Please return the Community Preference Survey to Matthew Foster, Town of Taos, 400 Camino de la Placita. Taos. NM. (575) 751-2037.

01. Where do you live?

Comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. not in Taos County b. not in New Mexico c. in one of the incorporated communities of Taos County d. in one of the unincorporated villages in Taos County e. in a rural area in Taos County f. in the Town of Taos g. Taos Pueblo h. part time in Taos and part time somewhere else 	
--	--

02. Do you own property in Taos County?

Comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. yes b. no 	
---	--

03. What is the primary reason you live in Taos?

Comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. economic / employment b. family in area c. employee of state, county, town d. cost of living e. access to recreation / outdoors f. access to culture / diversity g. overall quality of life h. urban services i. education opportunities j. I do not enjoy living in Taos k. I do not live in Taos 	
---	--

04. What is the secondary reason you live Taos?

Comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. economic / employment b. family in area c. employee of state, county, town d. cost of living e. access to recreation / outdoors f. access to culture / diversity g. overall quality of life h. urban services i. education opportunities j. I do not enjoy living in Taos k. I do not live in Taos 	
---	--

05. What type of housing do you live in?**Comments:**

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. I live in my own house / condob. I rent an apartment / condoc. I rent a house / trailerd. I live on a farme. other | |
|---|--|

06. How long have you lived in Taos?**Comments:**

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. less than 1 yearb. 1 to 5 yearsc. 6 to 10 yearsd. 11 to 20 yearse. 21 to 50 yearsf. more than 50 yearsg. multiple generations of my family have lived in Taosh. I do not live in Taos | |
|---|--|

07. How long do you plan on staying in Taos?**Comments:**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. less than 1 yearb. 1 to 5 yearsc. 6 to 10 yearsd. 11 to 20 yearse. 21 to 50 yearsf. the rest of my lifeg. I do not live in Taos | |
|--|--|

08. How do you rate your neighborhood as a place to live?**Comments:**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Excellentb. goodc. faird. poore. N/A (no neighbors, don't live in Taos) | |
|--|--|

09. How satisfied are you with the type of growth and development that has occurred in Taos in recent years?**Comments:**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">4. Extremely Satisfied3. Very Satisfied2. Satisfied1. Somewhat Satisfied0. Neutral-1. Somewhat Unsatisfied-2. Unsatisfied-3. Very Unsatisfied-4. Extremely Unsatisfied | |
|--|--|

10. How important is "Traffic Congestion and Creating Alternative Transportation Systems" for the future of Taos?**Comments:**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">4. Extremely Important3. Very Important2. Important1. Somewhat Important0. Neutral-1. Somewhat Unimportant-2. Unimportant-3. Very Unimportant-4. Extremely Unimportant | |
|--|--|
-

11. How important is "Economic and Business Development" for the future of Taos?

<ul style="list-style-type: none">4. Extremely Important3. Very Important2. Important1. Somewhat Important0. Neutral-1 . Somewhat Unimportant-2. Unimportant-3. Very Unimportant-4. Extremely Unimportant	Comments:
---	------------------

12. How important is "Environmental Protection and Land Conservation" for the future of Taos?

<ul style="list-style-type: none">4. Extremely Important3. Very Important2. Important1. Somewhat Important0. Neutral-1 . Somewhat Unimportant-2. Unimportant-3. Very Unimportant-4. Extremely Unimportant	Comments:
---	------------------

13. How important is "Water Resources Planning and Conservation" for the future of Taos?

<ul style="list-style-type: none">4. Extremely Important3. Very Important2. Important1. Somewhat Important0. Neutral-1 . Somewhat Unimportant-2. Unimportant-3. Very Unimportant-4. Extremely Unimportant	Comments:
---	------------------

14. How important is "Maintenance of Culture and Traditions" for the future of Taos?

<ul style="list-style-type: none">4. Extremely Important3. Very Important2. Important1. Somewhat Important0. Neutral-1 . Somewhat Unimportant-2. Unimportant-3. Very Unimportant-4. Extremely Unimportant	Comments:
---	------------------

15. How important is "Affordable Housing for Local Families" for the future of Taos?

<ul style="list-style-type: none">4. Extremely Important3. Very Important2. Important1. Somewhat Important0. Neutral-1 . Somewhat Unimportant-2. Unimportant-3. Very Unimportant-4. Extremely Unimportant	Comments:
---	------------------

16. How important is "Farming and Ranching" for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Important
- 3. Very Important
- 2. Important
- 1. Somewhat Important
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Unimportant
- 2. Unimportant
- 3. Very Unimportant
- 4. Extremely Unimportant

Comments:

Image 01. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 02. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 03. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 04. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 05. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:

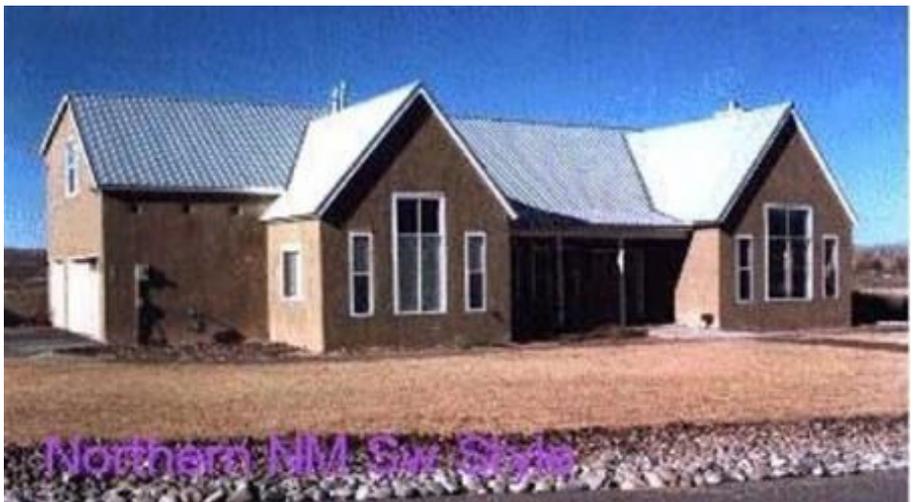


Image 06. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 07. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 08. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 09. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 10. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 11. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 12. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 13. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 14. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 15. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 16. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 17. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 18. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:

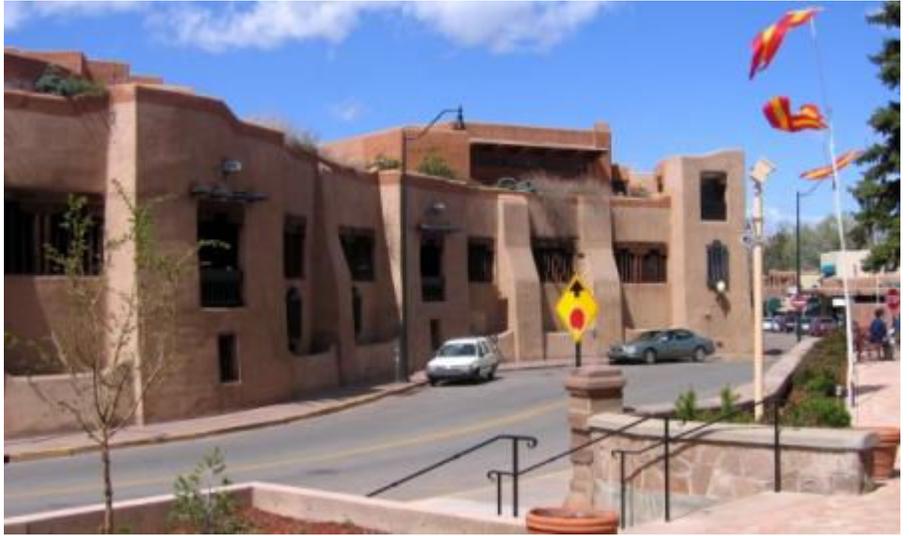


Image 19. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 20. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 21. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 22. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 23. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 24. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 25. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:

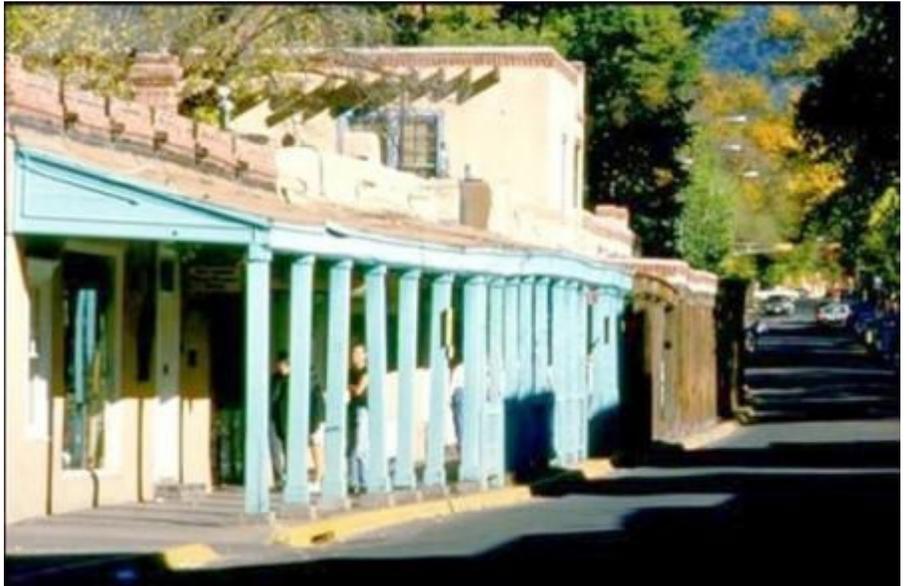


Image 26. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- 4. Extremely Appropriate
- 3. Very Appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 1. Somewhat Appropriate
- 0. Neutral
- 1. Somewhat Inappropriate
- 2. Inappropriate
- 3. Very Inappropriate
- 4. Extremely Inappropriate

Comments:



Image 27. How appropriate is this image for the future of Taos?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">4. Extremely Appropriate3. Very Appropriate2. Appropriate1. Somewhat Appropriate0. Neutral-1. Somewhat Inappropriate-2. Inappropriate-3. Very Inappropriate-4. Extremely Inappropriate |  |
| <p>Comments:</p> | |



GENERAL COMMENTS:

THE TAOS INDEX

671,000 tons of carbon sequestered from national forests in Taos County;

427,276 tons of carbon emissions in 2009

Number of kilowatts of solar electric power that is produced at Town Hall:
51; percent of total Town Hall electricity demand = 50%

Tons of carbon dioxide emissions from the average resident of Taos County
in 2009: 12.7.

Average in US: 27.2

Number of town-owned buildings that received an energy and water audit in
2010: 17

Minimum number of homes needed to meet the current demand for
affordable housing: 294

Priority number of the Artspace affordable housing for artists in the Town of
Taos Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan: 6; priority number 1:
Alexander Gusdorf ECO Park Phases II and III

Average price for a single family home in Taos between 2006 and 2010:
\$299,900.

Percent of all Taos households that can afford the average priced house in
Taos: 15

Average gallons of water used per day per person in the Town of Taos: 192;
average in US: 179

Kilowatt hours of electricity consumed by the average person per year in the
US in 2009: 95,688.

Taos County: 40,634

The minimum Home Energy Rating System score required for all new homes
built in the Town of Taos: 70; HERS rating for the average new home built in
the US = 100. Average existing home in the US:

120

Average number of acres the Taos Land Trust has conserved per year since
1993:

422

Percent of Taos County residents considered obese in 2006:

17.1

Percent of youth that considered themselves overweight or obese in the same year:

28.9

Percent increase in the cost of fresh fruit since 1989:

77

Increase decrease in the cost of fats and sugars since 1989:

33

Percent of food consumed in Taos County that is grown in New Mexico:

3

Number of days the Taos food supply would last if there were a catastrophe:

4-5

Taos County suicide rate between 2002 and 2009: 29.8 (per 100,000)

New Mexico rate in the same period: 18.0

nationwide: 10.9