**Town of Taos Comprehensive Plan**

**Housing Goals, Policies and Actions/Strategies**

**November 5, 2021 Draft**

**Goals**

1. A Taos family of median income should be able to afford an average priced home.
2. Taos neighborhoods should contain a mix of housing types affordable to all Taos residents.
3. Ensure that housing protects the health, safety, and welfare of the occupants.
4. All housing should exist in safe, beautiful neighborhoods that enhance residents’ quality of life.
5. Pedestrian-friendly streets and outdoor public places should be designed for residents to sit, eat, and visit in subdivisions and mobile home parks.
6. Linkages should be designed that encourage the use of non-motorized transportation and public transit among neighborhoods and from neighborhoods to community facilities, employment, and commercial centers.
7. Support economic development initiatives that bring up wage income for Taos residents to better afford market-rate housing.

**Policies and Actions/Strategies**

1. Provide a variety of housing choices affordable to people who live and work in the Downtown (Strong at Heart)
   1. Allow “missing middle” housing types in Downtown’s predominantly single-family zones, including duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes by right (no more than 1 parking space per unit)
   2. Allow higher density (dwelling units per acre) “missing middle” that fits into a compatible building envelope as a conditional use in the Downtown
2. Provide a variety of affordable housing choices throughout the Town
   1. Consider allowing duplexes by right in all or some residential zoning districts, assuring that units are not used as short-term rentals unless allowed in compliance with the short-term rental ordinance
   2. Consider allowing “missing middle” housing types in other zoning districts of the Town
   3. Consider increasing height limits to three stories and provide other development standard flexibility for new rental development, especially affordable housing. (2020 Affordable Housing Plan)
3. Provide development incentives for private sector projects that commit to long-term affordability. (2020 Affordable Housing Plan)
4. Require a mix of housing units by size and price within larger subdivisions and attached housing projects
   1. Consider inclusionary zoning that requires mixed-income housing or cash in lieu for use by housing authority/trust to develop affordable housing
   2. Work with Taos County on a joint Town-County approach to inclusionary regulations
5. Regulate short-term rental housing (***accomplished***) to restrict short-term rentals in the Central Business zone and cap the number of short-term rentals in other Town zones. Purposes served by the short-term rental housing ordinance include: to maintain or increase availability of mostly-affordable long-term rental housing; reduce traffic congestion, illegal parking and excessive noise in residential neighborhoods; enhance visitors’ stays in lodging which is generally better set up to accommodate visitors; require registration of all short-term rental units; and assure that lodgers tax is collected from short-term rentals.
   1. Periodically revisit terms of the short-term rental ordinance to assure that it is effective in helping to meet housing and lodging demands. Evaluation should include:
      1. transition of short-term rentals to long-term rentals, particularly affordable housing for local workforce
      2. assessment of whether ordinance positively impacted neighborhoods by lowering traffic noise, reducing on-street parking that had congested local streets, and reducing noise from rentals above and beyond ambient noise in neighborhood
      3. improve lodgers tax collection from short-term rental properties in town
      4. improve occupancy of lodging
      5. study whether the restrictions tend to push visitors to seek short-term rentals outside Town
   2. Work with Taos County on consistency in short-term rental housing provisions if the County decides to develop a short-term rentals ordinance
6. Study the “displacement risk” of housing strategies, including
   1. Mapping of what is affordable, what is not affordable
   2. Consider the effects of such strategies as:
      1. Accessory dwelling units (ADU’s) as they might help an existing property owner with additional revenue stream.
      2. Allowance of duplex conversion of single-family houses
      3. Creation of more affordable missing-middle housing which may give opportunities for existing residents/youths from old families to stay in the community
7. Open up some or all residential zones to accessory dwelling units (ADU’s) as a use by right, not restricted to guest homes or to blood relatives, nor subject to conditional use permits.
   1. Property owners must assure that the ADU’s are not used as short-term rentals unless permitted in compliance with the short-term rental ordinance.
   2. Do not allow ADU’s in areas where utilities have limited capacity that could be exceeded by added households
8. Work with the Northern Regional Housing Authority to increase their impact on affordable housing. The housing authority can act as a developer, a regional land trust, and sponsor additional mixed-income LIHTC projects. (2020 Affordable Housing Plan)
9. Work with Northern Regional Housing Authority to address the need for additional rental units through vouchers for low-income residents (<30% AMI). Section 8 is tapped out; therefore State or other programs are needed to provide vouchers. (2020 Affordable Housing Plan)
   1. Consider means to open up more housing units to accept Section 8 vouchers, such as a Town ordinance prohibiting landlords from discrimination against tenants based on the source of rental payment (note: legislation proposed in HB 111 (NM 2021 session), Modernization of State Housing Code, included a provision but the legislation did not get passed)
10. Create a housing trust with development capacity, package public-private housing developments and the ability to buy deed-restrictions on existing homes
    1. Determine who should manage the trust, such as: a new Town housing authority-community land trust, a new Enchanted Circle regional housing authority, Northern Regional Housing Authority or North Central Economic Development District
    2. Consider funding a limited number of vouchers through the housing trust. (2020 Affordable Housing Plan)
11. Provide reduced cost or at-cost Town land and reduced fees and costs for infrastructure, where appropriate. These leveraged resources will be offered only with the guarantee from for-profit or not-for-profit developers that they will develop affordable housing as defined by the Town of Taos.
12. Determine appropriate local public revenue sources for support of **a**ffordable housing, such as to support a housing trust or comparable organization, including but not limited to:
    1. Affordable housing general obligation bond
    2. Gross receipts tax option dedicated to affordable housing
    3. Real estate transfer tax on high-price sales with proceeds directed to affordable housing
    4. Lodger tax portion dedicated to affordable housing
13. Expand the use of current housing rehabilitation programs and pilot new funding opportunities for housing rehabilitation (2020 Affordable Housing Plan)
14. Support and plan for additional Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects
    1. Utilize NM Affordable Housing Tax Credits in addition to LIHTC, to subsidize affordable housing
15. Anticipate and plan for more market-rate housing, including high end residences
    1. Emphasize the need for smaller housing units for the growing segment of single-person households and two-person households
16. Update development and design standards in the Land Development Code for mobile home subdivisions and parks
17. Coordinate with major employers to build employee housing. Work with such groups as Taos Ski Valley, Northern Regional Transit Authority, Kit Carson Electric Cooperative and Taos Municipal Schools.
    1. Employer-built housing for employees may include dormitories, apartment complexes built by private developers or through public-private partnerships, single family homes, and conversion of old motels
18. Assure that a portion of affordable housing is ADA accessible, suitable for special needs residents
19. Create walkable neighborhoods in addition to the Downtown area that can accommodate different housing types, including small-footprint buildings, townhouses, mixed income, tiny homes and smart mixed use.
    1. New neighborhoods in the Paseo del Canon East vicinity are a primary opportunity area
    2. Build-out existing neighborhoods that have a street grid and utilities
    3. Build-out and in-fill in areas that retrofit a segmented/incomplete street circulation pattern with new streets and lanes that allow for development.
       1. In the future, subscribe to subdivision street criteria and master plans, and require stub-outs for continuous local streets.
20. Encourage and support creative design professionals and developers to apply their skills to create new neighborhoods and in-fill projects that meet Town goals and standards
21. Identify locations in Town of Taos for desired employee housing dormitories
22. Encourage sustainable low energy use and water use housing
    1. Support through the State Construction Industries Division a residential green building code addressing home energy and water efficiency standards, such as use of all-electric, heat pumps for space heating and cooling, potential for micro-grid, passive solar design, healthy air flow and insulation
23. Support the efforts of the State of Homelessness in Taos Collaborative to provide shelter and permanent housing for people experiencing homelessness. (2020 Affordable Housing Plan)
    1. Support organizations providing housing and services to unhoused such as the Men’s Shelter, HEART and DreamTree, subject to the availability of funds and staff time