

December 6-8, 2021

# Grant County, NM: A Vision for Five Points

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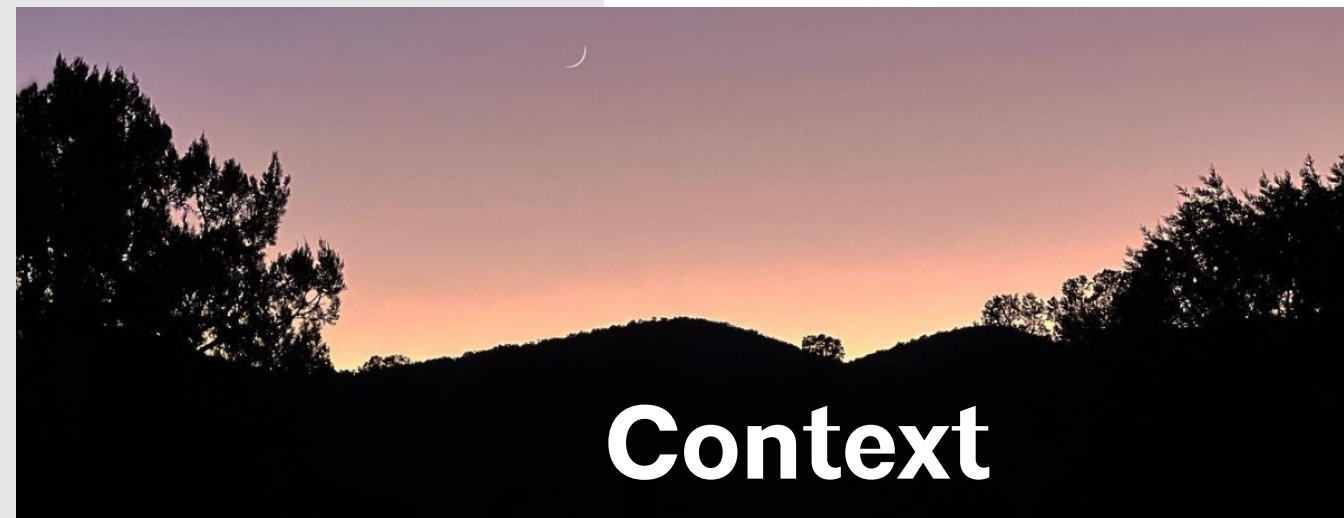
The ideas represented in the following report are those of the American Institute of Architects' design assistance team, based on our observations of the Grant County, NM community and its existing plans, the insights gleaned from the team's virtual public workshop and survey, and the ideas shared with us about the area and the aspirations for it in small workshops with a range of stakeholders. This input has informed our thoughts and this report represents our best professional recommendations in the public interest. We do not serve a client in this endeavor. The report, and the process that produced it, is a public service to the Grant County community.

The ideas captured here represent three intensive days of work (December 6-8, 2021) and the information available to us at the time of this writing. We do not expect this report to be followed as verbatim, prescriptive advice. This work represents a beginning – we hope a new beginning – for the area. It should be understood as a developmental tool, and we expect the community will expand on these ideas and amend them as you make it your own. This report serves as an opening mechanism to begin the necessary public work and we expect the ideas to evolve and change as you utilize it and as the Five Points initiative takes shape through the public processes to follow.

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# Introduction

Grant County, New Mexico has amazing stories to tell about its past culture, heritage, and the natural environment. But it also has amazing stories that are yet to be told. The county is in a transitional period, dealing with declining population, changes in employment opportunities, and recognizing the need to be more inclusive and equitable to all its residents. Under these auspices, the Southwest New Mexico ACT (swnmACT), an organization focused on building an inclusive creative economy in the region, developed a pilot project, the Five Points initiative, with the tagline, “Connecting Communities – Revitalizing Economies” to provide a spark for action across the county.

The immediate tangible focus of the Five Points is the restoration of a historic building in five communities – Silver City, Arenas Valley, Santa Clara, Bayard, and Hurley. Each of the buildings is highly visible in the community and have served important purposes over the years but most have been neglected for quite some time. The goal is to not only restore these buildings, demonstrating the sustainable practice of historic preservation, but also to develop educational, cultural, and community programming around each of them to demonstrate social and economic sustainability that works for the individual community and supports efforts to connect with the greater region.

The Five Points initiative will effectively serve as a central spine for spinoff activity and economic generation throughout the rest of the county and the region. Opportunities for outdoor recreation, including hiking, biking, river activities, and equestrian activities, will begin to be linked to each community and other regional assets. Cultural heritage destinations will become more prominent as they are linked up to various networks and other community sites.

As part of the Five Points initiative, swnmACT requested assistance from the American Institute of Architect’s Communities by Design program and asked the

AIA to convene a Design Assistance Team (DAT) in Grant County to work with the communities, gather information about each site, and help them visualize the project. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the team was unable to hold large public meetings to gain input from residents but did have an opportunity to meet with key stakeholders at each location and discuss the possibilities at those sites. A community survey was sent out to obtain additional input, and a virtual open house was held the first evening of the visit. Input from both the survey and the virtual open house is incorporated into the team’s strategies and recommendations. During the three-day visit, the AIA Team developed concepts for each of the Five Point sites as well as generated suggestions for satellite locations in or near each community. A larger regional connectivity network was also explored and concepts were developed on how to implement that network.

During the process the team paid particular attention to all aspects of environmental sustainability, but especially to social and economic sustainability, in part because of Grant County’s history that has disenfranchised many of its residents in the past. The overall goal is to help break the cycle of dependence on the extractive industry, poverty, and social division.

# Acknowledgements

Grant County, and especially the Hurley-Bayard-Santa Clara-Silver City-Gila corridor, offer unmatched assets, from its people, culture, history, human settlements and institutions, to its setting, environment, and natural resources.

The project area sits on Nde Benah, Traditional Territory of the Chiricahua and Warm Springs Apaches – past and present – through Yusen, the Creator. We honor with gratitude the commitment to protect and steward this Sacred Land by Nde (Apaches) and future generations. We recognize the Chiricahua Apache Tribe’s sovereignty as a self-governing nation.

Waves of Spanish, Mexican, Anglo/European migrants, including miners, farmers, and many others, have continued to build on the rich history and culture, creating countless cultural sites, both sacred and non-sacred places of the heart.

We also acknowledge that as we strive to work in harmony, past genocide, forced displacement, and racism leave scars that mere acknowledgement and apologies do not heal. This has created physical and institutional structural challenges, collectively known as institutional racism, which survive even as individual racism recedes and which still need to be addressed.

# Assumptions

## Lead With Equity

This strategic framework is designed to help build community. A critical part of any such effort is to lead

with equity, to ensure that the entire region benefits from new public and private investments and actions. The equity lens applies equally to the five historic points that Southwest New Mexico ACT asked AIA to examine and to the broader strategic framework.

For several decades, the employment and economic drivers of the region have been moving from mining, natural resource extraction, and military and a range of activities centered at Fort Bayard to even more outdoor recreation, health and healing, arts, dining, and higher education. This trend will only continue, especially as mining employment is almost certainly going to decline and the other economic sectors continue to grow. While this will generate more regional wealth and a stronger economy, there will continue to be on-going dislocations that hurt some residents.

Already these dislocations have shrunk the county population, similar to the trend in many rural areas of the nation. In Grant County, the loss of residents is



The billboard approaching Silver City reads “Gateway to the Wild and Scenic River,” which it is, but we hope this project also improves the connections to the communities to the southeast, many of which have lower median incomes and fewer resources.

especially significant for people who are entering the workforce through middle-age (the “missing cohorts”), in large part because of greatly reduced opportunities for young people without higher education or skills that match employment opportunities. Centering our work on equity requires education, workforce training, and job creation to stop the hemorrhage of young people and replace those jobs lost in mining and natural resource extraction. Fortunately, Grant County residents will continue to be connected to the land, as they have been for centuries, albeit in different ways.

High rates of poverty, especially among Native Americans and, to a lesser extent, youth and Hispanic residents create obvious inequities that need to be addressed. Often related to poverty and a lack of opportunities, Grant County has higher rates of suicide and premature deaths and teen and youth pregnancy than New Mexico and the United States as a whole.

In our survey and community engagement, we heard participants identify **Cultural Equity**, respecting and equally valuing all cultures, as a core value. Current and

historical cultural values, be it Chiricahua and Warm Springs Apache, Hispanic, and Anglo/European, or that shaped by professions (e.g., mining, ranching, arts, military, higher education) are all equally valued. As a practical value, highlighting cultural programming and sites of all cultures without cultural appropriation is a key part of this work. Given the history of racism and genocide, which is by no means unique to Grant County, a special effort must be made to honor neglected



*From the Infant Baby Jesus Shrine in Hurley, the Union Hall in Bayard, and the Fort Bayard National Cemetery to the Petroglyphs on Dragonfly trail and the Saint Vincent Church in Silver City there a dozens of sites that are extremely important to some residents and visitors and not at all to others, but all are equally worthy of our respect.*

cultures that have been damaged by past actions.

Related to Cultural Equity, we also heard the need for **Procedural Equity**, ensuring that all stakeholders have a seat at the table. This means, for example, engaging Apache Tribal officials on honoring Apache history, sites, and culture, and not trying to speak for them. Because the Apache are a sovereign nation, respecting that sovereignty is critical. Whether it is Indian nations, Hispanic, youth, minors, people with disabilities, or any other group, cultural equity means planning with and not for. Southwest New Mexico ACT, for example, worked with the Chiricahua Apache as they crafted their own acknowledgements for the Silver City Waterworks site.

Finally, community members stressed the need for **Distributional Equity**, a fair distribution of resources, especially in the area of affordable and attainable housing and employment and wealth generating activities. While the cost of housing is less in Grant County than much of the rest of the country, especially urban areas, the quality of some of the housing stock and the cost still makes quality housing unattainable

to many members of the community. Threats to mining jobs over the next couple of decades and increasing housing prices, especially in Silver City, threaten to worsen these conditions.

Related to distributional equity, even if not voiced in these terms, is **Structural Equity**. Past individual racism, even if dramatically reduced or eliminated, leaves behind structures that freeze inequities in place. The Mayor of Hurley, for example, noted that in the early days of Hurley as a company town, housing for Anglos/ Europeans was segregated from and superior to that provided to Hispanics. Because wealth for many people is concentrated in their homes, if they own their homes, this freezes the pattern of housing and the ability to pass wealth to our children. For this reason, addressing structural challenges to fair housing and employment are critical.

**Affordable and Attainable Housing**

Housing in Grant County, even in Silver City which is the most expensive market in the county, is significantly less expensive than average housing prices in the United States and elsewhere in New Mexico. Decent attainable housing, however, is still out of reach of many residents, especially to those who are unemployed, underemployed, or living on a fixed income. This directly effects the five historic points that Southwest New Mexico ACT is focusing on, because any investment should be examined as part of the broader equity and housing framework.

Many residents are housing burdened, meaning that they have housing but the cost of housing plus utilities consumes more than 30% of their income. Grant County has an additional challenge in that people are often transportation cost burdened, when transportation costs are more than 15% of their household income. With extremely limited transit, higher than average transportation costs (mostly because of high gas prices), and lower than average incomes, many residents are spending more than 45% of their income on housing



*We heard and saw an enormous amount of community pride, a strong desire for an equitable future, and a commitment to invest in the future for all residents.*



plus transportation and/or are living in housing that does not meet current housing codes.

Of course, the housing challenges vary significantly depending on where households live and work in the county.

Affordable housing is usually defined as those that are sold or rented to households making below 80% of the median area income and with restrictions to preserve the affordability. Attainable or workforce housing is not consistently defined but it is the ability of households to obtain housing.

In Hurley, Bayard, Santa Clara, and much of unincorporated Grant County housing prices and rents are still largely affordable to fully employed households, but housing is sometimes substandard and poorly insulated, resulting in high utility bills, lower quality of life, and, for homeowners, very limited or negligible asset appreciation. In Silver City, housing is still relatively affordable compared to the state and country, but housing prices and rents have appreciated significantly in recent years making it increasingly inaccessible to many. In every area of the county, residents with lower incomes may still find them priced out of the housing ownership or rental markets.



*We heard a commitment to Fair Housing, from public housing, to ending housing discrimination, to creating better and more affordable housing.*

Subsidized affordable housing exists in Grant County (e.g., Western Regional Housing Authority, Santa Clara Housing Authority, and Housing Authority of the Town of Bayard), but the supply of units is limited.

Addressing the housing needs requires a number of strategies to improve existing housing serving low and moderate income households. All of these efforts exist to some extent in Grant County, but all of them would benefit from scaling up to the extent that resources are available. In many cases, local governments, housing authorities, nonprofits, and for-profit developers can facilitate some of these efforts.

- Existing housing owned by or rent restricted (by affordable housing restrictions) to low and moderate income residents can often benefit from housing rehabilitation focused on correcting code deficiencies. There are no Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement communities in Grant County (communities receiving formula grants directly from the US Department of Housing and Development), but communities may apply for competitive grants through New Mexico's Small Cities program (utilizing Federal funds), with one federal and state grant priority being to improve housing in colonias. Local governments and nonprofits can help facilitate this effort. CDBG funds can only be used to provide low and moderate income (LMI) benefit, but housing for LMI qualifies even outside an LMI area. In a competitive grant environment, however, investments outside an LMI area might be less likely to be funded.
- Home weatherization of homes for low and moderate income households, often with a priority for older residents and residents with disabilities.
- Housing Authorities have various federal and state funding sources, although always far more limited than the need, to rehabilitate their public housing units and fund their housing voucher programs.

- Leasing rooftops for solar panels in return for discounted electricity or hot water.

One of the potentially new programs on the near horizon, with state enabling legislation pending, is to create local Community Choice Aggregations (CCA). In a CCA, a community can opt in to become the default electric provider, with the regulated investor owned utility continuing to serve to transmit and distribute electricity. The benefits of such a program, depending on the final authorizing legislation, is the potential for electric cost savings, an increase in the amount of green (low greenhouse gas emissions) electric power, and potentially the opportunity to support some energy conservation measures. Private companies are available to manage the program, minimizing any risk to communities. Although the legislation is pending, the process can be complicated enough that communities and their non-profit partners should begin studying the opportunities now.

The most important opportunity for additional affordable housing opportunities are to include a significant number of units in any redevelopment of Historic Fort Bayard. The development of new affordable housing should be linked to any private sector redevelopment project. While the largest source of federal money for housing is the mortgage and property tax income tax deduction, the largest source of federal money for affordable housing is the Low Income Historic Tax Credit (LIHTC) for affordable rental housing. The program almost always is only economical for larger projects (e.g., 25 or more units), but the Historic Fort Bayard could accommodate a large number of affordable units, both for community members, probably in new buildings away from the core campus, and for the campus workforce, probably on the core campus. Any significant reuse would create a large number of workers at all ends of the workforce, many of whom would prefer to live near their jobs.

Most likely affordable housing would be in new buildings on the periphery of the core campus. Although

redevelopment of existing buildings is usually more expensive than new construction, redevelopment of historic wood frame residential buildings at Historic Fort Bayard could potentially include some affordable community and workforce housing which benefit from a combination of LIHTC and federal historic preservation tax credits. Both tax credit programs are typically syndicated by non-profit or for-profit developers, syndicating the deal to bring in private partners who benefit from the tax credits. Communities and community groups can work to set the stage to partner with and encourage development partners.

In addition to the Historic Fort Bayard, there are opportunities for scattered site affordable housing in all the communities, especially on underutilized municipal or county property or properties that are delinquent in their taxes, hopefully if the Chino Mines Company is willing to donate the former Hurley tennis court for that purpose, and potentially any number of other sites. Non-profit partners can often take the lead in this area, partnering with communities, but there are private investment opportunities as well.

For communities with zoning and/or other land use regulations (e.g., Silver City and Bayard), the single most important steps that communities can take is to remove barriers to affordable and attainable housing. For market rate housing, this can be reducing lot size requirements, increasing allowable density, and allowing multifamily housing. For affordable housing, it can mean providing additional bonus density or reduced dimensional or other requirements for housing that has deed riders to keep it affordable. These measures are at no cost to a community but can increase the availability of affordable and attainable housing.

**Economic Sustainability**

Community economic development is focused not merely on creating wealth but rather on creating wealth, community development, and community building that benefits the entire community. Some specific

investments primarily serve visitors, such as hotels, but the best way to attract visitors and visitor spending to the region, and the best way to attract footloose businesses that have a choice of where they invest and locate, is to make the region so desirable to people who live here that outsiders want to come to visit, play, stay, and spend money, and maybe someday move their business and their family here.



Details, these from Hurley and Silver City, encourage exploration.

Providing workforce training and education to youth and emerging workers is a critical component of community economic development. Mining and natural resource extraction industries are almost certainly going to continue to decline over the next couple of decades. While employment in this area is not going to disappear, it is unlikely to provide steady and well paid employment for those entering the workforce now and over the



While large projects excite and can be game changers, little hidden discoveries enchant and sometimes provide a durable memory that keeps people exploring, and spending money.

coming years. These trends are part of the reason that emerging workers are already leaving Grant County and emerging workers are not attracted to move here. Providing training and the employment opportunities for those youth in hospitality, arts, outdoor recreation, higher education, and other related local growth industries is needed for regional prosperity.

The Southwest New Mexico ACT (swnmACT) Five Points initiative will advance the community placemaking and provide economic benefits. With one project in each of the four municipalities and one in the unincorporated area on the longest gap between municipalities (between Silver City and Santa Clara), the benefits are spread between the region. Whether known as the Mountain Spirits National Scenic Byway, the Gila Heritage Trail, or the swnm ACT Five Points, anything which ties the region together helps all communities.

Outdoor recreation, art, and art installations have become the backbone of much of the regional economy, often beloved by residents as well as visitors.



Part of the One Million Bones in remembrance of the Darfur genocide, outside of Silver City, is quirky, artistic, and speaks to the community's values, while adding to explorations.

All of Southwest New Mexico ACT's Five Points will provide broadly beneficial placemaking, help identify the sense of place of each community and area, jobs for residents, and ensure that money spent locally stays within the region. For example, money spent at local businesses for locally produced art, for meals, for camping fees is then used to hire staff and buy supplies, with most of that money spent in the community (high multipliers), in contrast to money spent at a chain retail store where a smaller percentage of the funds are spent on local staff and more of the money leaks out of the community (low multipliers).

All of the Five Points projects have the opportunity to include incubators, makerspace, and/or workforce training. All of these efforts can help build local placemaking and provide opportunities for meaningful employment in Grant County, countering the population and opportunity loss that has been evident for several decades.

Incubators, for example, are places where new businesses can be started with less overhead, easing the burdens to local business formation. Incubators often provide a physical space where a business can start, with the hope that it will outgrow its space, move out, and open up the space to the next business opportunities. Incubators often, with or without a physical space, provide the business support services that a small business might not be ready to provide in-house (e.g., shared use of a copier, shared bookkeeping, or even just a friendly guiding hand). Incubators can lower the cost of startups and provide a nurturing supportive space and or services. They also provide a much needed boost to the entrepreneur culture and support ecosystem in the Southwest New Mexico ACT Five Points region. Business start-ups, which are critical in all communities but especially those that have low cost and available real estate and business opportunities (Santa Clara to Hurley), need those incubators, entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurial support systems to build their opportunities. The Grant County Makerspace



and Business Incubator Assessment, Feasibility Study (Creative Startups, 2019) has already examined future opportunities in some detail.

Makerspaces provide a different kind of incubator and provide access to equipment to make things and support services that might not otherwise be available or economically feasible. Given the high quality and broad maker equipment in The Future Forge Makerspace in Silver City, any other incubators should be identifying a niche market not covered by that space. Future Forge is a wonderful model, for both hobbies and some business use, with a 3D printer, CNC router, and other equipment

Makerspaces can be non-profit, such as The Future Forge Makerspace, or for-profit, large or small, and provide any kind of shared equipment and services. Depending on local needs, other niches may exist. For example, a small for-profit business (now closed) provided access to sewing machines in Northampton, MA.



*Vejle, Denmark’s Spinderihallerne, a small former mill, became a successful business incubator. The low land rent small towns can offer allow incubators and new business models to thrive.*

The Southwest New Mexico ACT Five Points importance, however, goes far beyond all of their economic benefits, placemaking, incubator and entrepreneurial support roles. The redevelopment of those key five properties can be part of the catalyst for broader community economic development and placemaking.

No action is more important to entire region than the redevelopment of Historic Fort Bayard and improved connections from the Fort to the adjacent Fort Bayard National Cemetery and Fort Bayard Medical Center/ State Veterans’ Home.

The Historic Fort Bayard redevelopment will attract external capital and spending to the region, making the economic pie bigger by creating a new market niche. In attracting new customers and extending visitor stays, the redevelopment will have little direct competition with existing market niches and will create new market opportunities in the four other municipalities. The Fort is the geographic center of the Southwest New Mexico ACT Five Point region and is the nexus, or connection, between the mining communities to the south and the outdoor recreation, mountains, and the Gila River/Gila National Forest to the north. This redevelopment will strengthen the entire Southwest New Mexico ACT Five Point region, complementing and strengthening the already strong economy of Silver City and attracting more arts, outdoor recreation, and healing to Santa Clara, Bayard, Hurley, and beyond.

The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) on US Route 180 north of Hurley is 8,000 vehicles per day (2020), and has been trending downward in recent years. Even at its peak a decade ago, this is a low enough to avoid attracting a lot of national chains (potential “category killers”) but high enough, especially given the relatively low land rents, to encourage local businesses. In order for these businesses to develop and thrive, however, they need a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem and wayfinding and placemaking to draw people off the highway.



*Historic Fort Bayard and the adjacent Fort Bayard National Cemetery provide a powerful beauty that attracts those who had no relationship to the generations of families and children who lived and played nor to those who are buried there. Those visitors might want to linger, and support the economy.*

Given the employment, underemployment, and low and moderate household incomes, the region is well suited to attract federal Economic Development Administration, American Rescue Plan Act, Federal Highway/NMDOT funding to bring in grants to support these approaches.

Even with higher counts a few years ago, and a significantly higher summer peak, the relatively limited traffic volume should negate the need to widen two lane sections of US Route 180 to four lanes, except for occasional passing lane sections. The wider road, besides being an unnecessary expense, would detract from the visitor experience and make it harder to connect to their surroundings and even less likely for visitors to stop and explore the communities along the road.

NMDOT has begun to embrace the concept of community context design. If the region could build a consensus on the lack of need for widening US Route 180, NMDOT could be encouraged not to widen the entire highway and instead spend the funds they might otherwise use for road widening for better connections to the five municipalities and for business loops through the municipalities that do not already have them.

Exciting community context design projects include, for example, an additional bridge into Santa Clara to create a business loop and new off road shared use paths that connect the four municipalities. While these are expensive projects, especially a new bridge, the cost would be significantly less than widening all of the two lane sections of US Route 180.

Success will always require big and little actions. Even as this strategic framework focuses on the Southwest New Mexico ACT Five Points, adjacent town redevelopment, and Historic Fort Bayard, there is other low hanging fruit available for quick and easy action. For example, Visitors, unlike locals, often learn of opportunities for exploration and spending money not only from the readily available literature available in visitors centers, but from on-line sources, including Trip Advisor and



Yelp. Strengthening those opportunities can be no cost. For example, this design team ate at a restaurant in Hurley. One review on each site increased the number of reviews on Yelp by 12.5% and on Trip Advisor by 5%. A zero investment to help put a site that Trip Advisor rates as “off the beaten path.” What seems like a small gesture can be very important to a small business, and even a 5% increase in customers can be the difference between profit and loss.

### Historic Preservation as an Economic Tool

Because the Five Points Initiative focuses first on five historic buildings, it’s important to understand what role historic preservation can play in the redevelopment or adaptive reuse of each of these and what role it can play in each community. As a general rule of sustainability, it’s often said that “the greenest building is the one that’s already built,” as the resources that went into the construction of the building have already been expended and are part of the “embodied” energy of the structure. Replacement of an existing building requires much more energy to demolish the existing, manufacture building components, and deliver them to the site. Traditional restoration of historic buildings is also more friendly for the environment and for local employment, as the restoration work is much more labor-intensive and uses fewer new materials. Historic buildings can also incorporate elements of modern sustainability practices such as solar panels, water collection, a reduced need for electric lighting due to daylighting from more and larger windows, and a reduced need for HVAC equipment due to operable windows and the ability to have cross-breezes throughout a structure.

There are not a lot of regulations or restrictions on what can be done with historic buildings, and not a lot of funding opportunities. But in some cases when a community has invested in training and a commitment to historic preservation, they will have greater access to resources available for owners of historic properties. Two of the communities impacted by the Five Points

Initiative have taken those steps to become CLG (Certified Local Government) communities – Silver City and Santa Clara. In fact, they are two of only nine CLGs in the state. This provides them with technical assistance from the state historic preservation office (SHPO), and occasional grant opportunities. It also offers an opportunity to provide some level of protection for historic resources.

For individual buildings, there are additional opportunities for historic preservation incentives. If a building is significant enough to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places, is used for a commercial purpose, and undergoes a substantial rehabilitation, the owner/developer may be able to use the federal historic tax credit program to take a 20% tax credit on the amount of the rehabilitation. This program is not available for residential properties unless it generates income (apartment buildings, etc.). There is also a state incentive program that is a tax credit for state income tax of the owner/developer. Learn more about both incentives at <http://www.nmhistoricpreservation.org/programs/tax-credits.html>.

Finally, there are also programs available through the National Park Service to survey and inventory historic sites and other resources that are important in the cultural heritage of diverse and underrepresented communities. It’s possible these programs could be utilized for one or more of the Five Points sites, especially the Union Hall, or for auxiliary sites in each community. For more information about this program visit <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/underrepresented-community-grants.htm>.

Fort Bayard is an exceptional historic property, in that it is a National Historic Landmark. There are very few historic resources that rise to that level of significance. It also means that there are certain restrictions protecting the existing buildings and other features on the property. For example, it’s likely that no building can be constructed on what was historically the parade

grounds. Buildings can be rehabilitated, but they must be done in such a way that maintains their historic character, and any new buildings that are constructed on site will need to be compatible in design and scale with the existing buildings. The state historic preservation office, and to some extent the Village of Santa Clara will administer review of any proposed changes.

## What we heard:

Given the continued presence of COVID-19, in person and indoor interactions were kept to a minimum; therefore, the DAT team was unable to host a typical in-person community engagement event. Instead, a survey was created and shared with the communities to learn more about Grant County, its assets, and the community's aspirations for the future. We heard from a variety of residents and stakeholders of all ages from all around the county. The responses, along with smaller stakeholder meetings, gave the DAT team an initial understanding of the priorities of the people of Grant County and how to help them work towards their aspirations. A summary of responses can be found below.

## What makes the communities of Grant County more alike than different? What are your shared assets?

While the towns in Grant County have their own identities, they are tied together by many similarities. Most commonly, residents cited their shared history: Grant County has a unique history that blends Mexican heritage, Indigenous traditions, and the Wild West. There's also a shared rural economic development that stems from the county's mining and ranching history. Residents also connect over their shared love of the outdoors and their desire to protect and preserve the historic wilderness that surrounds them.

## What's the best thing about your community in Grant County?

Grant County has many assets that make it a great place to live! Residents love the influence of the different histories of the area as well as the diversity of people. One of the most common responses to the best thing in Grant County mentioned the county's outdoor recreation. Overwhelmingly, respondents appreciate the proximity to the Gila National Forest and all the other recreational activities available: hiking, horseback riding. Similarly, the mild climate and beautiful scenery—including the mountains and the dark skies—are highly valued. The unique art scene with its art youth murals throughout the county is beloved by Grant County. Survey respondents emphasized that while they appreciate and welcome visitors, they enjoy that the area isn't overwhelmed by tourists.

## Ideally, what would your community be like in 10 years?

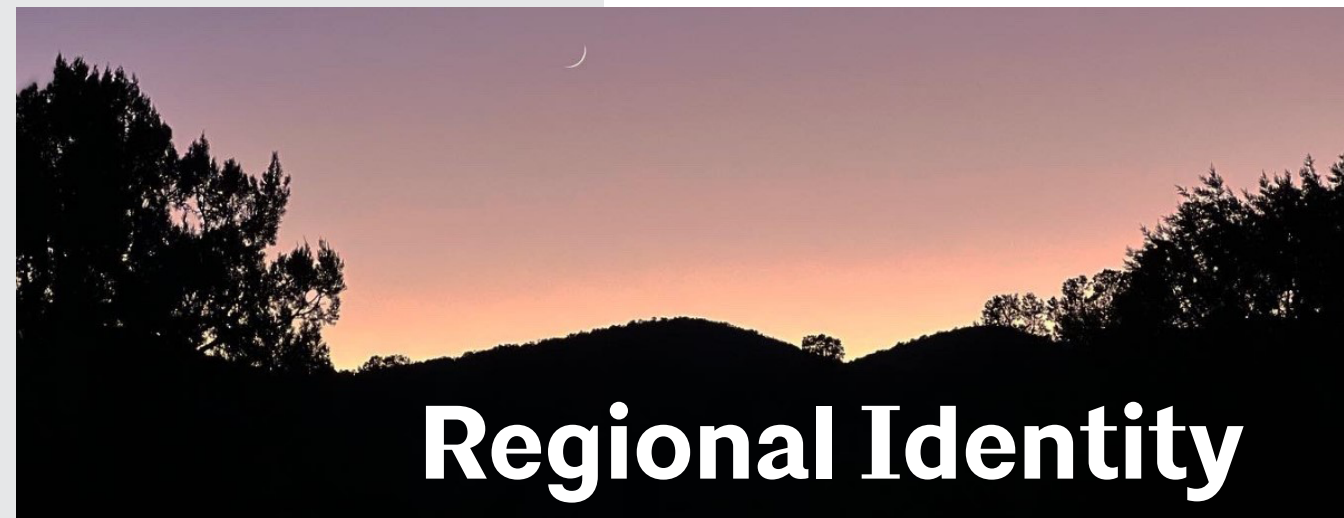
When looking to the future, residents want to build on the many assets they have without losing the essence of each community. On an economic level, survey respondents emphasized a future Grant County where every town has a thriving downtown that support artists and the outdoor recreation economy. There would be plenty of affordable housing and good jobs that encourage younger people to stay in the county after graduating. Physically, there would be multimodal pathways that connect the different attractions and destinations in the region. The trails and bike systems would be first rate. As a whole, Grant County would serve both locals and visitors.

## The Five Point Initiative hopes to turn five historical buildings across Silver City into drivers for community and economic development. What uses would be most beneficial for the residents of each of these communities and Grant County?

When it comes to the Five Points and what the community envisioned for those buildings, there were a variety of ideas. Many recommendations revolved around the food industry: everything from breweries and beer gardens to restaurants and coffee shops. Some also recommended larger scale food venues such as mercados, indoor farmers markets and food halls. Another trend in recommendations was around housing and lodging. Some recommended hotels and lodging to support the many events that happen in the county, while others pitched ideas for increasing affordable housing units. Residents also saw value in venues for artistic exploration, such as maker spaces, art museums, or a live theater venue. Lastly, survey respondents suggested turning the historical buildings into community gathering spaces or tourist destinations. Respondents had similar ideas for Fort Bayard's historical buildings, in addition to ideas of the fort becoming a theme park or music venue.

## Main survey take-aways

Between the immense history and diversity of the county and the recreational activities available all around, there's a lot to love about Grant County! Residents love their county and want to continue to build on their successes to date. As each town moves forward with projects, it is critical that public participation and engagement remain high so the needs of the residents are addressed and the essence of each town remains intact.



# Regional Identity

# Developing a Regional Identity

While the Five Points initiative can truly serve as a primary impetus for positive growth in Grant County, we must also look at the role the county plays in the broader region. Located at an important nexus in the American Southwest, Grant County is within a few hours drive from other significant and well-known regions, including White Sands National Park, the ecologically sensitive Sonoran Desert, and the pueblos of northern and northwestern New Mexico.

One opportunity is for Grant County to become the center of a larger cultural, ecological, and sustainable region, what we’re calling the Gila Heritage Region. This provides an avenue to connect to all the other resources within the county and in adjacent counties, especially those associated with the Gila Wilderness Area, the world’s first wilderness area, celebrating it’s centennial in 2024; Gila National Forest; the strong cultural and industrial heritage of the mining districts; and the earliest cultural heritage of the Mogollon, Mimbres, and Apache peoples.

We encourage the development of consistent signage, wayfinding, sustainable amenities, art, trails, and vegetation as well as a broader marketing strategy for the region. These will ultimately encourage more community and economic development, and the opportunity to share experiences across cultures and creative experiences.

# Regional Link with Individual Personality

- The region is the basecamp for the Gila District.
- Each town has its own identity, but all have a common language, branding and wayfinding for the region.
- All efforts embed education and workforce

training based on sustainability, environmental conservation, and the outdoors.

- Recreation, art, and hospitality as economic opportunities as the mining industry fluctuates.
- Multi-generational learning at all incubation and training centers.
- Incorporate outfitters at every stop/town to build to Gila National Forest experience.
- Feature art, culture, and sustainnble pracitces at every opportunity.

## 1 Silver City – Sustainable environmental education training

- Jumping off point for CDT and Gila National Forest from west
- University town with artist guild, shops, master gardeners

## 2 Arenas Valley Whiskey Creek Zocalo – Hospitality training and music incubation

- Art/food hub with temporary and permanent housing

## 3 Santa Clara – Traditional architecture and construction techniques training

- Traditional architecture infill
- Health and wellness focus (tinctures, health food, market, nursery)

## 4 Bayard – Educational and civil rights training

- Union building with rich history
- Depot as gathering space and outfitter

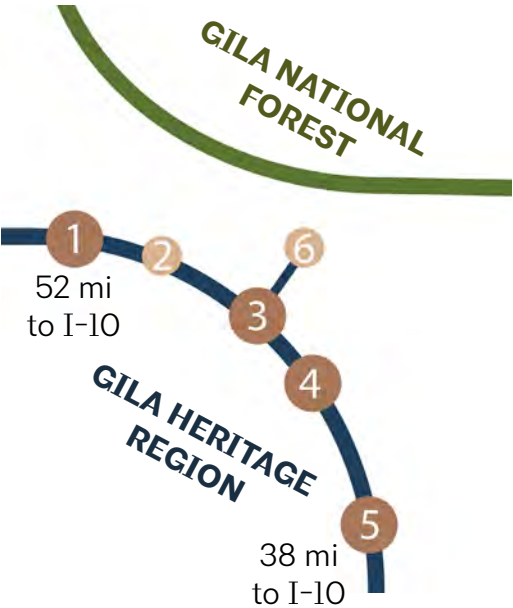
- High school and middle school provides opportunity for multi-generational learning

## 5 Hurley – Metal works, sculpture, and jewelry making

- Small scale downtown with gateway to the Gila region from south
- Depot as a gathering space and outfitter

## 6 Fort Bayard – Outdoor health and wellness education training

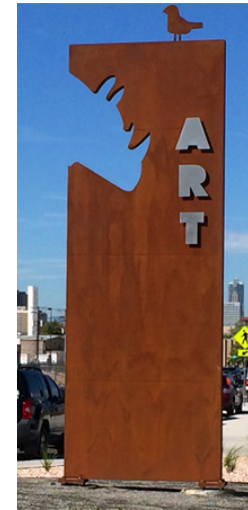
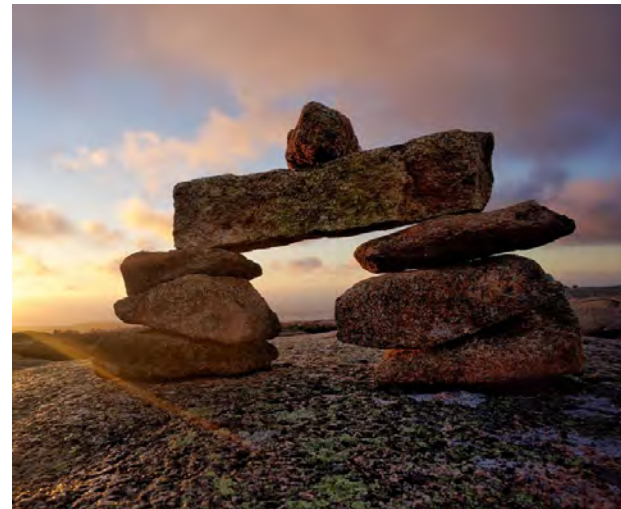
- Historic and pictuesque site as the base of the Gila National Forest
- Plenty of space for development
- VA hospital and Forest Service bring people to site (+/-500 people)





## Regional Marketing & Wayfinding as a Linking Element

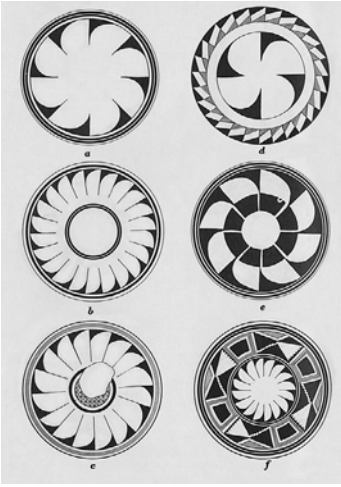
The communities of Hurley, Bayard, Santa Clara, Arenas Valley, and Silver City are all unique, with their own personality and features. However, as previously noted, there is a missed opportunity to link these communities together in order to bring residents together and market them to visitors as a whole. A cohesive marketing identity and wayfinding that reinforces that identity across the Gila Heritage Region would go a long way to make residents of the separate towns feel a part of something larger, and tell visitors what is special about this region. An example of a successful marketing identity and wayfinding package can be found here: <https://www.carbo-la.com/atchafalaya-water-heritage-trail-1>. Below are some examples of how that could be implemented in the Gila Heritage Region.





Art as a Linking Element

The Gila Heritage Region has a rich history of art, from traditional pottery to tile and metalworks. Art should be intentionally featured in all five points and Fort Bayard, as well as in public rights-of-ways and public parks, as a linking element that showcases the region’s personality.

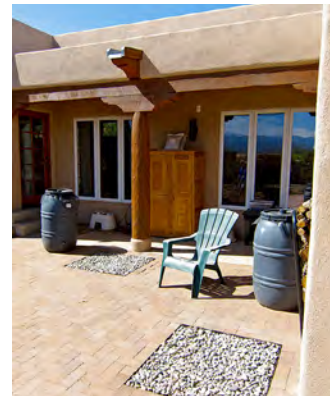




## Environmental Sustainability as a Linking Element

Environmental sustainability is a part of the culture of the Gila Heritage Region. The following sustainable practices should be incorporated throughout the region whenever possible to reduce environmental vulnerability and to visually showcase the region's commitment to resilience. These sustainable practices have been featured in the five points to illustrate how they can become linking elements throughout the region.

- Active and passive solar energy
- Wind energy (windmills)
- Water catchment and reuse
- Green building techniques
- Drought tolerant, native plants
- Open space preservation and access





# Streets, Parking, and Trails as a Linking Element

The streets throughout the Gila Heritage Region are typically wider than needed. This results in reduced infiltration, increased heat (heat island effect), and increased driving speeds. There is also a lack of formalized parking in lots or on the street. As a result, people block the fronts of buildings and park in public areas that could otherwise be used for civic gathering space.

A few adjustments to the streets and parking throughout the region would help reduce seasonal flooding, increase infiltration, beautify the towns, and create civic space to gather. Highway 180 through Silver Springs is a good example of native median plantings. The multi-use path along Highway 180 in Santa Clara is a good example of a separate multi-use path, though more separation from the road would be ideal. Some additional examples are below.



Slow, capture and infiltrate water.



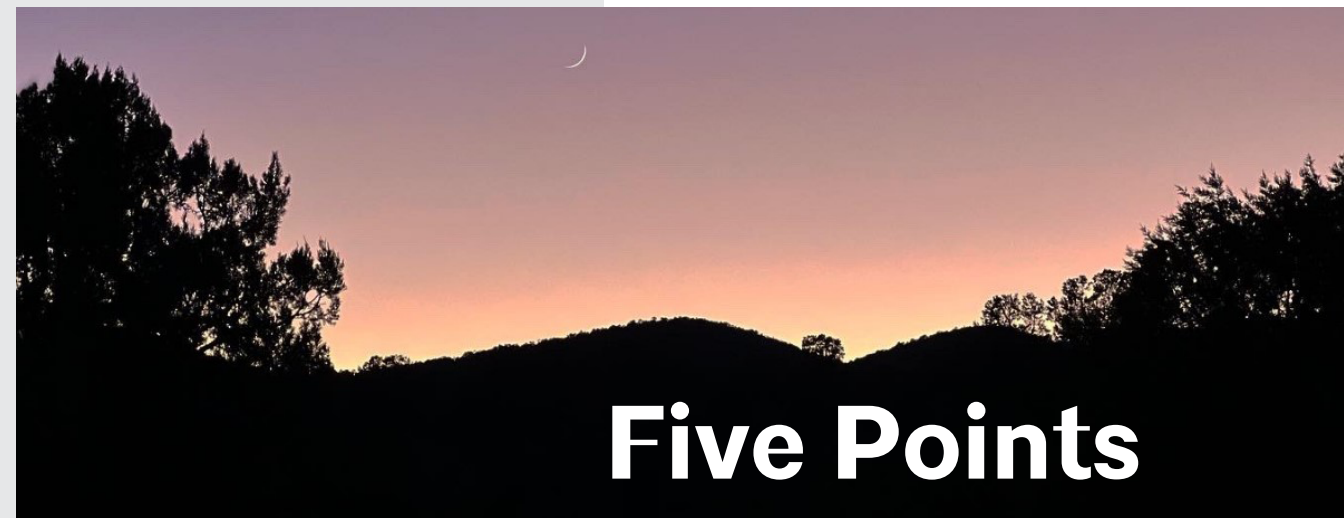
Add native trees and meadow plants for habitat, cooling and beautification.



Formalize on-street parking to free up civic space and slow cars.



Add bike lanes, sidewalks, and off-road multiuse trails with extra space on roads to link to larger trail system and major destinations.



**Five Points**



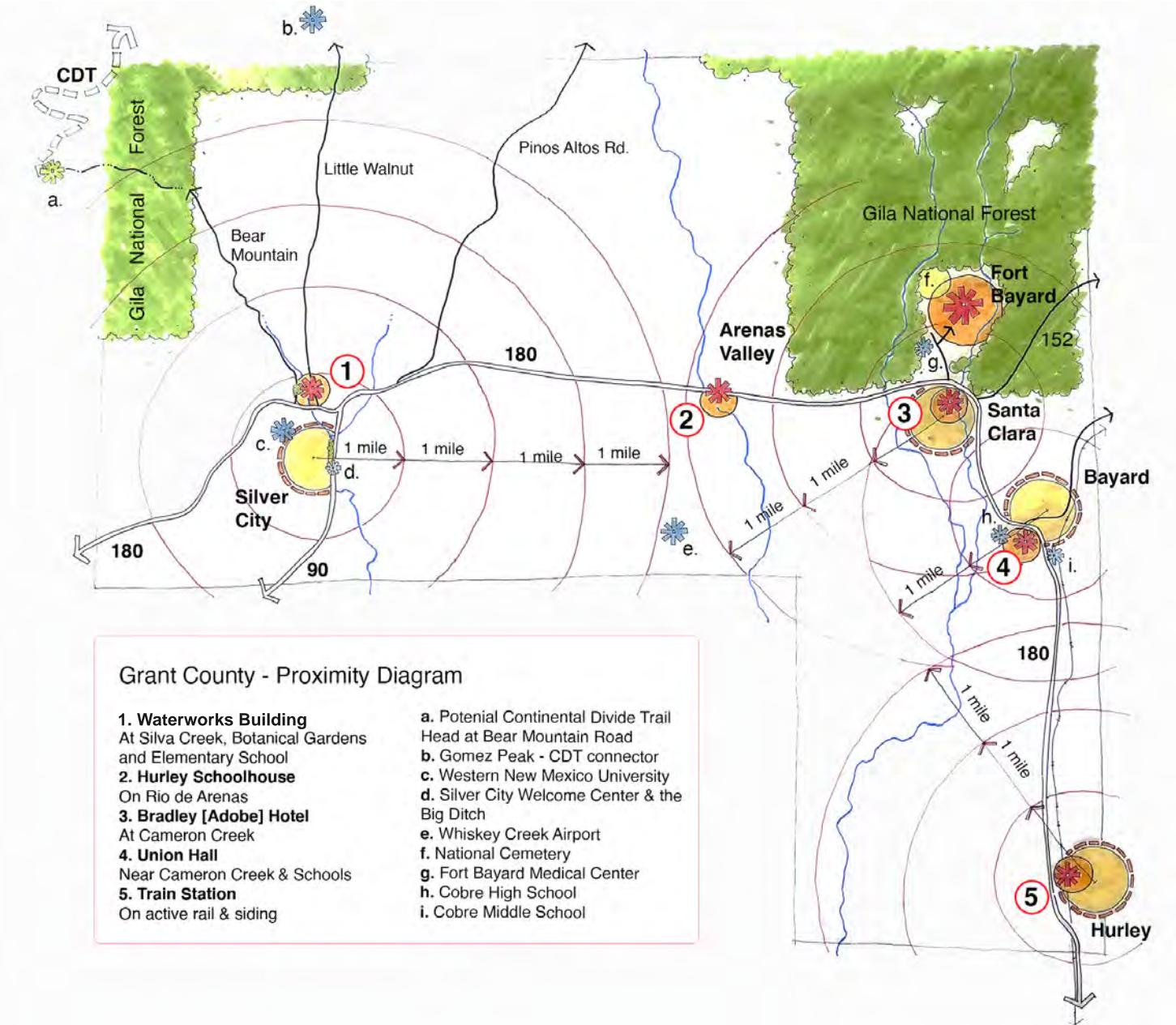


Diagram showing locations and relative proximity of Five Points sites and other points of interest.



## Silver City Waterworks – Gateway to the Continental Divide Trail

The Waterworks Building located on Little Walnut Road in Silver City was built in 1887 and is owned by the Town of Silver City. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and the property was previously a brownfield site, but the contamination has been remediated using an EPA grant. It serves as the northwesternmost point of the five and the site has been identified as a key one for sustainability education and practices.

The Waterworks redevelopment has been planned to tie the Continental Divide Trail to Silver City to serve day and long distance hikers and expand their economic

impact on Silver City. The effort is already underway and is a great addition to the Five Points initiative.

There are additional opportunities, potentially in partnership with the Aldo Leopold Charter School and the Botanical Gardens, to restore indigenous plants, add sustainability and natural systems education for hikers and the public. A first step is to remove the very unattractive metal fence, tie to the San Vicente Greenway and formalize trail connections. Activating the site is a better security system than the metal fence can ever be. Creating (possibly free or in-kind) housing on the upper level of the Waterworks building for an intern or caretaker could create an additional level of oversight and security for the site as well.

Building adventure and discovery to the deep vault in the building could make the building an exciting place to visit and add it to Silver City's must visit list.



*The Silver City Waterworks Building.*



*Copenhagen's Cisternerne, the 1958 water cistern that opened as an artistic space in 2015, is a hidden surprise that drew long lines of visitors. The Waterworks vault is no less magical.*



*The Waterworks staircase to its deep vault provides a hidden surprise.*

## Incubation & Training

Sustainable environmental education, propagation of indigenous plants, hospitality.









## Whiskey Creek Zocalo – Connecting Silver City to Santa Clara

The Hurley Schoolhouse located in the Arenas Valley is now known as Whiskey Creek Zocalo. Originally used in the Town of Hurley it was moved to Arenas Valley, probably in the late 1940s or early 50s and added on to at a later date. It is privately owned and is planned to be a restaurant, cultural and entertainment venue as well as a nursery for native plants.

The ongoing development of this historic building into an arts, food, and performance space, with a focus on treating and training employees is already underway and is an exemplary project. The focus on creating a de-facto community center is an important contribution to the Five Points initiative and creates a destination and a place on the biggest gap in destinations between Hurley and Silver City. This site can also be positioned as the gateway to the nearby Dragonfly Petroglyphs.

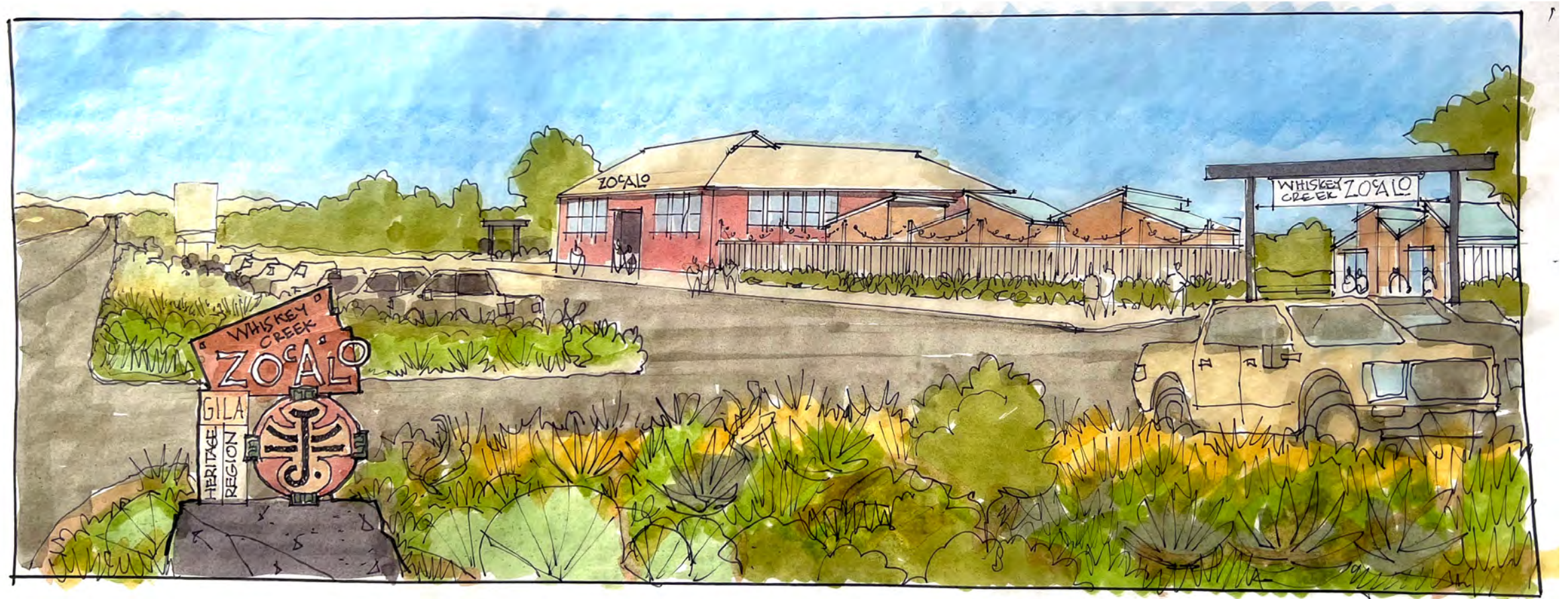
Outside of the building, there are a few opportunities. Landscaping to restore indigenous plants, moving parking away from the front of the building, and

improving wayfinding will all improve the curb appeal and sustainability of the site.

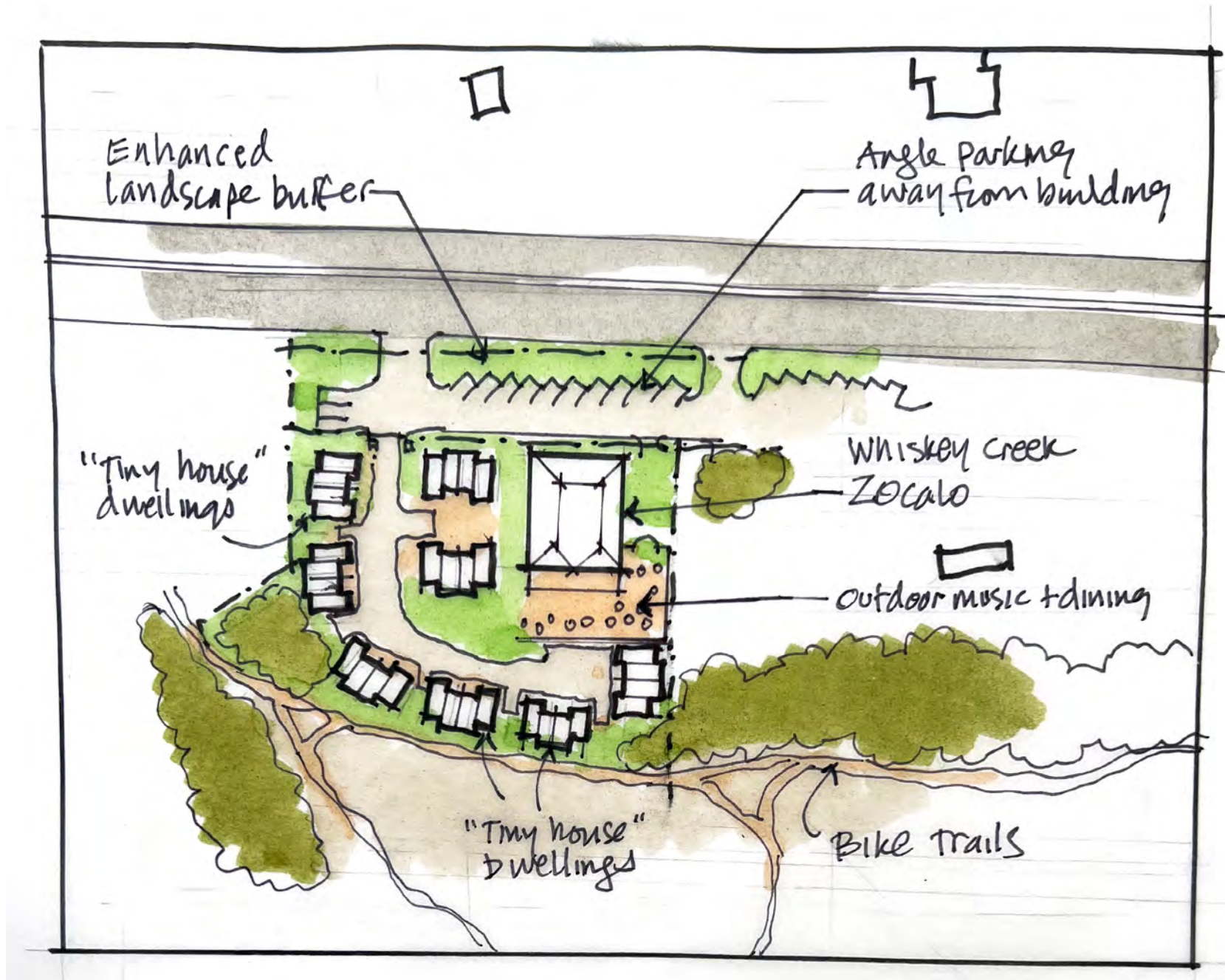
There is also a potential to create an affordable or workforce housing of tiny homes behind the building, which could help activate the site into a tiny village with a sense of community even after hours and provide much needed workforce housing.

### Incubation and Training:

Hospitality and music.









## Santa Clara and the Bradley Hotel – Gateway to Historic Fort Bayard

The Bradley Hotel, located on Ft. Bayard Road in Santa Clara, is one of the last remaining two-story adobe structures in the village. Much of the building seems to be in sound condition, but the walls are deteriorating and need to be repaired. With repair, the building might be eligible for the state historic register. The building and adjacent vacant lots are privately owned, and the owner is looking for a new steward for the building and adjacent lots that would bring some economic revitalization to the community.

The Santa Clara–Fort Bayard axis is the center of the region and critical to regional success. The former Bradley Hotel, the historic hotel in the heart of Santa Clara, provides an opportunity to house a café or other food and drink establishment. The hotel redevelopment can activate downtown Santa Clara by its gravitas and by pulling in visitors, especially those visiting Historic Fort Bayard, the Fort Bayard National Cemetery, the Fort Bayard Medical Center, and the future US Forest Service office. It would also serve downtown Santa Clara, both with food and jobs. Given the expertise that the Aldo Leopold Charter School has in building arts and adobe, they would be a great partner to work on the exterior façade of the former hotel, and of future buildings being renovated in Santa Clara. This restoration work could be in conjunction with an adobe apprenticeship, a skill in demand in New Mexico.

Potential new buildings, designed to be compatible with the historic hotel, could sell produce (“Fresh”) and herbs (“Tincture”) or any other uses that help build a critical mass downtown and draw in customers and visitors.

At the same time, expanding the Santa Clara Mercado to build on the joy that farmers markets bring, with more value added products, more shade, and other

improvements, can benefit the local residents and make it more attractive to visitors. The Mercado should also become a gateway for people to explore Cameron Creek, with the potential opportunity to open a walking trail in the dry wash, crossing under US Route 180, and extending up to Fort Bayard, a simple 15 minute walk that would strengthen that connection, with a second access point at the Santa Clara children’s playground.

Santa Clara lost much of its business when US Route 180 bypassed the town. A new bridge on Oak Street across Cameron Creek can allow the creation of a business loop through downtown. At the same time, new wayfinding signs, using the regional family of wayfinding signs discussed earlier in this report, should be installed at the three Santa Clara US Route 180 entrances at Oak Way/Oak Street, Maple Street/Route 152, and Fort Bayard Road.

The visitor center functions of the Fort Bayard Visitor Center should be moved from US Route 180 into historic Fort Bayard, drawing people into the fort. At the same time, the Bataan Memorial Recreational Park, only a ten minute walk from downtown Santa Clara, needs to be better connected to downtown, with sidewalks needed on Fort Bayard Road.

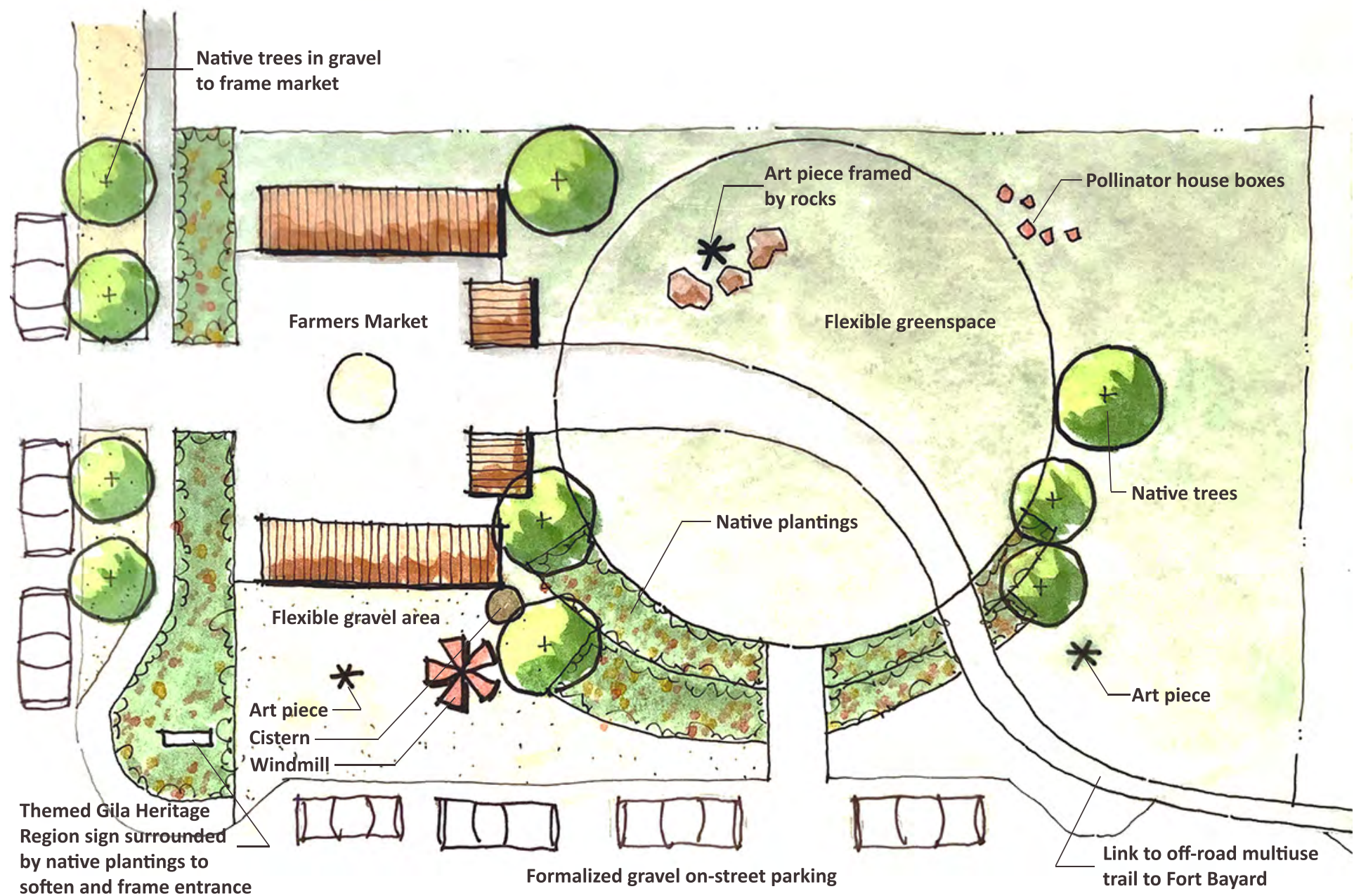
### Incubation and Training:

Traditional architecture and construction techniques.



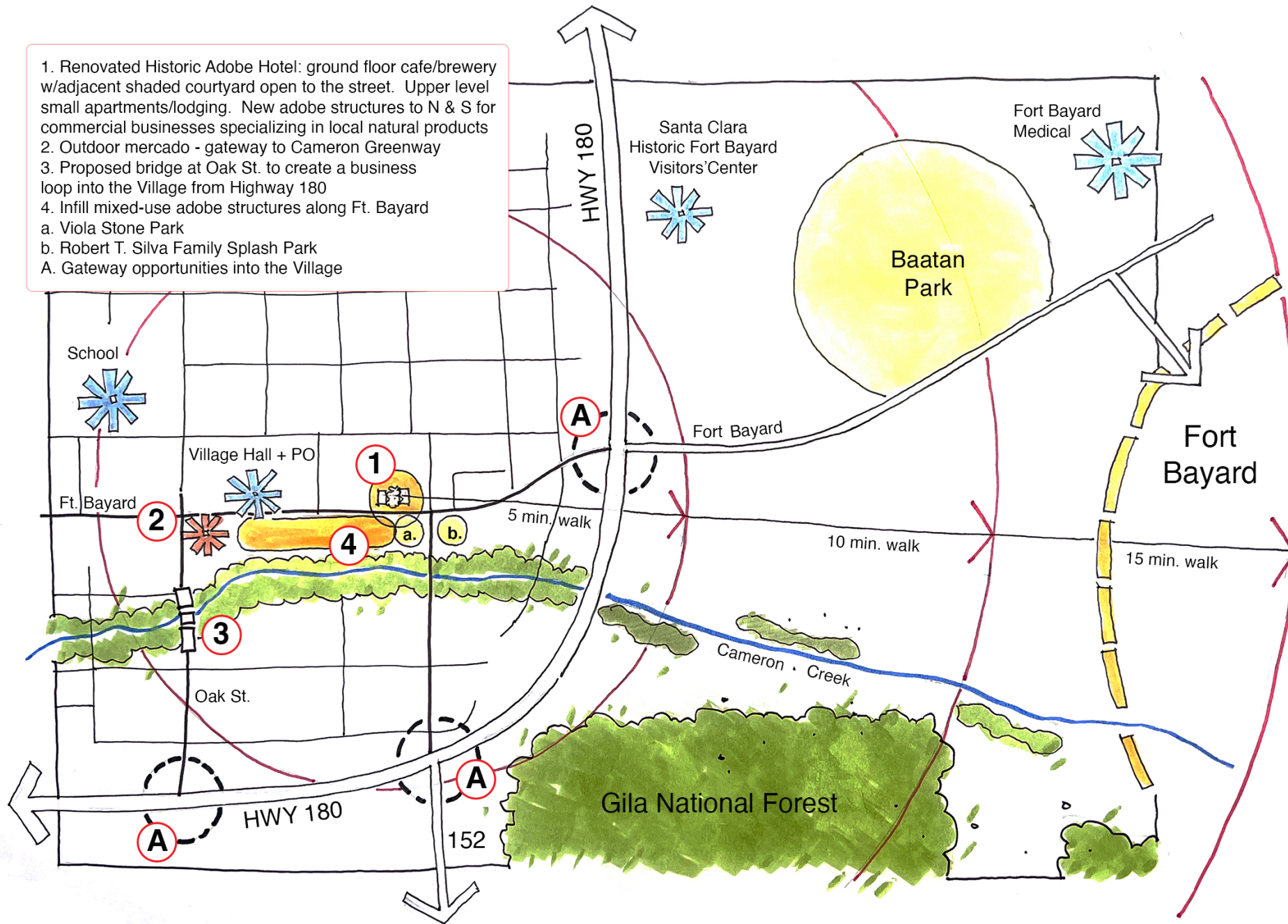
*Improve the Mercado and connect it to Cameron Creek.*





Expanded Santa Clara Mercado, with site improvements and connections to Cameron Creek and Fort Bayard.

1. Renovated Historic Adobe Hotel: ground floor cafe/brewery w/adjacent shaded courtyard open to the street. Upper level small apartments/lodging. New adobe structures to N & S for commercial businesses specializing in local natural products
2. Outdoor mercado - gateway to Cameron Greenway
3. Proposed bridge at Oak St. to create a business loop into the Village from Highway 180
4. Infill mixed-use adobe structures along Ft. Bayard
  - a. Viola Stone Park
  - b. Robert T. Silva Family Splash Park
- A. Gateway opportunities into the Village







*New buildings, designed to be compatible with the historic hotel sell produce ("Fresh") and herbs ("Tincture") that help build a critical mass downtown and draw in customers and visitors.*



## Bayard and Union Hall – Education and Civil Rights Hub

The Union Hall on Tom Foy Boulevard in Bayard is the former headquarters of the Local 890 Chapter of International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers. Recently acquired by the City of Bayard, the building has tremendous historical and cultural significance for its association with the union and the Empire Zinc Mine strike from 1950–52. It is very likely that the building would be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and may well be eligible as a National Historic Landmark. The city will likely use the building as a community center and event venue.

The Union Hall provides an opportunity to tell a union and civil rights story. It is a perfect addition to the Five Points initiative—the historical anchor.

Although the building is modest, its importance comes from the story it has to tell. There may be opportunities to partner with Western New Mexico University and the High School to use the building as an education center for community education, ranging from civil rights to history and social studies, multigenerational classes, and an awareness of the region's unique story.

Wayfinding, using the consistent family of wayfinding signs, can invite visitors to the region to hear the story. Both the building and the site need some tender loving care to stabilize the building and make the building and the site more attractive.

### Incubation and Training:

Lifelong, multigenerational learning and civil rights education (civil rights, gardening, cooking, bike repair, pottery, weaving, leatherworking, etc),



*Formalize parking, moving it away from the building, and construct a sidewalk along the mural so it can be viewed and for photo opportunities.*



# Hurley and the Train Depot – Gateway to the Gila region

The historic train station in Hurley is the final link in the chain. Originally built by the AT&SF Railroad in the early 20th century, the building has been used by Southwestern Railroad for many years but is now in the process of being transferred to the Town of Hurley. Plans are to convert it to a visitor’s center, coffeehouse and food/gift shop.

As the gateway to the region, the first thing that should great visitors and residents on Hurley from the south is memorable gateway signage, at the Diaz/Carrasco intersection, that celebrates the town and messages that you have arrived. The image on page 28 builds off the Dragonfly petroglyphs symbols, but the region should develop a coordinated family of wayfinding signage, including gateway elements, to be used consistently. Wayfinding helps create a sense of place and it needs to be far more than directional and directory signs.

As a visitor enters Hurley, the old train depot should become the new node as the true gateway to Hurley. The train depot should be a small, compact visitor center to the entire region, not just Hurley, with a coffee shop to encourage exploration. Visitor information should be curated to introduce visitors to the best the region has



to offer and provide specialized information, not simply to carry every brochure from outside the region. Inside the train depot, the historic walls and ceiling should be preserved as an authentic memory of place, and not covered. Likewise, the active railroad and related sidings which often store rolling stock adds to that authentic sense of place. The area immediately north of the train depot should host two sheds to support outfitters (bicycles, canoes, and kayaks) and to build/incubate outfitter opportunities to immediately introduce visitors to outdoor recreation.

Across the street from the depot, in what is currently an unneeded gravel parking lot, would be a great place for a youth hostel, with a pub or similar attraction, to bring younger visitors into the region. Adjacent to that, the Hurley directory sign should be updated with new attractions and emphasis, using the same family of wayfinding signage suggested above.

Those attractions include the Infant Jesus shrine and gift shop, the museum and Old Hurley Store and train



Preserve the rich history and texture of the existing train depot walls and ceiling.

museum. Opening times should be coordinated to serve visitors. The abandoned industrial buildings west of Town Hall would be an ideal studio and sales floor for large scale metal sculptures, or similar arts fabrication that would both introduce visitors to regional art and provide a low land rent space that such large fabrication efforts require. Ideally, this would be an artist incubator space to launch the next generation of large format artists.

Cortez Avenue, which connects the train depot with the attractions above, Town Hall, and downtown, was designed for heavy truck traffic that no longer exists. Parking in downtown on the north side of the road should be moved off the gravel and onto the road, which can accommodate that parking and still be wide enough. This would allow businesses to activate that previous gravel area for greenspace, outdoor commercial uses, or other activities that draw in passersby in a way a gravel parking lot cannot.

Vistas down a street that terminate at an interesting



The arroyo provides a great focal point and a connection from Town Hall towards the Chino Club.

feature (terminated vistas) are extremely attractive features and draw people to explore and walk a little further. There are three important terminated vista opportunities in Hurley.

First, 1st Street, running from Town Hall at Cortez Ave., has an arroyo in the center of the road which provides visual interest, especially for visitors who are not from the desert southwest, and connect Town Hall to the Chino Club. This wonderful feature could be cleaned up a bit and made more of a focal point to encourage exploration, with the view to the north terminating at Town Hall and providing a distant desert view to the south.

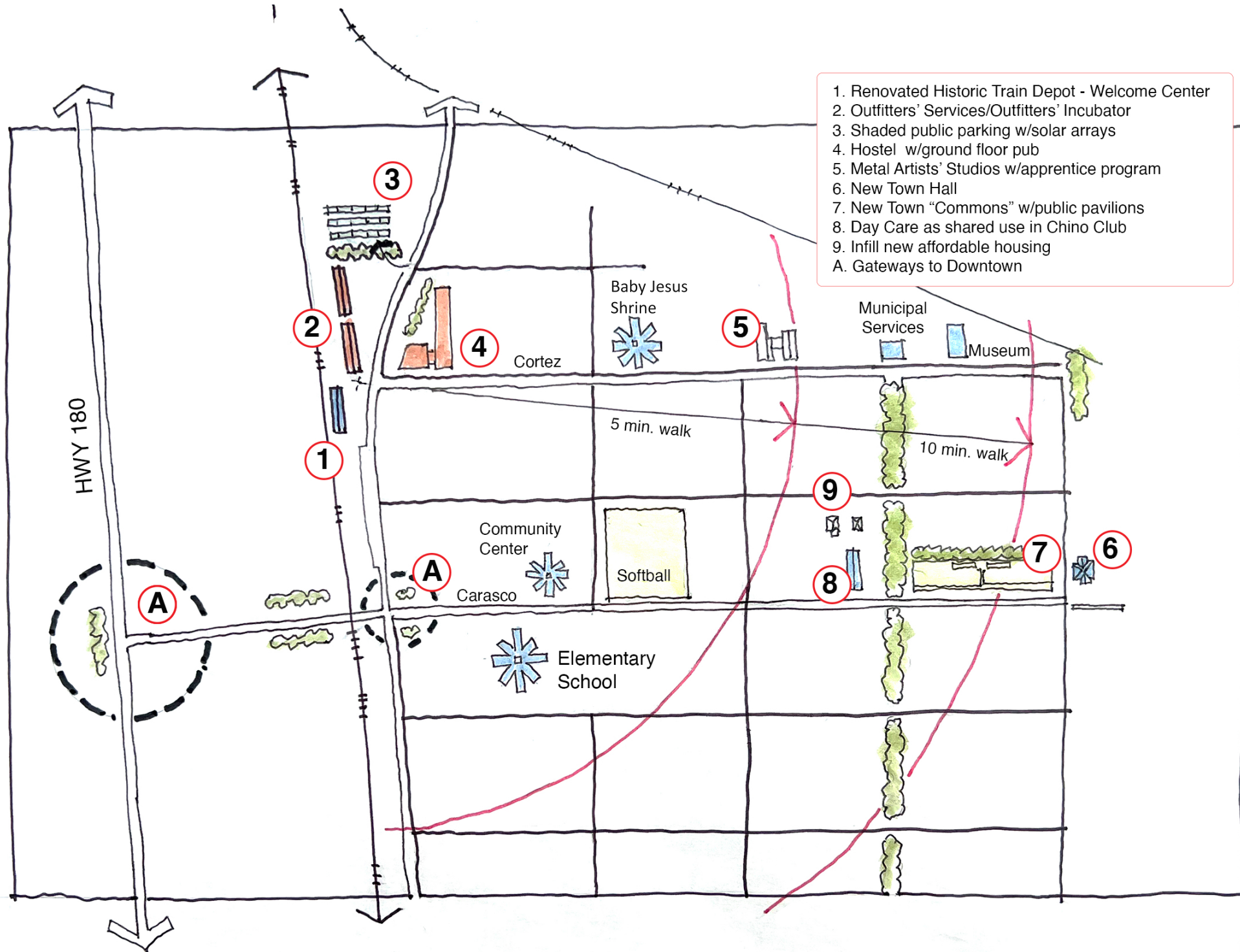
Second, the current gravel parking between the Chino Club and the former Chino Mines Company offices that Chino is donating for a new Hurley Town Hall. It is not needed for parking, since there is plenty of on-street parking spaces available. Instead this space can be repurposed as a village green, framed by two of the most important buildings in town. The Chino offices/Town Hall will be restored as a key focal point, drawing the center of gravity of Hurley east.

Finally, Cortez Ave. terminates to the west at the train depot, discussed above, and to the east at the site of a former mine smelter. The view to the east provides an opportunity to create one more focal point on the most important commercial road in Hurley.

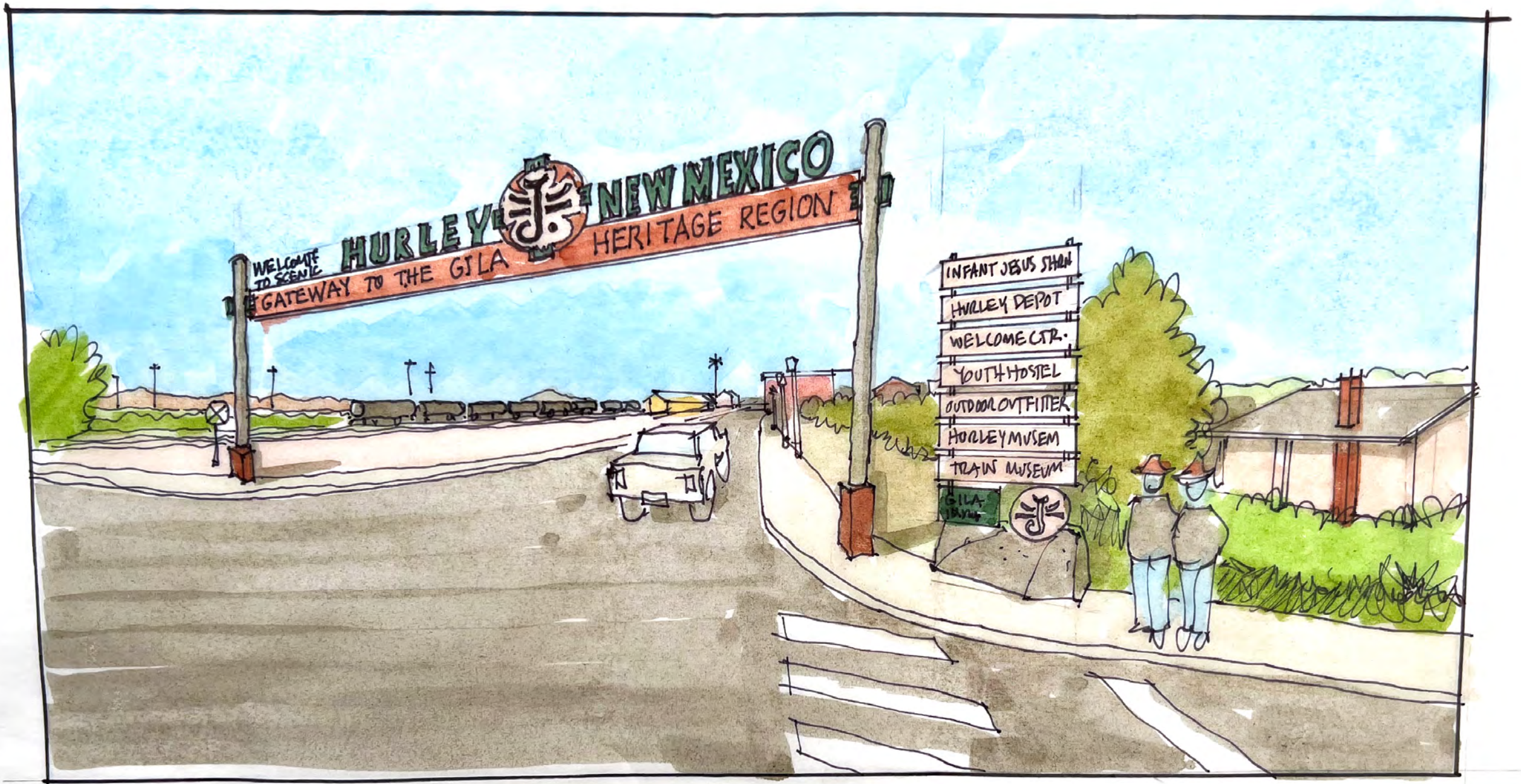
Meanwhile, the Chino Club, currently used rarely by the Chino Mines Company, could ideally continue to serve their needs while being activated for other community use, such as a day care or other community uses. The adjacent former tennis court would be an ideal site for affordable housing, built at the scale of the former company town houses nearby.

## Incubation and Training

Metal arts, sculpture and jewelry making, and outfitters and outdoor recreation.

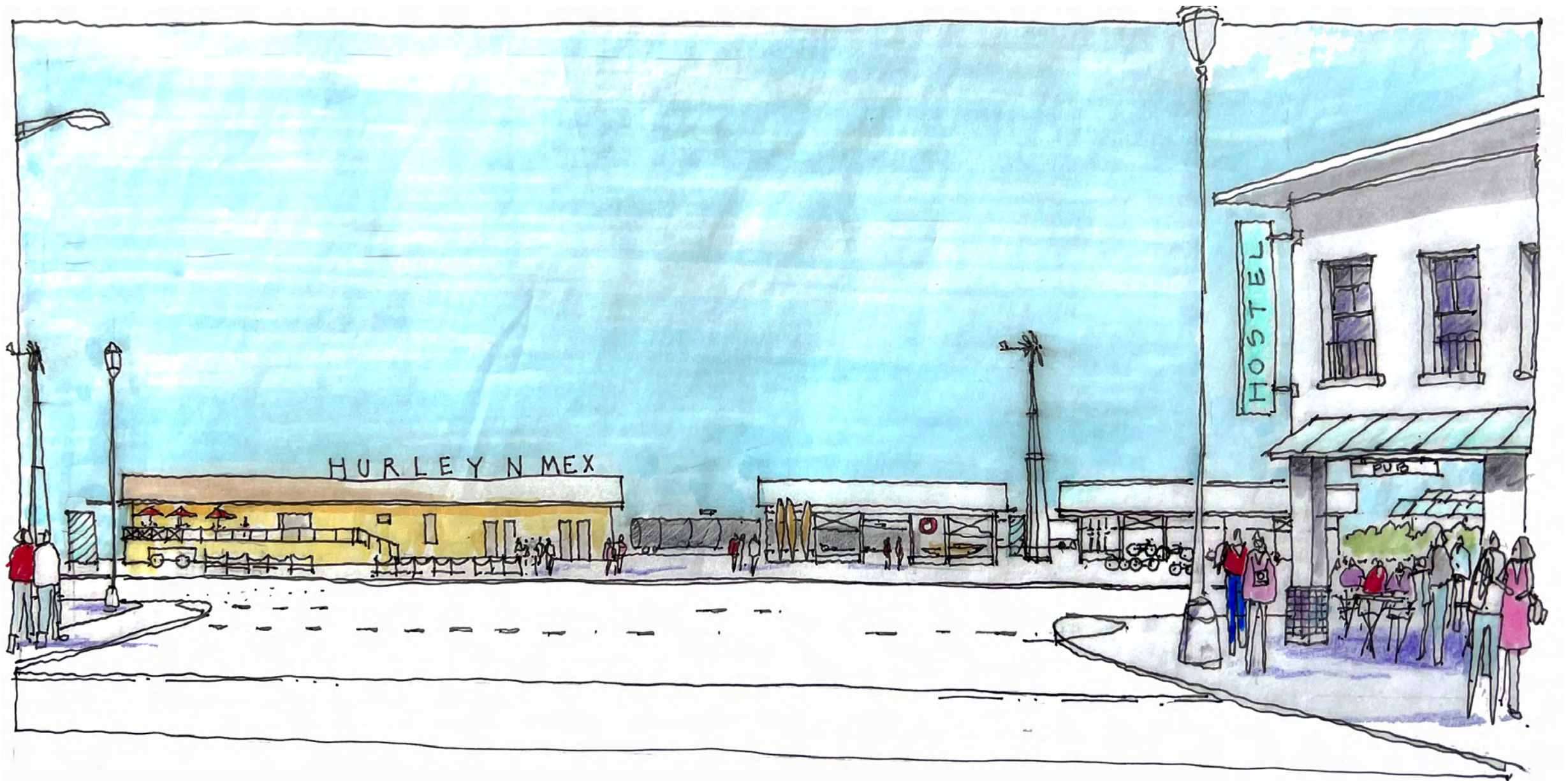






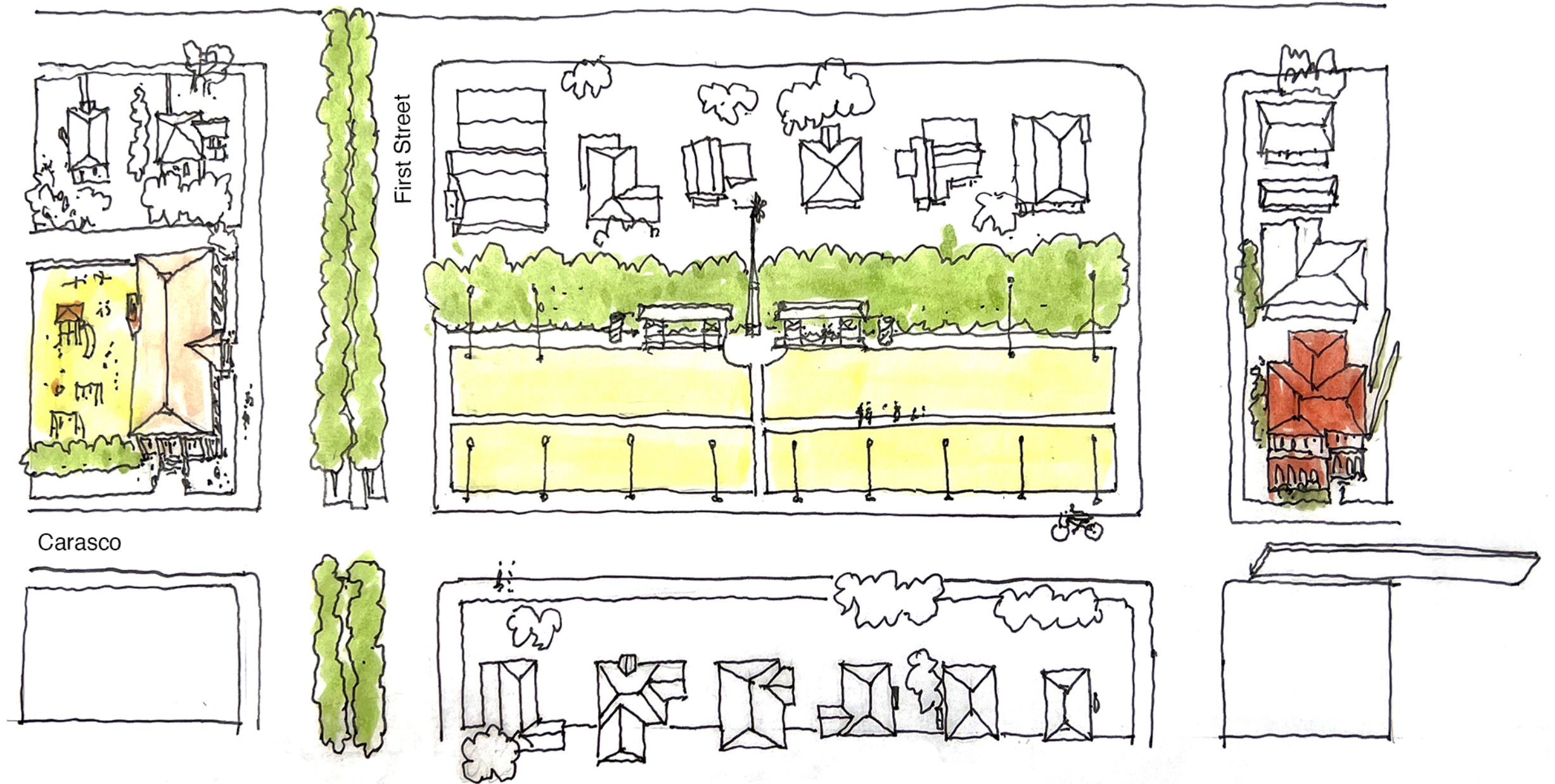
A gateway arch at the intersection of Diaz and Carrasco would welcome residents and visitors alike to the region.



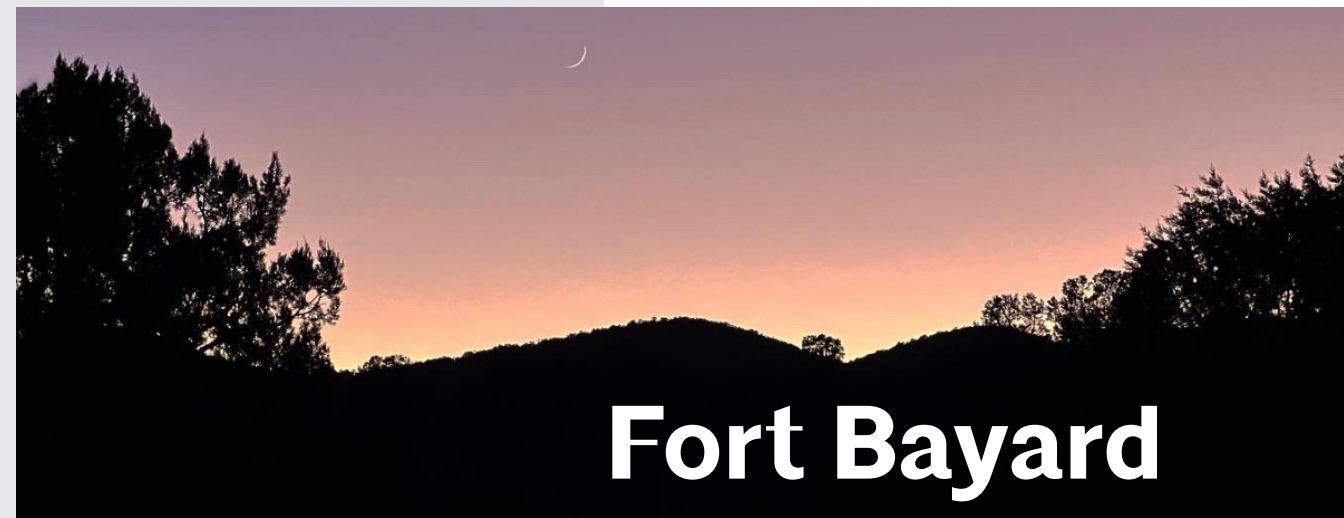


Looking west to the train station, now a welcome center/coffee/gift shop, with outdoor recreational outfitters in sheds to the right, and a new hostel and pub on the corner.





New Hurley municipal center, with common space in the middle with public pavilions for events, flanked on the right by the old Chino offices (new town hall), and on the left by the Chino Club, perhaps re-purposed as a daycare center.



**Fort Bayard**



# Ft. Bayard History

Established in 1866 to protect settlers working in nearby mining districts from Apache conflicts, it was the most prominent evidence of the federal government's role in the development of southwestern New Mexico. African American soldiers, often called Buffalo Soldiers, served at the fort in its early years. In 1899 the facility became the Army's first tuberculosis sanatorium, in part because of the climate and high, dry setting. In 1922 it was transferred to the Veterans Bureau and a modern hospital was built. In 1965 the federal government closed the hospital and transferred the facility to the State of New Mexico. Many of the earliest buildings have been replaced over the years, but there are still more than 80 buildings and structures that are considered historic. The entire site was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2004. Some of the buildings are currently being leased by the Village of Santa Clara with the intent to sublease to the US Forest Service. The Village of Santa Clara is also considering annexation of the fort property.

# Historic Fort Bayard – Past & Future Regional Anchor

It is impossible to consider the future of the region without bringing in Historic Fort Bayard. Its redevelopment is going to be the most significant redevelopment project in the entire region, a once in a lifetime opportunity. It has the potential to be an enormous economic driver, at least partially mitigating the on-going regional population decline, especially of emerging and early career residents, providing well-paying and diverse jobs. It would complement, not compete, with existing businesses.

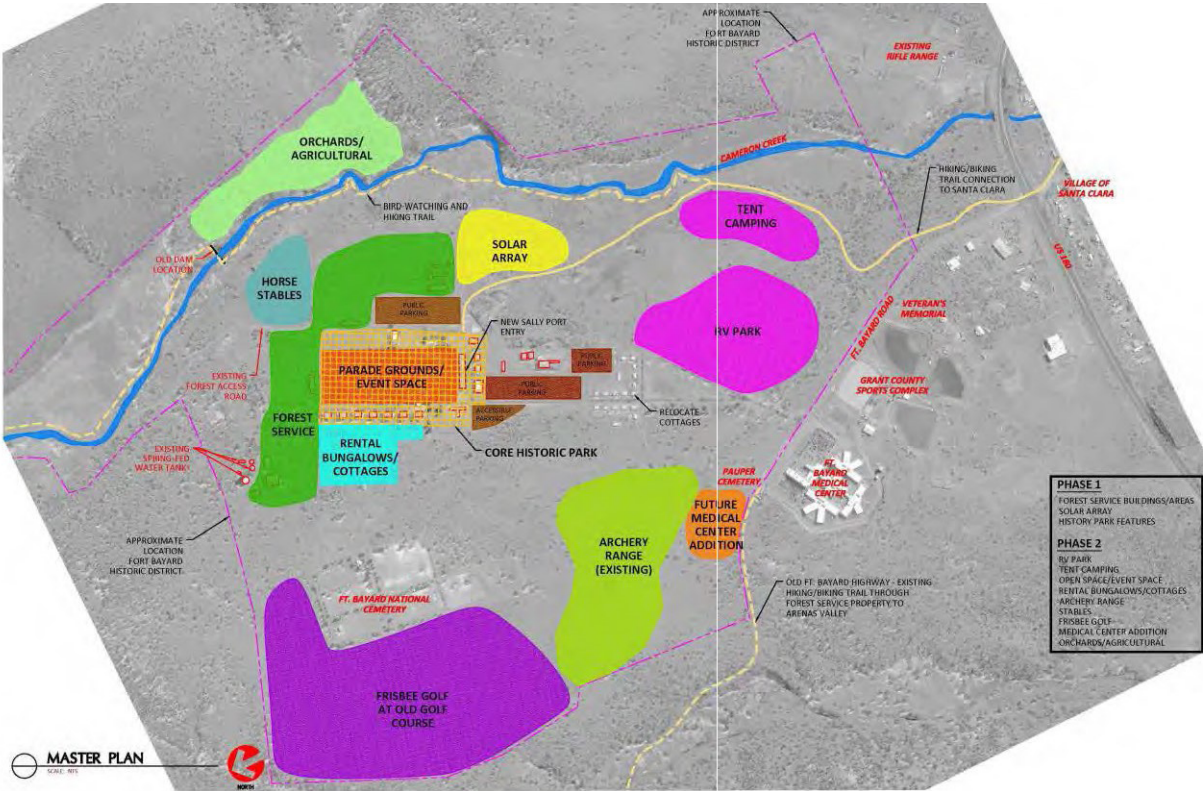
The Fort Bayard Historic District Final Business Plan (Pros Consulting, 2016) and Living Heritage Park Plan for Fort Bayard National Historic Site (Silver Architects) provide a vision for an outdoor recreation and preservation focused redevelopment that, when



The human history, such as the Buffalo Soldier, and architectural richness makes Historic Fort Bayard an amazing desirable place for visitors.

fully accomplished, can be an amazing asset to the community, attract new visitors, improve the experience, and be a catalyst for growth. The plan was written during the demolition of the former 145,000 square foot hospital, which highlighted the need to advance Fort redevelopment.

Trends in the past six years, even with the disruption caused by the Covid pandemic, have demonstrated a continuing and growing demand for outdoor recreation and hospitality, drawing people from distant cities and increasing the ability to attract the necessary capital.



The Heritage Park and Business Plans create a great vision for Historic Fort Bayard, but changes over the last six years and area needs require a greater focus on hospitality.

The very remoteness of the region, which can be a challenge for some kinds of businesses, make it a highly desirable destination. At the same time, as the 2020 decennial census demonstrated, the population decline, especially of younger people, is continuing with no signs of abating. This creates both a need and an opportunity to up the priority for hospitality related investments from the low priority identified six years ago to the region's highest priority. Those investments will enhance the entire region, and create the jobs and opportunities that will retain and attract youth.

With these trends, the Fort is well positioned to attract the necessary private sector hospital investment. Attracting investors is likely if the state and/or Santa Clara can continue to stabilize buildings and allow investors to enter into long-term leases for buildings and grounds as they are ready to advance on their investments, to avoid investors needing to pick up the carrying costs far in advance of their bricks and mortar improvements.

The likely decline in mining and natural resource extractive jobs over the next two decades could be more



than made up for by the expansion during a two decade Fort Bayard redevelopment buildout.

Precedents abound for this kind of reuse project, including some very exciting redevelopments. Each project is different, depending on building, market, and community opportunities and constraints so there are no perfect parallels, which is what allows each project to serve the community in which it sits. For example, The Village at Grand Traverse Commons, the adaptive reuse of the Traverse City State Hospital in Michigan, is also a multi-decade redevelopment, but it has already transformed the area and has served as a model for many other projects. Military base closures, even when bases employed many people, have often generated more civilian jobs than the military activity they replaced, such as Devens in Massachusetts. McClellan in Alabama is a far larger and more complex former military base, but it shows how the historic fabric can be adapted to current needs at any scale.

The sketches here offer a realistic phasing scenario, but over a two decade build out process actual phasing will change based on constantly evolving market conditions. The proposed mixed uses and multiple public and private sector developers allow for development to continue to move forward even as there are speedups and slowdowns in different sectors. The scenarios are the same whether the state of New Mexico wanted to enter into long term leases or, with very detailed land disposition agreements and use restrictions, decided to transfer portions of the site to other entities.

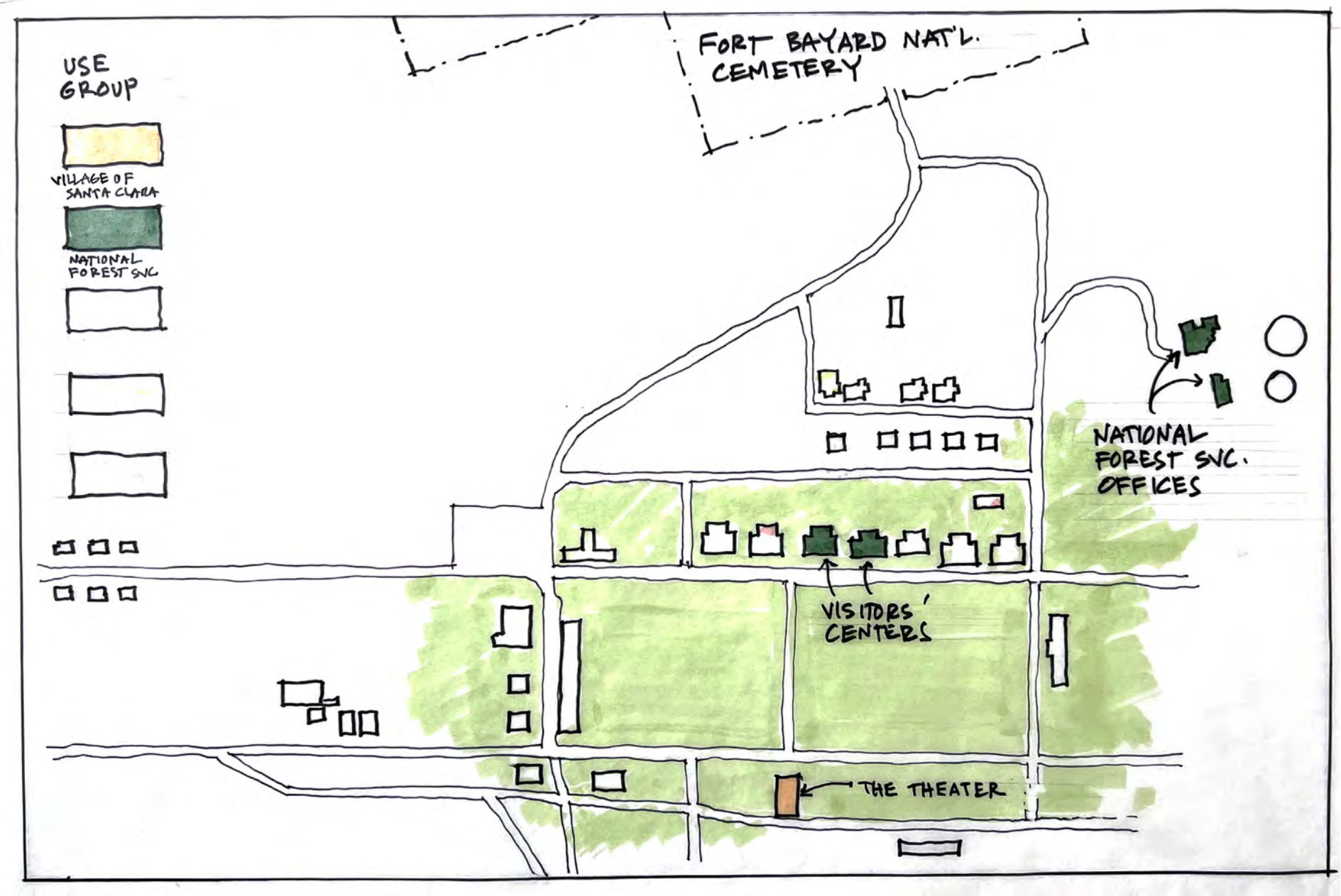
The mix of uses, lease holders, and investors require careful master planning, but can create a synergy within the campus and its adjacent resources (cemetery, hospital) and all the regional communities. The scenario provided here advance the discussion beyond the work done six years ago to create a series of operating principles, but with the full expectation that the concepts will evolve during any master planning process. Design principals should include historic preservation and adaptive reuse, mixed use,

workforce housing, community affordable housing, arts and outdoor recreation focused hospitality uses, community economic development, programmatic connections to Santa Clara, the medical center, and the national cemetery, pedestrian and bicycle connections to Santa Clara and outdoor recreation resources, and sustainability and resilience.





The first phase are the projects that are already underway: Santa Clara's use of the theater and the redevelopment of part of the site for a US Forest Service regional headquarters and visitor center. These will immediately increase visitation and should be done with simple trail and wayfinding to connect to outdoor recreation and the national cemetery. As the site reuse grows, it will build momentum and start attracting investment, especially in Santa Clara. The pedestrian connections to Santa Clara discussed in the Santa Clara section of this report become more important in this phase.



The second phase includes the Chiricahua Apache Tribal visitor center, the first phase of Officer Quarters reuse, and Administrative Building Adaptive Reuse. The Tribal visitor center could potentially move to the first phase, depending on how fast those discussions and funding move. Making the Officer Quarters occupiable again at this phase would involve basic envelope and interior renovations, although without elevators and ramps uses will be very limited. The most significant investment would be a full adaptive reuse of the Administration Building converting it to resort center and hotel. At this point, the campus will be a very active space and provide significant regional economic and placemaking benefits. It also will demonstrate to funders and investors what can be done, and build excitement and even more momentum. Any trail and sidewalk connections not completed in the first phase should be done concurrent with this second phase.





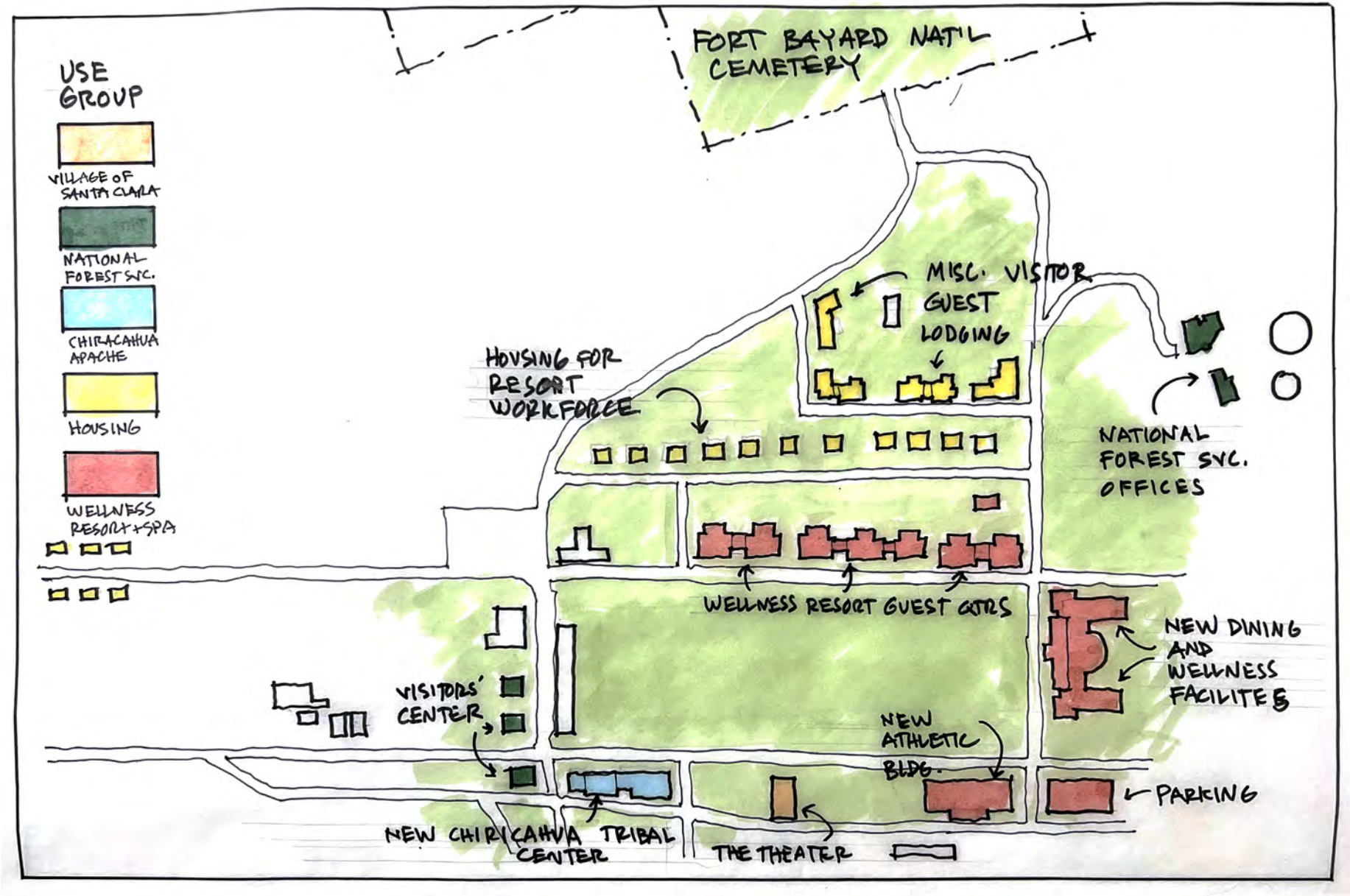
Final buildout will be the reuse of all the reasonably salvageable historic buildings, and new development of space targeted for such uses. This almost certainly would include, for example, expanding the Administration Building (or building adjacent new structures) so the resort and hotel can provide its full dining and wellness opportunities. It might include connecting some of the Officers' Quarters buildings to allow mechanicals and elevators in new connecting corridors, allowing fully accessible buildings suitable for hotel or guest house accommodations. Fort Bayard workforce housing, guest housing, and potentially affordable housing could be developed in the smaller wood frame buildings marching up the hill on the west side of the campus. A new athletic building could be developed to house gyms and pool facilities, serving a multiple of users. In addition, affordable and community workforce housing could be developed on land that is part of the fort but away from the historic and critical open space sections of the campus.

**Additional Resources for Ft. Bayard**

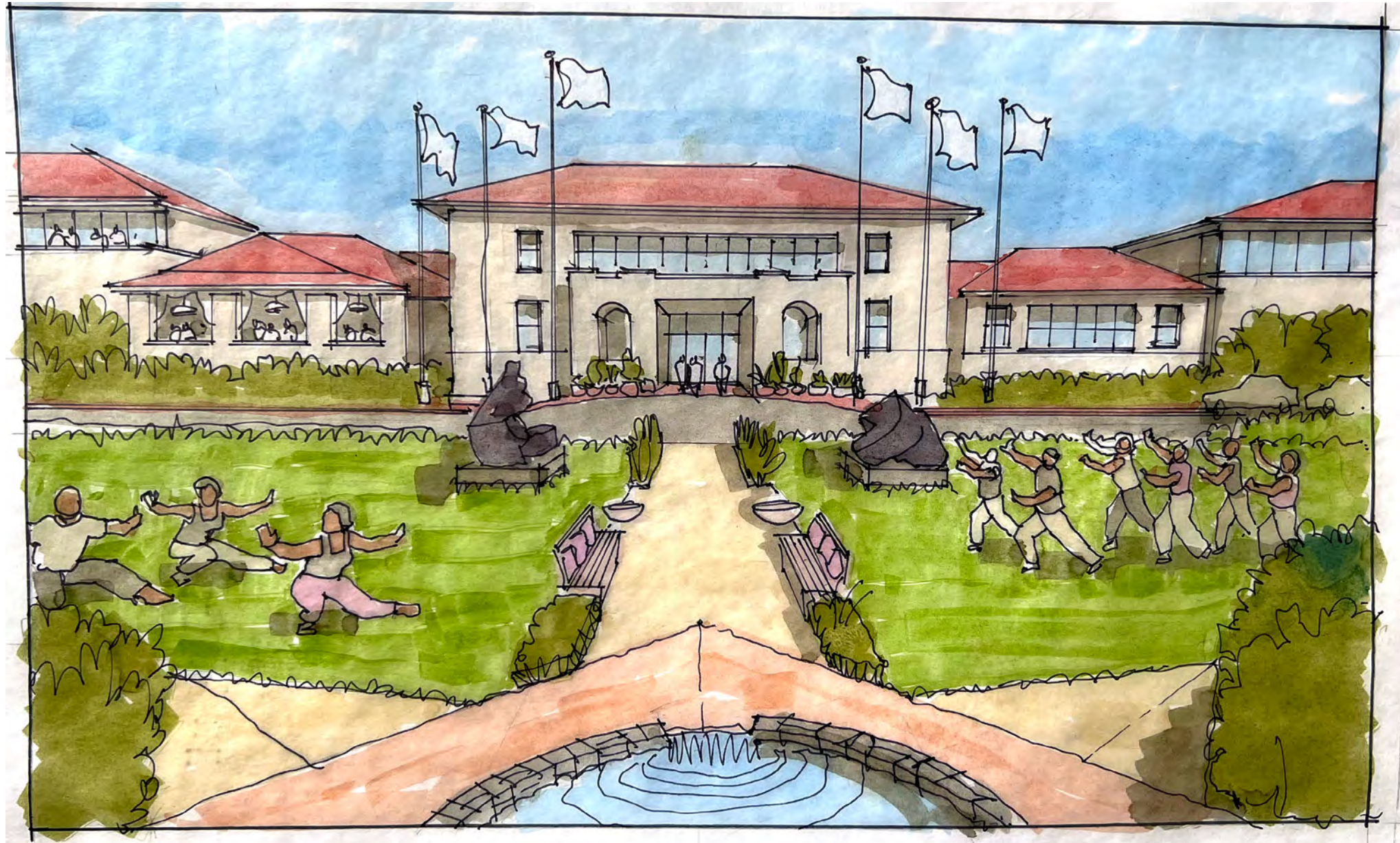
Fort Worden, located in Port Townsend, Washington, is a good model for the rehabilitation and development of Fort Bayard, primarily because of its similar size and layout, similar types of buildings, and its location in a county with a similar population. Fort Worden developed a vision and plan to transform the Fort into a financially self-sustaining lifelong learning center, with recreation and retreat opportunities for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. The property is owned by Washington State Parks but is managed by a local public development authority. <https://fortworden.org/>

**Incubation and Training**

Environmental education, health/wellness, and hospitality.







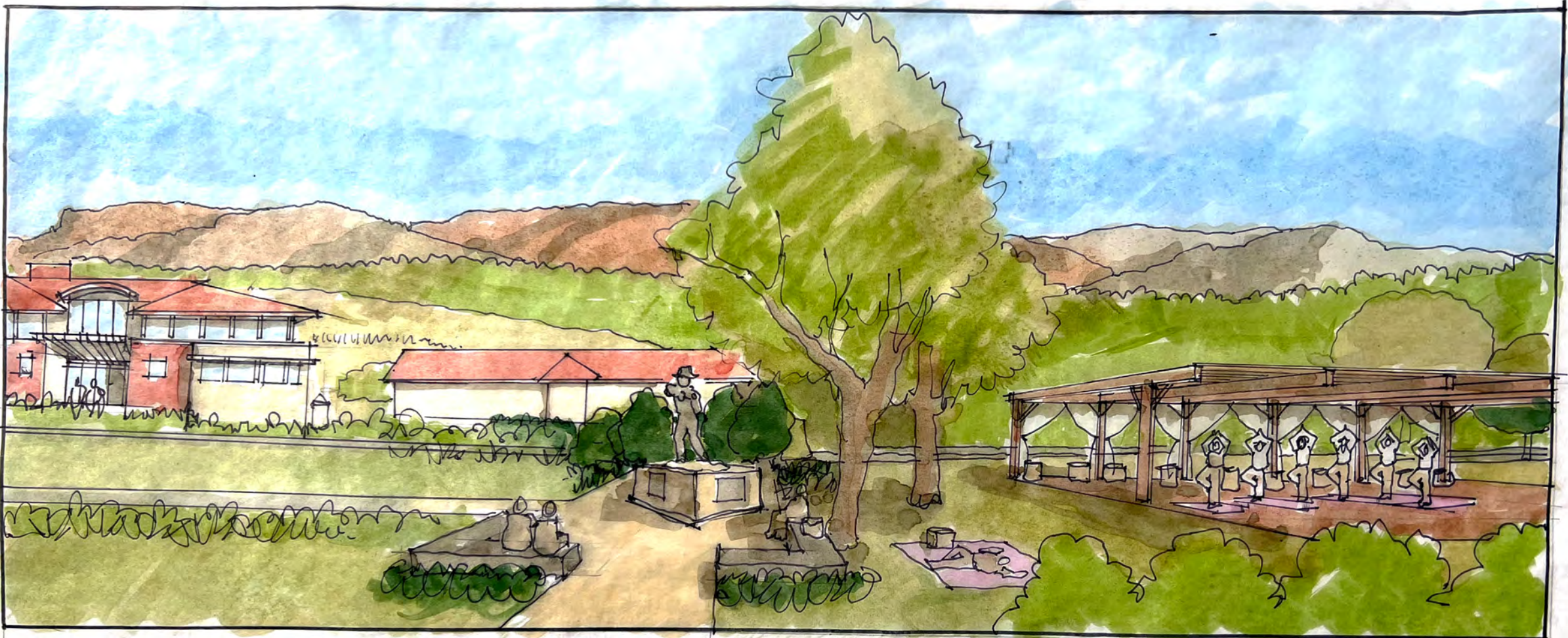
*A tai-chi class on the lawn in front of the Administration Building, now the main building for a wellness and healing center.*





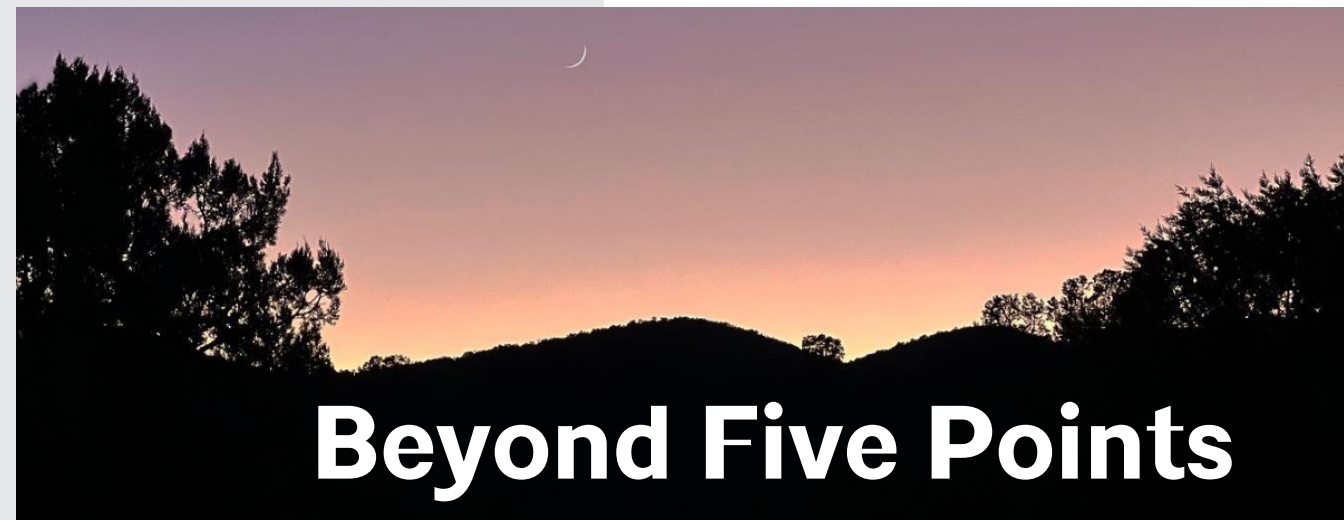
Officers quarters rehabilitated as housing or lodging with new construction in between to house elevators and mechanical equipment.





Outdoor performance or ritual space located on a portion of the parade grounds - but designed to be temporary and easily stored away when not in use.





# Beyond Five Points



# Beyond the Five Points: Regionalism in Southwest New Mexico

When the application was made to the AIA for this project, local partners wrote, “With this project, we seek to find common ground inspiring Grant County’s diverse communities to collaborate and work together for the benefit of all.” The convenors and leaders of the Five Points Initiative should be congratulated for what has been accomplished to date. It has no doubt involved incredible effort to construct a broad collaboration involving widespread regional representation from the participating communities. The team believes it may serve as a model for future efforts, specifically the need to build and formalize a partnership at the broader regional level to take advantage of the full extent of natural and human resources necessary to preserve this special place for the future.

## The Outdoor Recreation Economy: Understanding the Opportunity

According to pre-pandemic data, outdoor recreation had become one of the largest economic sectors in America, outpacing pharmaceuticals, oil and gas, car sales and education as the fourth largest area in our economy. A 2017 report by the Outdoor Industry Association found that the outdoor recreation economy generates \$887 billion in consumer spending annually and supports 7.6 million jobs. The impact of the outdoor recreation economy on New Mexico is also significant, and it is growing. A state study (performed by Headwaters Economics) on New Mexico’s outdoor recreation economy in 2019 found that it directly contributes to \$1.2 billion in incomes and 35,000 jobs. The report noted that there are more people working in outdoor recreation in New Mexico than in farming and manufacturing sectors, and only slightly less than employment numbers for mining, oil and gas development. Outdoor recreation

currently represents \$2.3 billion, or 2.5% of state GDP, but it is one of the fastest (pre-pandemic) growing areas of the economy. The report notes that between 2012 and 2017, GDP from outdoor recreation grew by 11% while the overall state GDP grew by 4%. It also reported 10.1% growth in direct tourism employment between 2011 and 2020, representing 8.3% of statewide employment. Separate research performed by Tourism Economics indicates that visitor spending in New Mexico increased 7% in 2018, the largest year-over-year growth since 2011, with over 37.5 million visitors spending in excess of \$7 billion (\$19 million was spent daily by visitors to New Mexico) with substantial cascading benefits for complementary economic activities. Programming around outdoor assets has important benefits as well. Running and biking events bring an estimated \$45,000 per event to host communities. While the pandemic has had an acute negative impact on the industry, it continues to represent a substantial opportunity for the future and the data validates an economic strategy inclusive of this area in the region, particularly given the assets that are present already which can be leveraged for economic development. Such a focus would match state aspirations. In 2019, the New Mexico Economic Development Department created the Outdoor Recreation Division to focus on developing the industry further. According to state officials, New Mexico was No. 2 in the country in outdoor recreation job growth in 2019 and weathered the 2020 pandemic better than half the states. It is also important to note that such a strategy serves and builds upon local needs and preferences. According to one study, 84% of New Mexicans believe the outdoor recreation economy is important for the future, but 76% also consider themselves outdoor recreation enthusiasts. Data suggest that over 65% of New Mexicans participate in outdoor recreation, and nearly 75% of New Mexicans live within 40 miles of a state park. Therefore, building on local needs with infrastructure to support expanded opportunities will make the area more attractive to outsiders while providing important benefits to local residents in the process. As the process builds

momentum and attracts more people, it will also realize greater fiscal health by capturing resources from visitors that can finance new investments. The strategy is built on the economic benefits that tourists bring to the region while creating amenities that serve local communities. This is the definition of a win-win strategy! It also enjoys full commitment from the state already through new public agencies devoted to investments that the broader outdoor recreation economy, and overwhelming popular support from residents.

## Putting it All Together for the Broader Region

In 2012, Angelou Economics was hired by Grant County to produce an Economic Development Strategy. At the time, they identified several key themes that our team found important to return to as you renew your collective work. They cited the following key observations, captured below verbatim:

- Grant County has many of the elements available to be competitive regionally. The challenge, however, is linking these assets together into a cohesive unit.
- Grant County has a strong sense of what defines it and what sets it apart, however, the marketing message is convoluted and lacking continuity. This is causing the area to miss out on a number of exciting opportunities.
- There is a strong awareness of what the challenges are, but successful outcomes will require the desire of implementation.

We believe that a lot of the above lessons still hold for the region, not only Grant County. In many ways, the Five Points Initiative is a great demonstration project that proves partnerships in this region can work to successfully integrate existing assets around common interests that benefit a wider area. The team believes the broader Southwest New Mexico region should look

at similar partnership models to address the issues identified above and position the region for success. This will require a multi-county, multi-jurisdictional partnership involving dozens of institutions, non-profits and community stakeholders but would represent a gamechanging structure to attract resources at a meaningful scale and integrate existing natural and cultural assets at a level of state and national significance. It would create a sufficiently broad network of partnerships to work effectively on preserving your sacred lands and habitat while benefitting your communities economically. It will also address existing equity issues by integrating everyone under a banner of regionalism where individual narratives all feed a coherent identity.

## Building a Coherent Regional Identity

We acknowledge that the history and culture of the area are both rich and complex. The current regional identity is often characterized by a schizophrenic collection of disparate narratives, rather than a coherent identity that integrates and is fed by each narrative. It reflects a complex history and the many conflicts and peoples that have coalesced here. This region has been a battlefield, literally. Communications are therefore missing connectedness and can be confusing and somewhat contradictory at times. However, the cultural narrative of this region is incredibly valuable to the American story and breathing life into the many layered histories of the people who have defined the region and continue to influence its culture and heritage lies at the heart of a successful effort. There is a rich mix of cultural ingredients that feed local identity today.

## Connect Your Assets & Integrate them into Narrative Experiences

The team found that the region has a wealth of assets that could be leveraged for economic development and sustainable placemaking if they were better connected under a coherent structure of partnerships with a unified



message and identity. There is also an opportunity to leverage federal, state and local resources for the effort if the right mechanisms are deployed, which would add significant momentum to the effort. These natural assets have tangible economic benefits to local communities already, but linking them more coherently together physically, conceptually and programmatically with the cultural and historic sites in the broader region represents a potentially huge opportunity for the communities of this area. It will allow Southwest New Mexico to present a coherent set of visitor experiences, which will in turn make each of your individual assets – which are remarkable on their own – far more valuable in the aggregate.

Key Regional Assets

Suffice it to say, this place is special. To say that this region is blessed with a wealth of natural assets would surely be an understatement. It’s instructive to consider a sample of what the natural environment provides in the greater region because the mix of features are simply spectacular and unique. One might begin with the Gila Wilderness – the first wilderness area in the U.S., designated in 1924 for its biological and topographic diversity. The Gila National Forest represents 3.3 million acres of mountains and rangelands and is home to the Gila River. The Gila River is reportedly home to one of the highest concentrations of breeding birds in America, including the endangered southwestern willow flycatcher. In fact, seven threatened or endangered species of fish, birds, snakes and frogs are dependent upon the habitat the river provides. It has one of the last remaining intact native fish ecosystems because it is the only free flowing river in New Mexico. The Gila also has the Cosmic Campground International Dark Sky Sanctuary, a designation awarded for lands “possessing an exceptional or distinguished quality of starry nights.” The site is the first of its kind in North America and in the National Forest System. The region also boasts the Continental Divide Trail, described as “One of the largest conservation efforts in the history of the United States.” It is represented as “more than just a line on a

map: it is a living museum of the American West, a place to reconnect with nature, and a unifying force bringing people of all walks of life together.” The CDT already has Trail Town programs for gateway communities, including Silver City, linking them to this natural asset. The region is home to a number of stunning State Parks as well, such as City of Rocks State Park, Rockhound State Park, Elephant Butte Lake State Park, Caballo Lake State Park, and Percha Dam State Park. Resources such as Lake Roberts and the Gila Hot Springs as well as other amenities contribute further to the incredible variety of natural assets found throughout the greater region.

Parks and Monuments

Consider the benefits that national and state parks and monuments bring to New Mexico. According to one study, in 2018 there were 2.1 million visitors to 14 National Park Service lands in New Mexico (two national parks, nine national monuments, three historic parks and one preserve). The visitors spent almost \$123 million, creating 1,752 local jobs. That impact is growing. From 2012 to 2018, visitation to National Park Service lands in New Mexico increased by 35% and recreation visits increased by 38%. New Mexico has 35 state parks which had more than 5 million visitors in 2018, more than twice the number of visitations to National Park Service Lands.

Multiple Scenic Byways

Most regions would be lucky to boast one scenic byway, but this region has two: The Trail of the Mountain Spirits Scenic Byway, and the Geronimo National Scenic Byway. Trail of the Mountain Spirits is described as a 93-mile scenic byway that “winds around the southwest corner of New Mexico, back and forth across the forested Continental Divide, through the country's first national wilderness area, the Gila, and past ancient cliff dwellings.” The Geronimo National Scenic Byway invites travelers to “Immerse yourself in the Apaches' history and the hot mineral springs used by Geronimo and his warriors. Visit the historic mining towns that flourished and died with the gold and silver fortunes. From desert

lakes to forested mountains, the Geronimo Trail captures the spirit of freedom and independence.” These are potentially powerful gateways to draw people to the region and have significant economic benefits on their own. For instance, in 2003 CRC & Associates conducted a survey of demographic and trip information from visitors to New Mexico's byways to develop information on spending in each community. The study found that byways generated more than \$267 million and 37,000 jobs statewide.

Important Historical and Cultural Assets

In addition to the 5-point community sites that were identified, this region features a number of significant historical and cultural sites that express narratives from a range of peoples and their histories. While these sites aren’t currently connected, they amplify the cultural narrative of the region in profound ways. The region’s public lands are host to the Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument, an incredible historical and archeological resource from the ancient Mongollan culture. In nearby Mimbres, the Mimbres Culture Heritage Site provides yet another National Historic register archaeological site with a collection of early settlement history on indigenous, Spanish and other European settlers of the area. The profound influence of the Apache people and their relationship with the land is felt culturally to this day in myriad ways and forms a core component of the heritage of the area. The region’s mining heritage is also pervasive, including former mines and mining towns and active operations. The Phelps Dodge Santa Rita Copper Mine has a history wherein Apaches, Spaniards, Mexicans, and Americans have all participated in mining at various times. The present-day open-pit mining operation was begun in 1910 and is now the third oldest active open pit copper mine in the world. Pinos Altos has the historic Buckhorn Saloon and the Opera House as well as a museum interpreting the history of the area. The Fort Bayard National Historic Landmark is an incredible resource, both physically and culturally. The surrounding landscape, moreover, captures a way of life that is unique to the American West and this region in

particular.

Resource Opportunity Starting Points

The State of New Mexico is an important partner for regional efforts and has existing and new resources that can contribute to various components of both the Five Points work and broader initiatives. Recently, the state announced it is receiving almost \$8 million from the U.S. Economic Development Administration focused toward the economic recovery of tourism and travel. The American Rescue Plan State Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Grant will provide assistance with marketing, infrastructure, workforce, and other revitalization projects for the state’s tourism industry. The Tourism Department will have a \$21 million budget plus a \$7 million special appropriation for tourism recovery efforts for fiscal year 2022. In 2020, the Outdoor Recreation Division launched the Special Projects and Infrastructure Fund to support projects that enhance outdoor recreation in communities across the state. They maintain a portfolio of community grants that can resource portions of the work ahead.

The Big Idea: Become a National Heritage Area

The team finds that there are several compelling reasons why this region of Southwest New Mexico should consider broadening its partnership work geographically under a National Heritage Area Framework. There are 49 national heritage areas in the United States currently, but only one in the state of New Mexico. The annual economic impact of NHAs has been estimated at \$12.9 billion, supporting approximately 150,000 jobs. National Heritage Areas (NHAs) are designated by Congress as “places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape.” NHA designation recognizes the national importance of a region’s sites and history. Once designated by Congress, the National Park Service authorizes grants to NHA organizations, which range

from \$150,000–750,000 annually. As an organizing framework, working toward a National Heritage Area would help build the structure necessary to produce a coherent regional message about the area and leverage existing assets most effectively. It also reflects widespread public opinion about the importance of the outdoors and its natural heritage and ongoing value to local culture. An NHA would necessarily force much wider regional partnership than currently exists, which will be labor and resource intensive in its initial phases, but the long-term benefits are clear and relate directly to publicly expressed aspirations.

**The Rationale for an NHA in Southwest New Mexico**

The landscape of this region has always been the foundation of its identity, going back to the ancient Mongollan culture who left the original fingerprints thousands of years ago. In the team’s view, this region’s tradition of varied peoples influencing and defining the cultural landscape is both distinctly American and is critical to our understanding of both who we are as Americans and the history and culture of the American West in particular. Its cultural landscape is certainly “nationally important.”

A brief reference point to only a sample of your history is instructive here. Consider that this is the land that gave birth to Geronimo, a figure of incredible importance to the history of the American West who fought for the land and his people and whose lasting imprint has carried over into cultural expression to this day. The Scenic Byway named in his honor notes that it is “fitting that the scenic byway be named for a man whose spirit remained with this country he considered his homeland.” This is the land where Apache leaders like Mangas Coloradas and Cochise fought for their people as well. It is also where the Buffalo Soldiers fought, where John Pershing took his first command. It is where generations of ranchers, miners and outlaws made their names. The region has also been home to more than a few of the notoriously colorful characters of the Wild West, figures like “Billy the Kid” and “Dangerous Dan”

Tucker. A place where outlaws and lawmen engaged in regular gunfights that continue to be retold through film and other interpretive art today. Beyond those famous figures, there is a rich cultural imprint that successive generations of peoples have brought to the region. The indigenous influence is still felt in everything from food to festivals to language. The Spanish influence led to the ranching tradition and contributed to cultural influences across society. Mexican and European influences further developed the complex cultural mix that is evident today. The mining tradition had participants from myriad backgrounds and cultures as well. The area’s historical past as a hub for health and healing brought another wave of people and culture. This has been contested land that has faced numerous conflicts and cultural influences that have contributed to who you are today. All of those narratives live here, and you have the opportunity to integrate all of them to tell today’s story of the region and its value to our national identity.

**Examples of National Heritage Areas**

*Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area*  
New Mexico has one existing National Heritage Area in the northern part of the state – the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area. It encompasses over 10,000 square miles of territory, integrating a number of key cultural sites, including the following:

- Rio Grande Gorge Bridge
- Rio Chama Wild and Scenic River
- Ghost Ranch National Natural Landmark
- Enchanted Circle and Turquoise Trail National Scenic Byways
- Rio Grande del Norte and Bandelier National Monuments
- Three National and Historic Trails and Route 66
- Puyé Cliff Dwellings National Historic Landmark

- Pecos National Historic Park
- Mesa Prieta Petroglyphs
- Taos Pueblo UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Palace of the Governors – Santa Fe

The Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area has a mission organized around 3 key areas of focus:

- Support traditions, heritage and culture to enhance understanding and awareness of the Heritage Area’s stories and resources.
- Create partnerships to collaborate in achieving cultural preservation.
- Promote economic development and heritage tourism.

*The Journey Through Hallowed Ground*  
The Journey Through Hallowed Ground in the Eastern United States represents an instructive case for Southwest New Mexico. They describe their National Heritage Area as follows: “Extending from Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, through Maryland and West Virginia, to its southern boundary at Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia, the Journey Through Hallowed Ground (JTHG) National Heritage Area preserves and promotes the history and heritage of “Where America Happened.” Home to nine presidential homes, 13 national parks, hundreds of battlefields that commemorate the French and Indian War, Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and the Civil War, and numerous other museums and historic sites, the 180-mile long, 75-mile wide JTHG NHA is one of the most historic regions in the United States. The JTHG NHA focuses its work and mission on the preservation of this rich history and the natural and scenic beauty of the region. Through the creation of integral partnerships, attention on expanding tourism opportunities, and educational opportunities, the JTHG NHA has strengthened the heritage, economy, and quality of life in the region.” This includes a dense

network of organizational partnerships.

The Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area (MD, PA, VA, and WV) generates \$703.0 million in economic impact, supports 8,401 jobs, and generates \$51.1 million in tax revenue. As one case study notes, partnerships are essential to its success:

*“Partnerships are important to an NHA’s ability to leverage funds and increase opportunities for tourism and preservation. The JTHG has over 350 partnering organizations that are actively engaged in promoting the NHA. The JTHG has generated partnerships in all four states. Some critical partners include, government entities and elected officials, convention and visitor bureaus, national park units, educational institutions, preservation and conservation organizations, and historic associations. The partnerships of the JTHG have allowed for increased collaboration among the various sites, entities, and organizations that realize the importance of promoting, preserving, and developing the historic and natural resources of the region. These partnerships and collaborations help enhance the offerings of the NHA and provide locals and tourists with a rich historic, recreational, and cultural experience throughout the NHA.”*

The Journey Through Hallowed Ground has an interesting history which will also resonate to residents of Southwest New Mexico. It began with a community movement to oppose a Disney plan for an American history theme park on the land. Local and national preservation organizations banded together to argue that the local landscape was far too valuable and should be preserved. Following defeat of the planned theme park, they organized to begin working toward the National Heritage Area as a way to preserve and sustain a culturally important region. It was a turning point for them. Southwest New Mexico has faced a similar recent controversy concerning the Gila River. In 2019, the Gila River was listed as the most endangered river in America due to a planned diversion project that has since been defeated. It highlighted the tenuous future for the entire landscape given climate change and manmade impacts



on the environment. Studies indicate that the river is facing an uncertain future as the mountain snowmelt that feeds it could be gone by the end of the century. The question is therefore whether the decision to defeat the diversion represents a similar turning point for Southwest New Mexico that could lead to a unified effort to preserve, sustain and celebrate the land and the culture it has given life to.

Partnerships

The Five Points Initiative is capturing a spirit of partnership that the team believes should be replicated at the broader regional level as well. This may be the central goal that your future success hinges upon, and like your natural assets, our team finds that your partners are already present and simply need to be connected better under a unified effort. While an effort like the JTHG may seem intimidating with 350 partners, a quick scan of your region reveals dozens of organizational partners with resources and capacity that could lead or contribute to this effort. For instance, the State of New Mexico is demonstrating it is serious about the outdoor recreation economy by creating new state agencies dedicated to it and new resources to help communities advance its agenda locally. Regional, County, and Municipal leadership are all present in the Five Points Initiative and could be similarly organized at a broader scale to make regionalism and its benefits spread at a more dramatic scale. Furthermore, the team found data online suggesting that there are 387 non-profit organizations in Grant County alone, and innumerable institutions that would align with a collaborative effort on the broader region. The inherent benefits of a broader regional approach will include an amplified visibility and diverse resource streams and organizational networks that produce a shared capacity that is far greater than anything now in operation. There is real power in regionalism if it is designed to integrate partners effectively and allow everyone to contribute where their role is best suited.

Juntos Podemos (Together We Can)

In some ways, history has come full circle with the threat of climate change and its impacts on the land that an overwhelming percentage of residents – 84% – cite as “important for the future.” A National Heritage Area framework would provide an infrastructure to begin to address several important topics simultaneously, including the challenge of preservation and sustainability in the face of a changing climate as well as the maintenance and continuance of the cultural heritage it provides. It would help open new economic opportunities for the region while protecting some of the characteristics that residents hold most dear, and ideally passing them along to future generations. While the landscape of this region has been subject to near universal value throughout its history, the heritage of the land has never been guaranteed here. It has often been tenuous, faced numerous threats, or been fought over.

History is instructive on this point when we consider that there are no remaining Apache lands here, that San Vicente was replaced by Silver City (at least by semantics), that Grant County almost seceded from New Mexico and became part of Arizona, that Santa Rita was physically wiped from the earth. Part of Main Street in Silver City is now the Big Ditch.

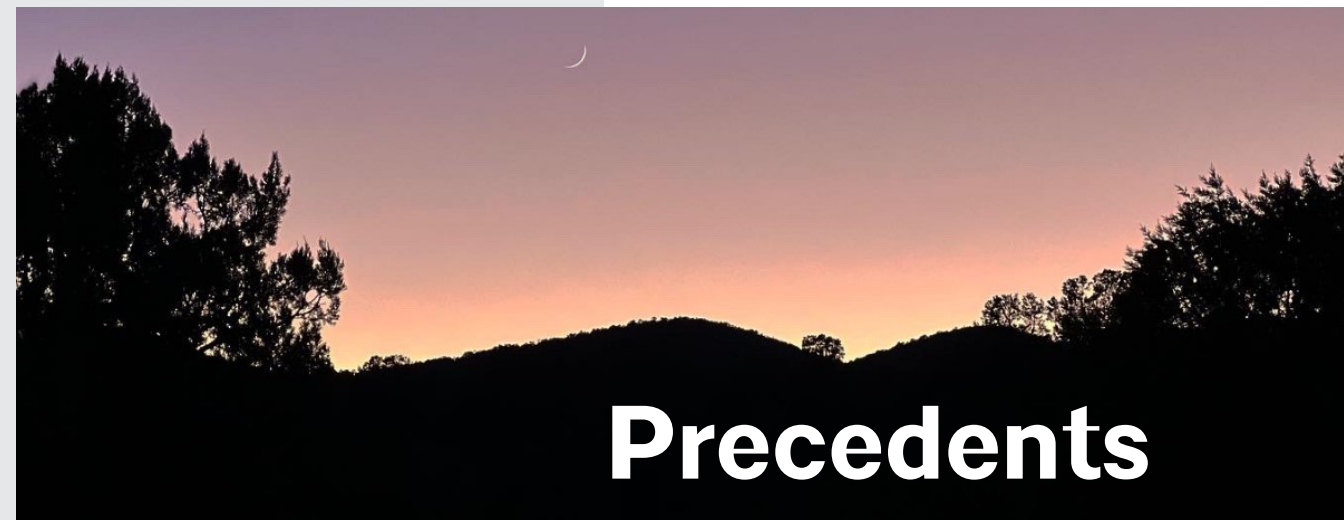
Permanence is not promised here. That remains the case today.

However, the team believes that you have a historic opportunity today to build a new narrative. There is real momentum toward natural and cultural revitalization. Consider the work you are doing currently. In 1999, the New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance named the Waterworks site one of New Mexico’s “Most Endangered” cultural properties and designated it a “Save Americas Treasures ” site. Today, it is being transformed as a cultural asset for the region that connects directly to the land through its relationship with the CDT and is grounded in fundamental principles of sustainability. In 2019, the Gila River was designated

as America’s Most Endangered River when threatened by a diversion project and climate change, but local communities defeated that proposal. The story is changing.

For all of the diverse peoples that have brought their influence the region’s culture, there is one clear through line that emerges – a connection to the landscape and an awareness of its importance in sustaining the community into the future. One can draw connections that go back to the indigenous Apache and continue with remarkable consistency in today’s culture. The Apache language includes the simple word ‘Ni’, which has a profound meaning that refers to both the land and a way of thinking and being. It suggests an entire orientation to the land that is profoundly respectful of its defining role in the history of peoples here. The fact that such an overwhelming majority of today’s residents – Apache and others – draw inspiration from the land and consider it critical to your collective future is a deeply important reflection of long-standing community values that has remained consistent through generations of change. It is a powerful unifying value that provides a foundation for your work moving forward.

One thing is clear. The future of Southwestern New Mexico will be determined by your communities together. You own that future and you together carry the responsibility and the duty to your neighbors and fellow citizens to make this happen together. Make it happen. Juntos Podemos!



# Precedents



# Case Studies: Learning from Other Community Experiences

As Southwest New Mexico ACT moves forward with the Five Points Initiative and potential broader regional efforts, there are lessons that can be applied from experiences elsewhere in the country and ideas that may have applications regionally here where it suits local needs and aspirations. The following includes a short list of examples of community efforts elsewhere in the US that is illustrative, including other communities that have undergone work with the AIA Design Assistance program.

## Connecting the Landscape Through Art

Many communities have used art effectively for creative placemaking and economic development as well as a way to express local narrative identity. Silver City is an outstanding example from the region. Our team found pervasive creative expression throughout the town that told local histories, expressed community values, and breathed life into an authentic local identity. Art can provide an effective vehicle to tie a region together creatively and express local narratives as well.

### The Wormfarm Institute & Farm/Art DTour

In Wisconsin, the Wormfarm Institute works to build connections between rural communities and urban places through investing in what they define as a regional “cultureshed,” an ecosystem of creative resources and talent. One of their premier events is the Farm/Art DTour, which is a bi-annual regional arts event that lasts two weeks. A self-guided tour through Wisconsin’s Driftless Region is highlighted by site-responsive art and agriculture and cultural attractions that amplify the landscape and its value regionally. As they note, “A 50-mile, self-guided, multifaceted agritourism experience, the DTour has drawn more than 200,000 visitors from throughout the Midwest to rural Sauk County. Meandering through working farmland, the route is punctuated by site-responsive

artworks, pasture performances, roadside poetry, local food markets and artist-led civic engagement. Inviting thousands to witness what farmers do every day, the DTour supports our region’s farming heritage, using the arts to spark curiosity about, and investment in, the future of farming and land stewardship. At a time when our community’s civic, economic and environmental health depends on bridging the rural-urban divide, this agri/cultural excursion brings people together in the landscape upon which we all depend.” One can imagine the possibilities for such an application in Southwest New Mexico, and the important relationships it could build while reinforcing fundamental community values about the land.



### The Confluence Project

The Confluence Project is a series of outdoor installations and interpretive artworks located along the Columbia River system in Washington and Oregon. Each art installation explores the confluence of history, culture and ecology of the Columbia River system. As they describe it “Confluence connects you to the history, living cultures, and ecology of the Columbia River system through Indigenous voices. We are a community-supported nonprofit that works through six art landscapes, educational programs, and public gatherings in collaboration with northwest tribes, communities, and the celebrated artist Maya Lin. The stunning landscape of the Columbia River Basin is shaped by millions of years of volcanic basalt, sculpted by flowing rainwater and snowmelt. Water that “cleansed a thousand places,” as one elder told us, gathers in the Big River, the Nch’i-Wána. These lands and rivers are also shaped by cultural traditions: knowledge, rules, and lifeways passed down through countless generations as a guide for how to live in balance with our natural environment. Elevating these Indigenous voices is both an act of justice and a call to action to take better care of our shared ecology.” Again, one can certainly imagine how a similar art-based approach to regional connectivity across the placemaking landscape of Southwestern New Mexico might apply.

## Working Regionally to Preserve the Landscape: Gateway 1 in Mid-Coast Maine

When small communities come together regionally, they can scale their voice and resources to build partnerships that attract federal support. The Gateway 1 Corridor Action Plan in mid-coast Maine is a great example for why regionalism is so important to rural areas. In their case, a collaboration of 21 townships came together to preserve the environment while growing their economy together, using a community-led land use process around their main transportation corridor. The 120-mile corridor of Route 1 extends from Brunswick to Prospect

and included as key partners the Maine Department of Transportation, the state planning office, and four regional commissions as well as the Federal Highway Administration. The plan integrated local and regional strategies for economic growth while preserving transportation corridors and maintaining the scenic characteristics that represent the mid-coast Maine regional identity.

## Examples from the DAT Program

There are many examples from the design assistance program experience that illustrate how small towns have had success with implementation efforts by involving the whole community in the process. The following provides a short sample of experiences that relate to this region regarding rural environments, economies, and natural and cultural heritage.

### Port Angeles, Washington

Port Angeles, Washington provides an example of how to inspire pride in change by creating a truly public revitalization process. Their success has been built around involving everyone in the process. In 2009, Port Angeles hosted an AIA team to focus on downtown revitalization and waterfront development. Port Angeles had suffered declining fortunes as the result of mill closures and reduced productivity from natural resource industries. It also lies at the gateway to America for people entering from Canada, and at the gateway to the Olympic peninsula and its national parks. Historically, it was home to dozens of indigenous peoples as well.

The approach that Port Angeles took to implementation opened up broad participation from the entire community. “Just two weeks after the SDAT presented more than 30 recommendations, the Port Angeles Forward committee held a public vote and unanimously agreed to recommend 10 of those items for immediate action,” said Nathan West, the City Manager. “Public investment and commitment inspired private investment, and, less than a month later, the community joined together in an effort to revamp the entire downtown,

starting with a physical face-lift. Community members donated paint and equipment, and residents picked up their paintbrushes to start the transformation.” An immediate idea came directly from the community. Volunteers banded together to give 43 buildings downtown an immediate face-lift, and the momentum was born.

This effort led to a formal façade improvement program that extended the initiative exponentially. The city dedicated \$118,000 in community development block grants (CDBG) for the effort, which catalyzed over \$265,000 in private investment. The city also moved forward with substantial public investment in its waterfront, which had a dramatic impact in inspiring new partnerships and private investment. Within 5 years, Port Angeles had over \$100 million in new investment downtown, including an award-winning waterfront that draws people back to the downtown. In June 2012, Port Angeles was recognized with a state design award for its waterfront master plan. The city completed construction of phase 1 in 2014, and launched phase 2 in 2015. Today, major new public facilities are found on the waterfront, including an arts center and a cultural center dedicated to the indigenous peoples of the area and their history.

The City of Port Angeles’ Pebble Beach Park, located along the downtown waterfront, is a good example. It was created to honor the Klallam tribal history. The City worked with the Lower Elwha Klallam and Jamestown S’Klallam tribes in planning the public park. Recently the park was officially renamed to reflect their Klallam heritage. As they note, “By giving places Klallam names we are honoring the unique history of our town and the indigenous people of this land and it demonstrates our commitment to helping carry on native cultures and languages. The Klallam people are part of the history of Port Angeles and naming this park using the Klallam language invites locals and visitors to explore and experience our area’s rich cultural history.”

As West concluded, “The City of Port Angeles SDAT experience was far more than just a planning exercise.

This opportunity for our community was a catalyst for action, implementation and improvement. A primary outcome has been that the process awakened community pride and inspired a “together we can” attitude. Today the inspiration remains and the elements and recommendations of the program continue to be the driver for publicly endorsed capital projects and investments in our community. More importantly this sustainable approach has tapped into the core values and priorities of our citizens to ensure a better and more balanced future for our City.” As Mayor Daniel Di Guilio observed, “This study will certainly continue to provide us with very positive and visible results for our city to benefit from for many years to come.”

In 2015, the city was runner-up in Outside Magazine’s Best Towns competition. As the Magazine observed, “In the final throes of this year’s contest, Port Angeles staged an impressive fight. Homeowners put placards in their yards reminding passersby to vote, businesses made pleas on sandwich boards, and locals stood on street corners with signs. The town ended up coming in second to Chattanooga—which has almost ten times the population—by just 2 percent of the vote. The message was clear. “We love this town, and this community can really pull together,” says Jacob Oppelt, owner of Next Door Gastropub. The magazine concluded that “Port Angeles isn’t big, but as this year’s Best Towns showing demonstrates, it can compete with just about any place.”

As the City Manager wrote in 2019, “This experience permanently changed the City for the better with a renewed focus on community sustainability. Through the implementation of a Sustainable Design Assessment our community was engaged and inspired in a manner that awakened community pride, activated excitement, and established a detailed implementation plan for positive change towards a sustainable future. The process heavily involved public participation from initial plan, to the final completion of each individual project. Ten years after the sustainable design assessment there continue to be new measures implemented and a strong support for this important community plan. ”



**Helper, Utah: The Little Town that Can (population 2,200)**

Helper City, Utah was incorporated in the late 19th century as a result of surrounding mines and the railroad, which runs through town. It developed a thriving local mining economy in the early 20th century. The town got its name from the ‘helper’ engines that were stationed at the mouth of the canyon to assist trains in reaching the Soldier Summit up the mountain. The natural resource economy began to suffer economic decline over the past 20 years, and in 2015 the Carbon Power Plant in Helper was closed. It had been in operation since 1954. The economic impact resulted in de-population and increased poverty, putting a strain on resources and capacity. The population of the town is 2,095, and the per capita income for the city was \$15,762, with almost 13 percent of the population living below the poverty line. In September 2017, Helper City hosted an AIA Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) to build a community-driven strategy for its downtown. Over 200 people participated in the process, which produced a 53-page report with recommended implementation strategies that focused on strengthening the public realm, activating the downtown and enhancing the historic fabric. At the conclusion of the process, one citizen stood up and declared, “You’ve given us hope.”

In the first year of implementation efforts, the town of 2,000 mobilized hundreds of volunteers in a grassroots effort to remake the public realm and activate downtown. Citizens were involved directly in a series of hands-on projects that included the redesign of Main Street, pop-up retail stores, redesigned public parks, restoration of the riverfront, and other initiatives. They also enhanced programming downtown with successful arts festivals and related events. The impact has been transformational, stimulating private investment and momentum for positive change. Helper City Mayor Lenise Peterman notes that, “The plan created from the SDAT event is driving continuous improvement in Helper City. By giving voice to the community we have

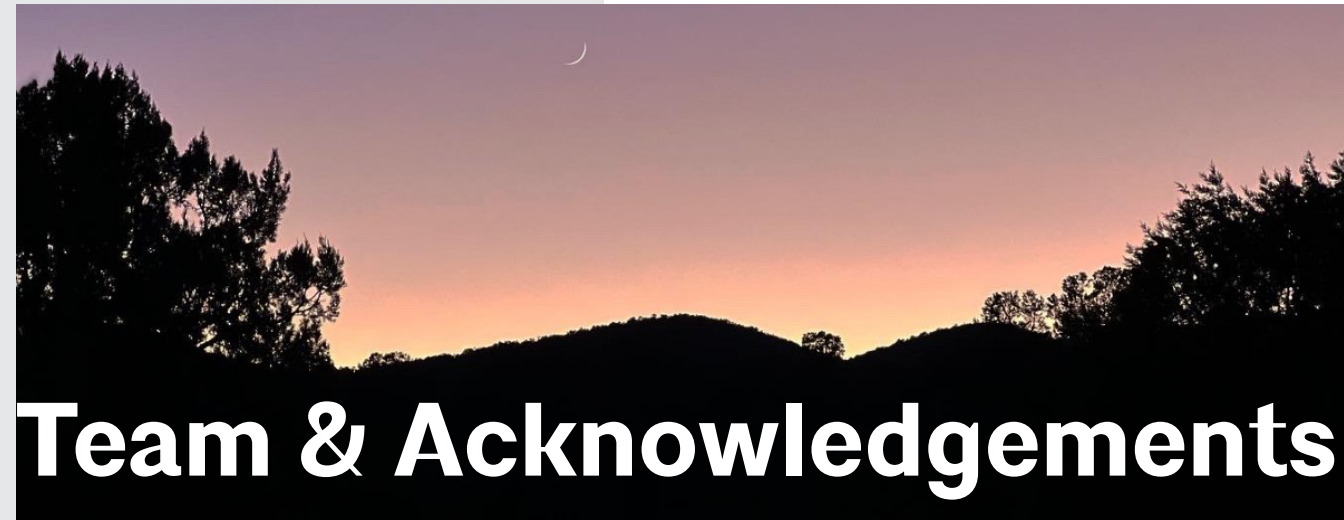


also given it hope in creating a sustainable environment which is respectful of our past, values our environmental assets and maximizes the opportunity for community engagement.”

Recently, Carbon County leaders hired a consultant to do an assessment of the entire jurisdiction. Regarding Helper, he had this to say: “I have never seen a community like this. You guys are the poster child for how to get things done...We really believe Helper is setting the Gold Standard for Utah.” That sentiment is felt locally as well. The Mayor and Steering Committee wrote that “The three-day immersion by the SDAT team has impacted, and continues to impact, our community on a daily basis. People in our community have something they haven’t had for some time, hope for a sustainable community. Key tenants of creating that sustainability include replenishing human capital (drawing young families to our city), caring for our environmental assets, and finally recreating an energy-based economy to a destination based one. And we are doing just that – everywhere in Carbon County people say it’s happening in Helper” – and it is!” Helper is living up to its namesake and living its motto, “The Little Town that Can.” As one local report noted, “Within the last 18 months, all but one of the available buildings on Main Street has been purchased and has undergone some degree of renovation.”

In 2018, Helper was recognized with a Facilitation Impact Award for its revitalization efforts. As Mayor Lenise Peterman wrote, “The SDAT program was the catalyst for what we have done and is the road map for what we will do to create our best version of a sustainable community. The community, at the final presentation during the SDAT visit, literally cheered. And we are delivering on the vision in lockstep with our citizens. A community with hope is unstoppable – I can’t imagine being where we are today without the support, guidance and expertise the SDAT program afforded a small, struggling rural community in Utah.”





# **Team & Acknowledgements**



# Grant County DAT Roster

## J. Todd Scott, AIA- Team Leader

Todd is a licensed architect who specializes in historic preservation and downtown revitalization. His preservation experience includes stints with Oklahoma City, as historic preservation officer, and with King County, Washington, where he currently provides assistance to historic property owners and local officials in that county and 23 suburban and rural communities. He has been involved in the rehabilitation of many buildings in small downtowns as the state architect for Oklahoma Main Street and for Design Works, an arts-based design charrette program. He has participated in a dozen design assessment teams with the AIA's Center for Communities by Design; several as team leader. Todd also served as community development director and assistant city manager for the city of Astoria, Oregon. He has presented at numerous state, regional, and national conferences on topics ranging from sustainability in design to mounting grass roots campaigns for endangered buildings. Todd has served on the boards of various non-profit agencies including heritage organizations, community development corporations, urban renewal authorities, and architectural foundations. He also currently edits The Alliance Review, the quarterly publication of the National Alliance of Preservation Commission

## Cheryl Morgan, FAIA

Cheryl is a licensed architect and Emerita Professor of Architecture in the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture of Auburn University. In thirty years of teaching she worked with architectural programs at Georgia Institute of Technology, Oklahoma State and California College of Arts and Crafts. For the last 12 years of her teaching career she was the Director of Auburn's Urban Studio in Birmingham, Alabama. Under Cheryl's leadership, the Urban Studio's Small Town Design Initiative Program worked with over 75 small towns and neighborhoods in Alabama. Morgan practiced architecture and urban design in the San Francisco Bay Area. She worked with a number of firms including Environmental Planning and Research, Gensler, and the Gruzen Partnership. Before coming to Auburn in 1992 she was an associate with the Berkeley firm of ELS/Elbasani and Logan. Morgan's professional practice now focuses on urban design, community revitalization and graphic design. She is also an experienced facilitator. Cheryl holds two degrees from Auburn University: a Bachelor of Architecture and a Bachelor of Arts (Sociology). Her Master of Architecture degree is from the University of Illinois, Champaign/Urbana. She is certified by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards and is a member and Fellow of the American Institute of Architects. In 2010 she received the Thomas Jefferson Award from the Jefferson County Historical Commission

as well as being named to a Woman of Distinction Leadership Award by Auburn's Women's Resource Center. In 2011 she was presented with the Alabama Chapter of the American Planning Association's Distinguished Leadership Award recognizing her as a "Friend of Planning." In 2012 she received one of Auburn University's highest awards for Achievement in Outreach. She is a member of the Rotary Club of Birmingham which honored her in 2016 with the Spain Hickman Service Award.

## Haley Blakeman, FASLA

Haley Blakeman, FASLA, holds the Suzanne L. Turner Professorship at the Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture at Louisiana State University. In addition to teaching, she serves as the undergraduate coordinator. Haley received her BLA from Louisiana State University and her Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) from the University of New Orleans. She is a licensed landscape architect and a certified planner, with over 20 years of professional experience.

Prior to teaching at LSU, Haley was the vice president for the Center for Planning Excellence, where she helped define organizational strategy in order to maximize the non-profit's impact, oversee workflow and optimize staff productivity. Haley has practiced urban planning and landscape architecture at a variety of scales, from comprehensive planning to detail site design. She has

been involved at all levels of design from concept to construction details, project and client management, and the creation and direction of a for-profit implementation program for a private non-profit. Throughout her career, Haley's design work has incorporated both natural systems and community engagement into every project despite the scale or location. Her varied work experience has given her a variety of perspectives and the context needed to be a creative problem solver.

Haley is passionate about providing opportunities for civic engagement, strengthening neighborhoods, empowering residents to improve their environment, and fostering incremental shifts that add up to big changes. She is also obsessed with alternative transportation networks that make it safe and easy for pedestrians and cyclists to get around and access daily needs.

Haley is nationally recognized for her leadership in the profession and has served the ASLA at the national level as the vice president of communications, chapter president council chair, annual meeting host committee co-chair, and on various committees. She has also served the local chapter as the chapter president and involved committee member.

Haley was recognized as one of Baton Rouge Business Report's "Forty Under 40" and Baton Rouge Area Leadership.



## Wayne Feiden, FAICP

Wayne is Director of Planning & Sustainability for the City of Northampton and Lecturer of Practice in planning and sustainability at UMass. His focus includes sustainability, resiliency, regeneration, urban revitalization, open space, alternative transportation, and public health. He led Northampton to earn the nation's first 5-STAR Community for municipal sustainability as well as "Bicycle-Friendly," "Pedestrian-Friendly," "APA Great Streets," and "National Historic Trust Distinctive Communities" designations.

His research publications include "Conservation Limited Development" (in press), "Building Sustainability and Resiliency into Local Planning Agencies" (APA PAS Memos), and Local Agency Planning Management and Assessing Sustainability (APA PAS Reports). Wayne's Bellagio Residency (Italy), State Department Professional Fellowship Exchange (Malaysia), German Marshall Fund fellowship (United Kingdom and Denmark), Fulbright Specialist Fellowships (South Africa and New Zealand), Eisenhower Fellowship (Hungary) all focused on revitalization and sustainability. He has served on 33 multidisciplinary teams to other communities on revitalization and sustainability issues. Wayne is a fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners. His awards include honorary member of Western Mass AIA, professional planner and advocacy planner awards from APA-MA, and American Trails Advocacy Award. Wayne has a BS Natural Resources from the University of Michigan and a Masters in City Planning from the University of Northampton Carolina.

## Mike Davis, FAIA, LEED AP

Michael R. Davis, FAIA, LEED AP, Principal and President at Bergmeyer Associates, Inc., is a practicing architect and an advocate for sustainable public policy. He was 2013 President of the Boston Society of Architects and 2015-2016 Chair of the Board of Trustees of the BSA Foundation. For the American Institute of Architects, Mike currently serves as Advocacy

ambassador for the National AIA Committee on the Environment and as a newly-appointed member of the AIA Board Government Advocacy Committee. He participated on a national AIA Materials Knowledge and Transparency working group and was a contributing author for an April 2016 AIA sustainability white paper, "Materials Transparency and Risk for Architects". Mike has participated on or led AIA Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) and Sustainable Design for Resilience Team (DART) charrettes in Ithaca, NY, DeKalb County, GA, Augusta, GA, Tremonton, UT, St. Helens, OR, Louisville, KY, and Bath, ME, as well as the AIA's first International R/UDAT charrette in Dublin, Ireland. Mike's recent professional projects include a modular student residence hall at Endicott College, a LEED Certified facility for Hostelling International Boston in an adaptively-reused historic building, and a deep-energy retrofit of public housing units for the Boston Housing Authority at the Cathedral Family Development, which achieved LEED Platinum certification. He blogs about his firm's work as signatory to the AIA 2030 Commitment at <http://mikedavisfaia.wordpress.com>. Mr. Davis advised the Boston Planning and Development Agency as a Member and Chair of the Boston Civic Design Commission from 1996 to 2018 and served on Boston Mayor Thomas Menino's Green Building Task Force and Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick's Net Zero Energy Building Task Force. He holds a Bachelor Degree in Architecture from the Pennsylvania State University and a Master of Architecture from Yale University

## AIA Staff:

### Paola Capo

Paola Capo is the Sustainability and Communities by Design Specialist at the AIA.. In her position, she provides architects and communities with the resources they need to create healthier, more sustainable and

equitable built environments. She graduated from Georgetown University in 2017 with a degree in Science, Technology, and International Affairs, concentrating on Energy and the Environment—a degree inspired by the many places she lived growing up as an Army brat. She recently completed the 6-week [IN]City program at UC Berkeley to expand on her knowledge in urban planning.

### Erin Simmons

Erin Simmons is the Senior Director of Design Assistance at the Center for Communities by Design at the AIA in Washington, DC. The Center is a provider of pro bono technical assistance and participatory planning for community revitalization. Through its design assistance programs, the AIA has worked in over 250 communities and has been the recipient of numerous awards including "Organization of the Year" by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) and the "Outstanding Program Award" from the Community Development Society. Erin is a leading practitioner of the design assistance process, providing expertise, facilitation, and support for the Center's Design Assistance Team programs. In this capacity, she works with AIA components, members, partner organizations and community leaders to provide technical design assistance to communities across the world. Her portfolio includes work in over 100 communities across the United States and internationally. Erin is an Academician of the Academy of Urbanism in London, UK. Prior to joining the AIA, Erin worked as historic preservationist and architectural historian for an environmental and engineering firm, where she practiced preservation planning, created historic district design guidelines and zoning ordinances, and conducted historic resource surveys. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Florida State University and a Master's degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Georgia.

## Joel Mills

Joel Mills is Senior Director of the American Institute of Architects' Center for Communities by Design. The Center is a leading provider of pro bono technical assistance and democratic design for community success. Its programs have catalyzed billions of dollars in sustainable development across the United States, helping to create some of the most vibrant places in America today. The Center's design assistance process has been recognized with numerous awards and has been replicated and adapted across the world. Joel's 27-year career has been focused on strengthening civic capacity, public processes and civic institutions. This work has helped millions of people participate in democratic processes, visioning efforts, and community planning initiatives. He has delivered presentations, training content, workshops and public processes in over a dozen countries across 5 continents. In the United States, Joel has provided consultative services to hundreds of communities, leading participatory processes on the ground in over 85 communities across 35 states. His work has been featured in over 1,000 media stories. Joel has served on dozens of expert working groups, boards, juries, and panels focused on civic discourse and participation, sustainability, and democracy. He was a founding Board Member of the International Association for Public Participation's United States Chapter. He has spoken at numerous international conferences concerning democratic urbanism and the role of democracy in urban success, including serving as the Co-Convener of the Remaking Cities Congress in 2013. Joel is an Academician of the Academy of Urbanism in London, UK. He is the author of numerous articles on the relationship between democracy, civic capacity and community.



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# Grant County, NM: A Vision for Five Points

Facilitated by AIA Communities by Design

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