



LA RISTRA NORTHWEST

Empower People. Build Community. Create Jobs.



Spring 2018
Update

2014-2018 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments

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THE HIGH COUNTRY PLATEAU | Northwest, New Mexico

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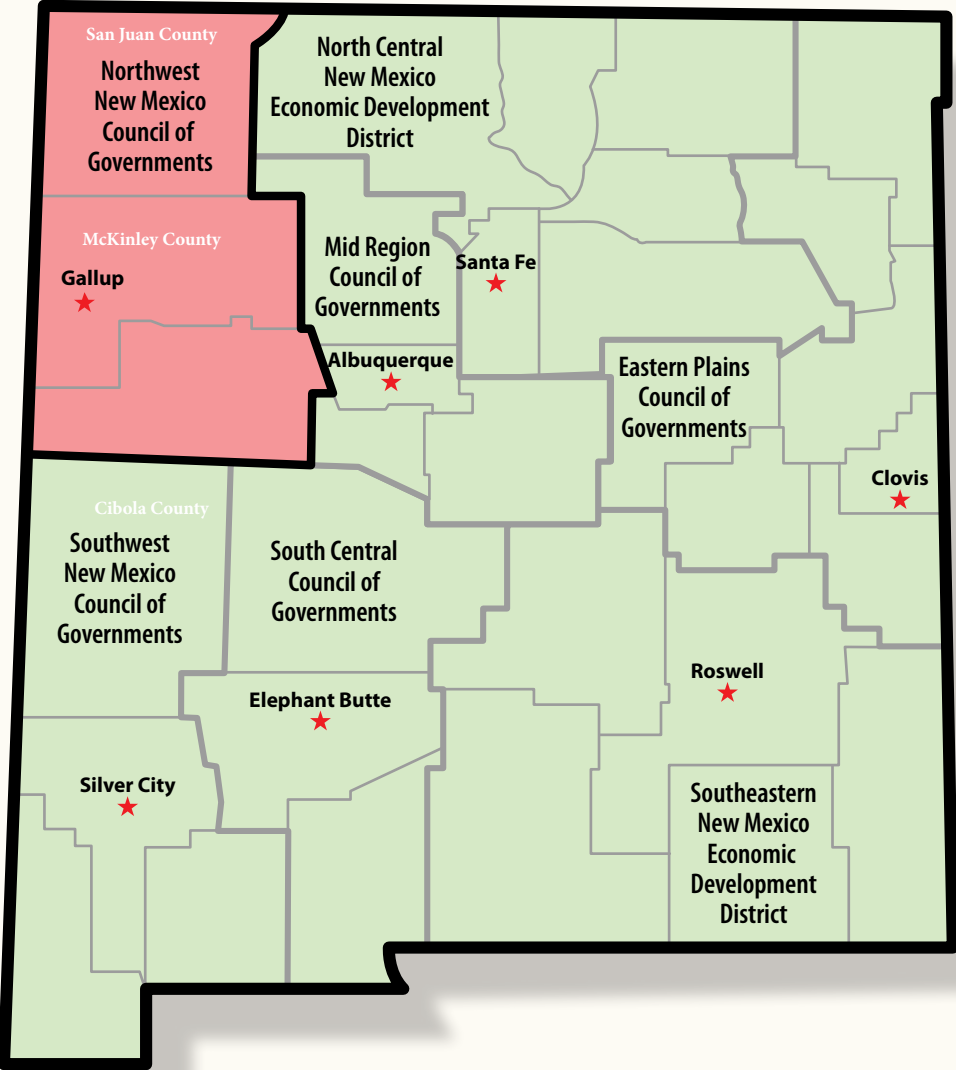


New Mexico Association of Regional Councils

The 7 Districts of The New Mexico Association of Regional Councils (NewMARC)

The Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments is designated by the State of New Mexico as “State Planning & Development District 1,” serving Cibola, McKinley and San Juan Counties.

The state’s 6 remaining Districts join together with the Northwest COG in the statewide trade group, the New Mexico Association of Regional Councils (NewMARC).



I. WELCOME & OVERVIEW

Welcome to **La Ristra-Northwest**, a regional strategy for growth and prosperity in the high-plateau country of Northwest New Mexico.

This La Ristra-Northwest strategy reflects three exciting developments in the field of integrated economic planning:

- It serves as the pilot initiative in the State to align regional templates with the statewide framework, La Ristra New Mexico;
- It draws inspiration from work being done nationwide to forge integrated and innovative plans and action strategies at the state and regional levels; and
- It is supported and reinforced by new guidance from the US Economic Development Administration encouraging innovative action and accountability in the crafting and implementation of “Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies” (CEDS), along with a portfolio of emerging tools and resources for us in informing and energizing economic development efforts across the nation.

Here in our quadrant of the Four Corners region, these are extraordinary times. We are “in transition.” Following a turbulent century of growth and development – driven largely by a volatile and cyclical “energy economy” based on the mining of coal, uranium, oil and gas – the region is facing the imperatives of transition and change to a diversified and sustainable economy of the future, no longer so dependent on extractive industries.

The region’s economy is split between

- the wealth pockets formed by governmental revenues, retail commerce and energy mining and power production, on the one hand, and
- chronic poverty across its 77 rural communities, on the other.

Taken as a whole, as compared with nearly 400 economic development districts across the country, the Northwest New Mexico district ranks in the lowest 8th percentile on the recently published “Innovation 2.0” index of economic viability.

Time for a new mindset, a new strategy, and a new call to action – in the context of a new vision, new collaboration and new investment. The La Ristra-Northwest strategy encompasses three broad arenas of development:

✦ **Empower People;**
✦ **Build Community; and**
✦ **Create Jobs & Enterprise.**



The **La Ristra** framework provides a platform for a dynamic and continuous progression of research, planning and action.

La Ristra-Northwest is a web-based regional strategy, to be actively worked with, updated, and accounted for, tapping well-designed and accessible tools for shared communication and decision-making. Utilizing a software technology adapted for **La Ristra** by the New Mexico Association of Regional Councils (NewMARC) from the Panoramic© program knowledge tool, projects and investments will be posted to the regional website, displayed on interactive GIS maps, and further developed, funded and tracked in real time.

While accounting for the profound diversity of economies, cultures and resources across the region, **La Ristra-Northwest** provides a unified framework for collaborative action. In implementing this Strategy, stakeholders throughout the region will be engaged in the framework and the integrative communications involved in giving our priorities and initiatives the best chance for success. We encourage you to explore La Ristra New Mexico in detail. (Add link here)

We thank our seven Economic Development District partners in New Mexico, who work together with us under the NewMARC umbrella to forge new regional and statewide strategies, collaborative frameworks and communication tools in support of growth and prosperity for all of our communities. We also thank our many strategic partners throughout the Northwest New Mexico region, the State of New Mexico and across the country, who have contributed so vitally to the development of **La Ristra-Northwest**.

To a Prosperous Future,

Jeff Kiely

Executive Director
Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments



II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (Spring 2018 Update)

Our regional strategy – *La Ristra Northwest* – puts forth a vision addressing People, Community and Enterprise, identifies challenges and opportunities to address for our future development, and sets forth key strategies for moving the region forward.

Our vision challenges us to reach higher:

*Northwest New Mexico
will be restored, sustained and transformed
by growing individual, household and community prosperity,
by creating great places to live, work, play and stay,
and by putting the region's workforce to work.*

Our launch-point provides a mix of (a) serious chronic and emergent challenges to sustainable economy and (b) unique cultural, geographic, natural resource and infrastructural assets on which to build new capacity and growth.

Our challenges are most starkly represented in economic statistics that place our region in the bottom 20th percentile of the nation, with large portions of our population across the 15,000-square-mile area actually inhabiting beneath the 5th and 10th percentiles. Our high unemployment rate (and much higher in rural communities) reflects both the lack of available jobs and the mismatch between the skills of our workforce and the demands of employers.

With over half of the region's population and land base on American Indian reservations, differences in economic frameworks, along with a long-standing history of intercultural and jurisdictional tensions, must now be transcended in the form of cross-sector and cross-jurisdictional communication and cooperation.

Our assets are also considerable – though often less than optimally leveraged for the equitable benefit of the population as a whole. Our people are the most important resource, but need support and opportunity in order to achieve their desired economic well-being.

The global tourism market maintains an attraction to and fascination with our indigenous art and culture. The Four Corners region, in which we inhabit the New Mexico quadrant, is so rich in ancient and living culture, as well as geographic wonders, that National Geographic Magazine selected it as one of only 17 venues worldwide for a Geotourism and MapGuide initiative (check it out at www.fourcornersgeotourism.com).

The energy economy has been a very big deal in northwest New Mexico, serving as a primary economic driver in the 20th century. The region's experience in mining (uranium, coal, oil and gas) and power generation may be seen as providing foundational industrial and human resource assets that can translate into newly diversified economic activity. The Northwest New Mexico COG has collaborated with public and private partners in parlaying POWER grant funding from the US Economic Development Administration into commissioning a major assessment and forward strategy for our historically coal-reliant region, as well as the formation of a broad-based collaborative, reflected in the Four Corners Future Forum attended in Fall 2017 by over 140 stakeholders from all of the Four Corners states, and currently embodied by an ongoing collaborative forming up as the Four Corners Regional Consortium.

The goals and strategies of *La Ristra New Mexico* represent a major "stretch" for the leaders, stakeholders and citizens of the northwest New Mexico region. We see that it will require a powerful synergy of actions taken along a number of different, but inter-related, strategic pathways. In this framework, we seek to align community development investments (in workforce, infrastructure and quality-of-life amenities, for example) with economic development objectives (new commerce, new employment, new investment in the regional community and increased economic well-being by all sectors of the population).

In carrying out, and continuously refining and updating the strategy, we look to achieve breakthroughs and reach important milestones through implementation of strategic projects and initiatives, while at the same time tracking the arc of our progress against big picture indicators, such as poverty alleviation, educational achievement, business creation and asset attainment.

New Mexico Economy

“New Mexico has the opportunity to adopt a new approach to economic development and a set policies designed to provide economic opportunity for the people of the state. New Mexico does not lack the resources to invest in its own physical and human resources.”

Lee Reynis and Jim Peach
New Mexico 2050

III. Background

A Summary Assessment of the Economic Landscape

Overview

The communities of Northwest New Mexico occupy a unique place in the American economy – geographically, historically, industrially and culturally. As such, they represent unique sets of assets, challenges and opportunities.

Over 230,000 people inhabit 15,000 square miles of high plateau lands across three counties – Cibola, McKinley and San Juan – in the Four Corners quadrant of New Mexico, dispersed among six cities and 77 rural communities. One-half of the population and one-half of the land base are Native American, representing four tribal nations.

In broad strokes, the Northwest New Mexico region is a fragmented economy reflecting strong economic activity in some sectors while at the same time showing chronically high levels of poverty across the region – particularly in rural communities on American Indian reservations. There is also a pronounced range and disparity in economic productivity across the three counties, with San Juan County generating over 70% of the region's economy (\$7 billion of \$10 billion in annual gross receipts for the region), followed by McKinley County with 24%, and Cibola County with 6%.

The region boasts abundant natural resources and a 20th century legacy of robust mining and power production activity, as well as high levels of governmental employment and income and an outsized “hub retail” sector capitalizing on a far-flung rural market. We are also rich in cultural diversity, in high quality indigenous arts and crafts, and in world-class geographic, archaeological and recreational assets. Higher education institutions are well-established throughout the region, and Interstate 40 and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad provide major transportation and logistical assets, running east-west across the region's southern corridor, supplemented by north-south state and national highways extending into the Four Corners region.



Demographic statistics, however, place the northwest New Mexico region near the bottom of many state and national indicators of social and economic well-being, with unemployment rates soaring above 50 percent in many rural tribal communities and disproportionate levels of social distress reflected in such factors as alcohol abuse and addiction, domestic violence and low educational attainment. In recent years, the WK Kellogg Foundation identified New Mexico as one of three states with the lowest indicators of child and family well-being, and the northwestern quadrant as the most needful region of the State.

Our **La Ristra-Northwest** strategy addresses the region's assets and challenges, while putting forth key elements for a strategic path forward for the region, as captured in the regional white paper supporting regional stakeholder sessions held as part of the strategic planning process. These are the economic challenges and strategic opportunities facing Northwest New Mexico in the run-up to 2020:

Restore. The past decade has seen economic stress from the “great recession,” deepened by astronomical federal debt, substantial cutbacks in all areas of federal discretionary funding, downward stresses on state, municipal, county and tribal budgets, and an overall decline in economic well-being by increasing numbers of Northwest New Mexico families.

In the extractive industry sector alone, the region lost nearly 6,000 jobs between 2008 and 2011, and new or restored jobs have been slow to re-appear. In intervening years, regulatory and market forces produced a new wave of cutbacks and layoffs. Recent regulatory changes may not sustainably alter market trends in the energy industry, and the challenge remains to restore economic viability in the face of these trends.

In rural communities, including many governed by our region's Tribal nations, economic challenges have grown and household incomes have suffered. The economic “tsunami” of Federal cutbacks and downward pressure on the mining and power generation industry conspire to further threaten economic opportunity and quality of life for thousands of our families. Our challenge is to restore momentum of progress and economic foundations that were eroded by recession and other economic forces.

Sustain. Our communities can claim many important assets, and our challenge will be to keep these assets in play as we forge our economic strategy for the next five years.

We have workforce - many of whom are unemployed or under-employed - that needs to be better trained and put to work. We have critical infrastructure (rail lines; interstate, US and state highways; and broadband fiber); industrial facilities (mines and power plants); water lines (including the billion-dollar pipeline now under construction to bring sustainable water

supply to the eastern reaches of the Navajo Nation and to Gallup. We have institutional power in our city, county and tribal governments, schools and colleges, chambers of commerce and tourism agencies, and private sector players. How will we collaborate to sustain these important regional assets?

Transform. The next challenge is to inaugurate collaborative actions that take the region to new levels of economic prosperity and well-being. If a tenth of our workforce is out of work (higher in rural), how will we create the 500 new jobs per year that will move us closer to full employment? How many economic-base jobs will get us there (i.e., in industries that export goods and services and import dollars into the economy)?

It is acknowledged that it's the private sector that creates jobs, but the role of the public sector (governments, schools, colleges) cannot be minimized. Our philosophy is that sustainable economic development occurs in combination and in partnership:

- the **private sector** invests in and establishes business and industry, produces goods and services to meet market demand, hires qualified people, and contributes tax dollars to the local and state economy;
- the **public sector** sets community vision, provides essential infra-structure, educates the workforce, and administers appropriate policy and regulation to provide for quality of life, promote justice and opportunity, protect the environment and secure broad public benefit.

In building up the economy and creating jobs for the population, community leaders are challenged to:

- set the **vision**,
- attract and put in place supportive **means** (infrastructure, policy guidance and financial resources), and
- proactively focus on a **plan of action** that will lead to positive results - otherwise not achievable without such planning and collaboration.

In many communities, this public commitment includes people and organizations who specifically focus on the core economic development activities of

- industrial attraction and recruitment,
- local business retention and expansion, and
- new business start-ups.

However, for these core activities to be successful, a broad spectrum of needs and capacities must be addressed at the local, regional and state levels. Many of these fall under the concept of success factors, or “factors of production” per the nomenclature of New Mexico's Jobs Council, i.e., those conditions that must be in place for business activity to start, grow and prosper.

Inputs

There are many knowledge streams and collaborative conversations flowing into the La Ristra Northwest framework, including most prominently:

Core Partnerships – involving collaborative work with the region’s economic development organizations: Cibola Communities Economic Development Foundation; Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation; and Four Corners Economic Development.

- ✦ In **Cibola County**, collaborations have included:
 - county-level forums, trainings and focus groups for economic planning (EDA-CEDS), rural development (*USDA-SET*), and job targeting (*New Mexico Interim Jobs Council*—regional workshops);
 - coal economy transitions, including collaboration with McKinley County in a State-supported edge-cutting public-private partnership with Tri-State Generation & Transmission Co-op to proactively study economic diversification and workforce opportunities related to economic assets represented in the Escalante Generating Station;
 - prospecting for resources to provide last-mile high-speed broadband capacity for local business;
 - piloting location-neutral programming for local displaced workers (*SoloWorks Job Creation Center*); and
 - completing comprehensive plans and accessing substantial public investments toward development of the Zuni Mountains Trails network traversing Cibola and McKinley Counties.
- ✦ In **McKinley County**, in addition to the CEDS, SET, Jobs Council and POWER forums and meetings, collaborations have included:
 - facilitation of a series of educational roundtables on economic development issues for local civic leaders;
 - development of *Gallup Energy Logistics Park* in partnership with the private sector, including the 4CITE study (*4 Corners Intermodal Transloading Equinox*) outlining transportation network/system developments needed for new industrial activity, in conjunction with rail and interstate assets traversing the community;
 - significant downtown revitalization activity and investment in historic downtown Gallup;
 - investment in Executive Pulse contact management software to track recruitment and business retention/expansion activity across stakeholders in the area;
 - POWER project implementation work involving collaboration with the COG and Cibola County on the strategic planning with TriState GTC and its Escalante Generating Station on transitional business cluster development utilizing the land, built infrastructure and knowledge assets of the power plant;

- collaboration with Cibola County and US Forest Service on planning and funding for the bi-county *Zuni Mountains Trails* network; and
- emerging focus on breakthroughs and collaborations in workforce development, in collaboration with the WK Kellogg Foundation.

- ✦ In **San Juan County**, collaborations have included:
 - Assistance in planning, development and staff recruitment for the 501(c)(6) Four Corners Economic Development (4CED) corporation,
 - Planning meetings in association with EDA CEDS, USDA SET, and New Mexico Interim Jobs Council processes.
 - Receiving and working on a pair of “sister” EDA grants under the POWER initiative for coal-impacted communities: one to the District for regional assessment and strategy development; and one to the College for upgrading of energy training technology and re-training of dislocated energy workforce. Under the POWER banner, the COG and the College partnered with 4CED, Arizona Public Service and many others to plan and host the Four Corners Future Forum in November 2017 to develop a collaborative action agenda and robust public-private partnership to implement the POWER findings across the Four Corners region.
 - A community branding initiative (“Jolt Your Journey”) that has generated major momentum toward growing the outdoor recreation industry in the Farmington area formally referred to at the Outdoor Recreation Industry Initiative (ORII).

New Mexico 5-Year Economic Development Plan – involving preparation of the State’s strategy for the 2013-2018 timeframe, in collaboration with the seven COG districts and many public and private sector partners across the State. Strategic Priorities outlined in the Plan include:

- ✦ **Innovation & Enterprise** – generating commercially marketable ideas and technologies, and attracting new investments and incentives for startup enterprise.
- ✦ **Rural Renaissance** – promoting prosperous rural communities
- ✦ **Borderplex and Logistic Industry Development** – leveraging the State’s assets and opportunities along the border to support new industrial development in the logistics sector
- ✦ **Business Resource Center/One-Stop Shop** – providing an entrepreneurial roadmap and mentoring resource to help New Mexico businesses achieve success and sustainability
- ✦ **Center of Excellence in Water Research** – in acknowledgement of the critical importance of water supply to all forms of economic growth in the State, this initiative aims to establish world class expertise in-state to generate long-term water supply solutions
- ✦ **Workforce Development** – deploying the resources of the *Job Training Incentive*

Program (JTIP) and collaborating with workforce stakeholders to provide business and industry with an educated and employable pool of workers for the 21st century economy

- ✦ **Industrial Recruitment** – collaborating with state, regional and local public and private sector partners to promote the State’s competitive advantages, attract new industry and improve shared accountability in tracking progress in business and employment
- ✦ **Film & Emerging Media** – expanding production and infrastructure support for film production, marketing the State’s unique assets to attract new film production and associated media companies, and promoting film tourism

Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board—Strategic Plan – facilitated by Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments and North Central New Mexico Economic Development District, and including the following strategic priorities:

- ✦ **TELLING THE STORY:** Branding, Messaging & Marketing the NALWDB – Create and communicate our value proposition to partners, constituents and stakeholders.
- ✦ **TEAMING UP:** Building Effective Partnerships – Achieve new levels of unity and collaboration in a client-centered workforce system.
- ✦ **INVESTING IN WORKFORCE:** Optimizing, Diversifying & Growing Resources—Expand services and long-term impact through building a broader resource base.
- ✦ **WORKING SMARTER:** Improving, Tracking & Reporting Performance – Create a performance information system that organizes and reports performance data aligned with the accountability and decision-making needs of the Board and its partners.
- ✦ **PURSUING EXCELLENCE:** Refining & Strengthening Board Functioning – Ensure that all Board members know their roles and responsibilities, and are engaged and active in helping lead the organization.

Trail of the Ancients SET Plan (USDA’s “Stronger Economies Together” initiative) – referring to the “high quality plan” for rural development in the Northwest New Mexico region, as developed in partnership with the New Mexico office of USDA-Rural Development and the Cooperative Extension Service at New Mexico State University. The planning process was undertaken in parallel with the COG District’s work on the EDA-supported “Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy” (CEDS), and was to be considered a primary reference for investment and development in the region’s rural communities. It involved a year-and-a-half of training seminars conducted by NMSU-Extension with sub-regional cohorts of rural stakeholders, culminating in preparation of the “high quality plan” recently approved by USDA-Rural Development, thus qualifying the region for priority consideration in tapping USDA resources. Key strategic priorities of the SET plan are depicted in the above graphic.



Long Range Transportation Plan for Northwest New Mexico – produced by the COG-administered Northwest Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NWRTPO) in alignment with the excellent statewide template and standards for the New Mexico Long Range Transportation Plan. The region’s Transportation Strategy includes 9 priority issues to be addressed within the overall accountability framework of the State’s plan:

- ✦ **Maintenance** – Address infrastructure maintenance, especially bridges;
- ✦ **Coordination** – Improve inter-jurisdictional coordination – tribal, county, state, federal;
- ✦ **Economic Growth** – Anticipate and support new economic development in the energy & logistics sector and in conjunction with general economic growth trends in San Juan County;
- ✦ **Commercial Connectivity** – Optimize rail connectivity for oil and gas, coal, fly ash, and agricultural products;
- ✦ **Public Transportation** – Improve and expand regional public transportation service;
- ✦ **Rural School Bus Routes** – Increase investments in improving the region’s school bus routes, most of whose mileage is on unpaved roads;
- ✦ **Livable Communities** – Promote coordinated, locally-sensitive development according to Federal “Livable Community” principles;
- ✦ Rural Funding – Improve access to funding for rural transportation projects.

New Mexico Interim Jobs Council – involving three years of planning and policy work commissioned by the New Mexico State Legislature, staffed by Lautman Economic Architecture and assisted by the State’s 7 COG districts. The goal was to identify the number of economic-base jobs needed statewide over 10 years in order to restore employment rates to pre-recession levels. The approach was to utilize a calculation matrix to estimate job-creation targets, to

organize these analyses according to state-appropriate industry clusters (later refined as “program theaters” to focus programmatic resource investments), to identify and prioritize gaps in the factors of production that would be needed to achieve the job targets in each program theater, and to generate policy and funding recommendations for consideration by the Legislature.

Within this Jobs Council framework, analyses for the Northwest New Mexico region showed a need for over 11,000 jobs over 10 years (or 1,100 jobs per year), which represented a job creation “deficit” of over 4,000 jobs 400 per year) based on an estimated regional capacity to create only 6,800 jobs (680 per year). Factor-of-Production gaps were most pronounced in Qualified Workforce, Infrastructure (especially broadband and data storage), Marketing & Lead Generation, Transportation, and Capital.

POWER (Partnerships & Opportunities in Workforce & Economic Revitalization) – involving a pair of grants from the Austin Regional Office of the US Economic Development Administration:

- ✦ **The POWER Report** -- \$327,300 to the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments to commission an assessment of the region's coal-reliant economy along with strategic recommendations, and to facilitate the implementation and financing of promising strategies to diversify economic activity, productivity and employment throughout the region. This study was completed by Highland Economics LLC and published in February 2017, and its findings are being actively worked on for implementation. The POWER report can be accessed via the Appendix.
- ✦ **Energy Workforce for the 21st Century** -- \$1.4 million to San Juan College to upgrade instrumentation and controls training equipment in the College's world-class School of Energy, thus expanding the School's capacity to provide skill training and certification that can be used in a variety of industrial fields, as well as direct investment in retraining opportunities for dislocated energy workers seeking new career paths after layoffs by the area's coal, power, gas and oil companies.

To capitalize on the findings and experiences emerging from these POWER grant projects, the College, the COG district and many regional stakeholders partnered to plan and convene the *Four Corners Future Forum* in Farmington in November 2017, where the POWER Report findings were discussed, sub-regional issues and priorities showcased, an action agenda created and a Four Corners regional partnership set in motion to oversee and coordinate implementation of the action agenda. Key areas to be engaged include: cross-boundary, inter-jurisdictional collaboration between tribal and non-tribal jurisdictions; timelines and scenarios for the decommissioning of coal-related industrial activity; diversification strategies and their potential for replacing and surpassing the coal industry as an economic driver; and public and private sector roles in financing economic initiatives going forward. The final report from the Forum is included in the Appendix.



New Mexico Economy

“ The more that New Mexico appreciates, develops, and supports its residents language skills, the more appealing it will be as a partner for technology enterprises and other companies wanting to do business in Latin America.”

Lee Reynis and Jim Peach
New Mexico 2050

Reflection:

A Look Back at the 2009 Northwest New Mexico CEDS

It is a challenge to accurately measure capacity and output for Northwest New Mexico, especially when different parameters, data and approaches are being utilized by regional partners. In 2009, the Northwest New Mexico *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy* identified five benchmarks to monitor regional growth and prosperity. These goals – to be impacted by a combination of economic development activities across the region and over a five-year span – included: 1) Increase household income; 2) Increase per capita income; 3) Decrease percent of people living in poverty; 4) Increase educational attainment; and 5) Create a net gain of 5,000 jobs. The following summary provides a brief assessment of goal attainment by the region.

INCOME:

The data are inconclusive when attempting to assess net change in income. With regard to Median Household Income (MHI), the data reveal positive change for both 5-year periods, 2005–2010 and 2010–2015. Over the entire 11-year span covered by the data:

- ✦ Cibola County MHI improved over 12% from \$31,670 to \$35,580;
- ✦ McKinley County MHI improved over 4%, from \$27,833 to \$29,040;
- ✦ San Juan County MHI improved over 33%, from \$36,796 to \$49,173.

This reveals a significant spread across the three counties, with the regional average generally on a par with the statewide average for New Mexico of \$42,127. On this measure, **the 2009 CEDS goal was partially attained, but with overall gains falling behind annual inflation rates.**

In terms of Per Capita Personal Income (PCPI), from baselines of \$22,665 (2005) and \$27,530 (2010), Regional PCPI in 2015 was \$31,865. This showed an increase of about 1.5% per year (about \$1,000) per year, though 15% below the 2015 New Mexico state average of \$37,605. In this category of income growth, **the 2009 CEDS goal was partially attained, but again, with overall gains lagging behind inflation.**

POVERTY:

County-level data for poverty show poverty levels climbing faster in each county and for the region than for the state as a whole:

- In McKinley County, a poverty increase from 34% in 2007 to 37% in 2012, but back down to 34% in 2015 in 2012;
- In Cibola County, a 25% increase from 23% in 2007 to 29% in 2015;
- in San Juan County, a 9% increase from 17½% in 2007 to 19% in 2015.

For the regional as a whole, the poverty level increased 16% from 23.3% in 2007 to 25½% in 2015, which was 27% higher than the statewide average poverty level of 20% (a 10% increase in poverty levels compared with 2007). **The 2009 CEDS goal was not attained.**

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT:

Educational attainment in the region was mixed. In the period 2007 to 2014, the region's rates for high school graduation and beyond dropped, from a 78% rate in 2007 to 73% in 2014. In this respect, **the 2009 CEDS goal was not met.** In 2007, region's college attainment rates of 11% were 130% below New Mexico statewide, at 25%. By 2014, the region's rate of bachelor's degree attainment had improved by one-third to 15%, while New Mexico's rates increased by one-sixth, to 29%, or nearly double the region's average. **The 2009 CEDS goal was partially met.**

EMPLOYMENT:

Against the backdrop of our goal of 5,000 net new jobs in the region, and drawing from Custom Region-Builder on the StatsAmerica website (based on YSDOL Bureau of Labor Statistics data), trend lines show 6% net job loss, or 5,034 fewer jobs, between 2005 and 2016, i.e., from 88,258 to 83,224. The number of unemployed increased by 2,156 (from 5,369 to 7,525), or 40% during the same time period; the unemployment rate increased from 5.7% in 2005 to 8.3% in 2016. In that period, there were interim periods of pronounced fluctuation, as reflected in net loss of about 5,000 jobs between 2008 and 2010 in the San Juan Basin related to contractions in the oil and gas industry. Net job losses were also severe in Cibola and McKinley Counties, and San Juan County rebounded for a net gain of over 600 jobs. Overall, the employment goal in the 2009 CEDS was not met.

THE INNOVATION INDEX

The *Innovation Index* was created by the US Economic Development Administration to support strategic economic development planning in rural regions. The Innovation Index provides a set of analytic tools that can help regional leaders reach a strong consensus on strategic direction. The data can also be used to see and understand a region's weaknesses, strengths and potential. In this way, data and analysis can inform stakeholders' collective action toward a common vision and can guide complex decision-making by analyzing a region's assets or liabilities in detail.



Innovation Headline —the one, high-level summary index—is comprised of five major categorical indexes organized thematically. Those five major indexes are built up from several core indexes defined below.

Human Capital and Knowledge — This category suggests the extent to which a region's population and labor force are able to engage in innovative activities.

Business Dynamics — This category gauges the competitiveness of a region by tracking the entry and exit of individual firms, including the movement of enterprise from outdated ideas and practices to new and potentially revolutionary ones that grow community wealth.

Business Profile — This category measures local business conditions and resources available to entrepreneurs and businesses.

Employment and Productivity — This category describes economic growth, regional desirability or direct outcomes of innovative activity.

Economic Well-Being — This category explores standard of living and other economic outcomes.

Indexes attempt to present complex data simply, thereby enabling the development of dashboards. The headline, categorical and core indexes score a region or county relative to the United States on a continuous scale. There are two measurement components: a) Index Value and b) Ranking.

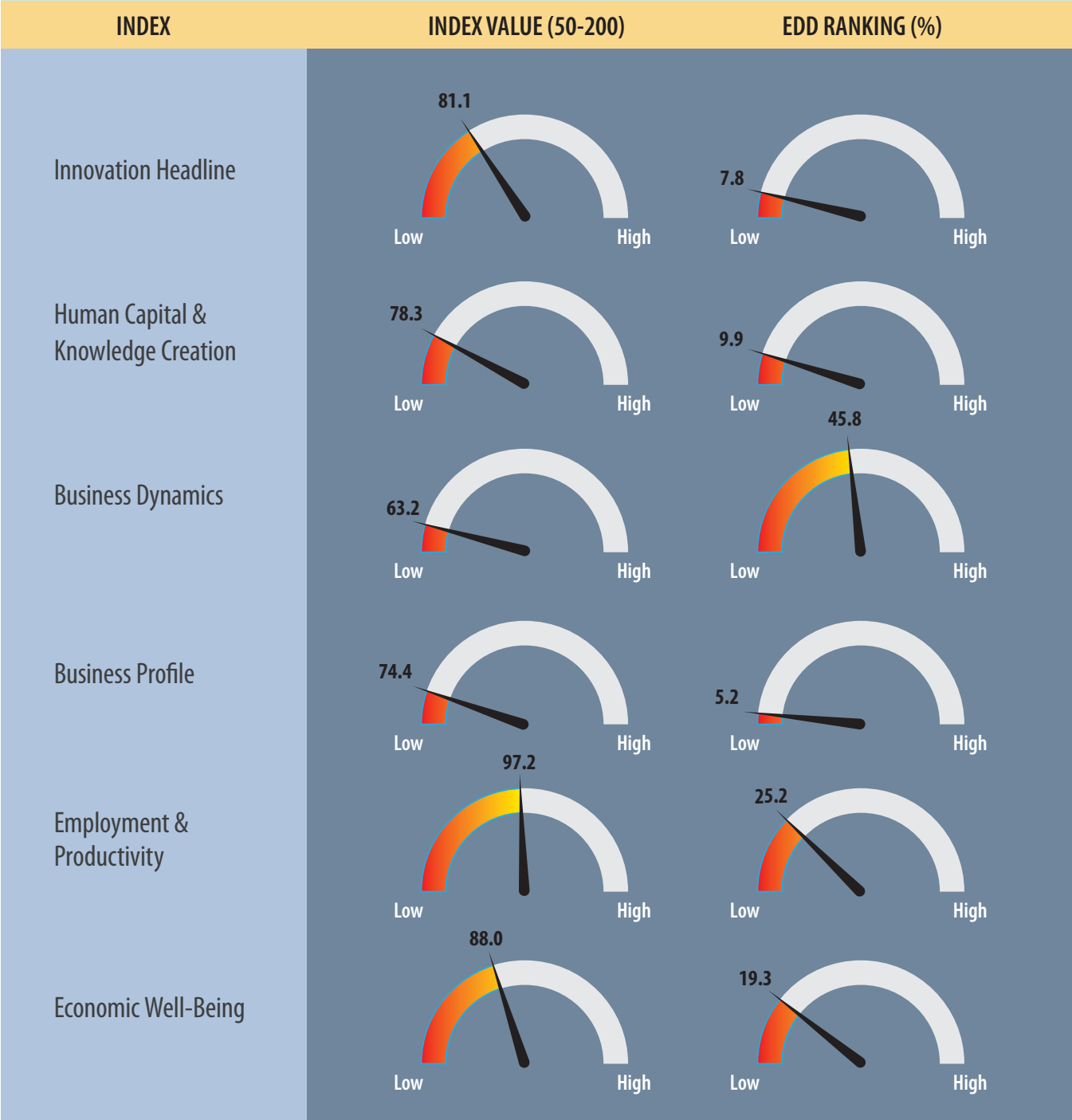
Index Value — The index range is 50 (low) to 100 (typical US median score) to 200 (exemplary). An index value around 100 means the region is on par with the rest of America.

EDD Ranking — The ranking compares an economic development district (EDD) to other EDDs in the country. There are 384 EDDs. A rank of “1” is the top position. A rank of “384” is the lowest position. When comparing counties, the ranking positions one county to all the other counties in the USA. There are 3,110 counties. Again, “1” would imply the best county innovation score in the USA; “3,110” would imply the worst county innovation score in the nation.

Interpreting the Northwest New Mexico dashboard, we see that the *Innovation Headline* index value of 81.1 falls well below the US median average. Further, our EDD ranking of 354 falls at the bottom 8% of all economic development districts in the country, implying that 92% of the nation is outperforming the Northwest New Mexico region on these measures.

A quick glance at the other categorical indexes conveys a similar story, that Northwest New Mexico’s index values and EDD rankings are low and need to be dramatically improved. These indexes suggest that our region’s population and labor force are limited in their ability to engage in innovative activities; that the region is “about average” in general competitiveness; that local business conditions and resources available to entrepreneurs and businesses are poor; that growth, regional desirability and direct outcomes of innovative activity are marginal; and that our standard of living and other economic outcomes are low.

Innovation Speedometer



New Mexico Economy

“What will the New Mexico economy look like in the year 2050? There is nothing automatic about economic growth or economic development. Without a new direction—a new strategy—New Mexico’s economy in 2050 could look surprisingly like the New Mexico economy of 2014.”

Lee Reynis and Jim Peach
New Mexico 2050



New Mexico Cultural Affairs and The Arts

“ By 2050, leaders will have come to see the arts and culture enterprises as the central, if not dominant, contributor to the health of an economy based on quality of life, not expansive growth.”

V.B. Price
New Mexico 2050

The expanded Innovation Dashboard provides detail on a selection of particular metrics of interest that together comprise the summary scores for each of the primary Index categories. These are the indices that the Northwest Region will be tracking over time, as updated periodically within the web-based Innovation 2.0 framework.

For most of the region’s stakeholders, the category attracting the greatest interest will be “Economic Well-Being Index,” as it reveals the economic health of the region across readily understood measures, such as personal income, poverty, unemployment, and compensation. As the dashboard shows, the region ranks in the lowest 20th percentile of the country with regard to this important Index – with poverty rate most telling in the bottom 3rd percentile.

Northwest New Mexico Innovation Dashboard

Index Categories	Index Value Range: 50 – 200 Median = 100	EDD Ranking Rank Order: 1 – 384 Mean = 192	Percentile	Index Categories	Index Value Range: 50 – 200 Median = 100	EDD Ranking Rank Order: 1 – 384 Mean = 192	Percentile
Innovation Index	81.1	354	7.8	Innovation Index	81.1	354	7.8
Human Capital and Knowledge Creation Index	78.3	346	9.9	Employment & Productivity Index	97.2	287	25.3
Educational Attainment	84.2	309	19.6	Job Growth to Population Growth Ratio	110.8	140	63.4
Knowledge Creation & Diffusion	81.5	280	27.1	Industry Performance	73.7	368	4.2
STEM Education & Occupations	55.1	346	9.9	Gross Domestic Product	139.8	58	84.9
Business Dynamics Index	63.2	208	45.8	Patents	87.0	290	24.5
Establishment Formation	101.1	175	54.4	Economic Well Being Index	88.0	310	19.3
Establishment Dynamics	102.0	194	49.5	Per Capita Personal Income Growth	116.4	136	64.6
Venture Capital Dollar Measures	22.2	186	51.6	Income Inequality (Mean-to-Median Ratio)	82.9	260	32.3
Venture Capital Count Measure	28.7	156	59.4	Poverty Rate (average)	51.4	373	2.9
Business Profile Index	74.4	364	5.2	Unemployment Rate (average)	86.2	243	36.7
Foreign Direct Investment Attractiveness	42.6	320	16.7	Dependency Base on Income Sources (ratio)	80.1	272	29.2
Connectivity	103.5	214	44.3	Net Migration (average)	71.7	335	12.8
Dynamic Industry Profile	91.6	299	22.1	Compensation	107.4	153	60.2
Proprietorship	68.7	382	0.5				

SOURCE: StatsAmerica.org/Innovation 2.0



A similar dashboard has been prepared for each of the three counties that comprise Northwest New Mexico—McKinley, Cibola and San Juan. Again, ***Innovation Headline*** and the five major categorical indexes are listed by index value and county ranking.

McKinley County has the lowest Innovation Headline index at 63.1, and its county ranking of 3,049 places it in the bottom 2% of all counties in the nation. Cibola’s Innovation Headline index is slight above McKinley County, at 68.7, and its county ranking of 2,854 positions Cibola in the bottom 8%. Lastly, San Juan County’s Innovation Headline is highest of the three, at 88.6, but is still below the national median index score. The ranking of 1,133 shows San Juan County in the 36th percentile.

We have not shown the 57 sub-factors that comprise the five major categorical indexes analyzed above. To see Innovation 2.0 county detail by index, locate Northwest New Mexico - Innovation Index by Counties in the Resources & Reference section. To see Innovation 2.0 county detail by rank, locate Northwest New Mexico - Innovation Ranking by Counties in Resources & Reference section. To learn more about how to use Innovation 2.0 as a planning tool, click here: [Driving Regional Innovation-Innovation 2.0 Report](#). To visit StatsAmerica, click here: [StatsAmerica](#)

Innovation 2.0 will be a key driver of regional economic planning in the future. It will enable all partners to utilize the same parameters to prioritize regional and county strategies, tactics and objectives and to be able to perform side-by-side performance measurements moving forward.

Northwest New Mexico Innovation Dashboard by Counties

Northwest New Mexico [Index = 50 – 200; Rank = 1 – 3,110]						
Index Categories	McKinley County		Cibola County		San Juan County (Index Value)	
	Index	Rank	Index	Rank	Index	Rank
Innovation Headline	63.1	3,049	68.7	68.7	88.6	1,133
Human Capital & Knowledge Creation	68.5	2,708	67.3	67.3	89.9	1,167
Business Dynamics	33.7	2,914	47.4	47.4	64.9	687
Business Profile	57.4	2,806	51.5	51.5	79.7	1,091
Employment & Productivity	80.6	2,646	89.2	89.2	103.6	1,140
Economic Well Being	70.3	3,073	86.7	86.7	106.4	1,707

Source: Innovation 2.0 – on StatsAmerica.org/US Economic Development Administration

The “SWOT”:

“High Plateau Vision-21” Forums were conducted in each of the three counties, involving over 150 local stakeholders and producing rich input on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats inherent in each county community. From these analyses, as well as other input over time, a regional “SWOT” analysis emerged, which can be summarized in the following:

INTERNAL: CAPACITY FACTORS

Strengths

- 1 LOCATION** – The region is a unique crossroads of cultures, abundant natural resources, geotourism assets and transcontinental transportation systems – major locational assets at the foundation of the regional economy, but needing new and diversified strategies to take advantage of them in the 21st century. The region is known for its unique high-desert environment, featuring vast open spaces punctuated by remarkable buttes, mesas and red-rock cliffs and hosting world-class fly fishing, mountain biking and other recreational spaces.
- 2 PEOPLE** – The region hosts a quarter million people from diverse indigenous and immigrant backgrounds, with unique cultural assets and skill sets, and a history of coexistence and progress across a complex web of political and legal jurisdictions – a rich asset that can be uplifted through collaboration and a commitment to human resource development.
- 3 ENERGY INDUSTRY**– The region has a robust economic heritage in energy-related industries in service to national and global energy demands, including coal, uranium, natural gas, oil, and power-generation – a legacy that faces new challenges and opportunities under modern regulatory, environmental and market conditions, creating new motivation for industrial adaptation and diversification.
- 4 CREATIVE INDUSTRY** – Northwest New Mexico serves as a regional epicenter for wholesale and retail trade in world-class indigenous arts and crafts, featuring the work of Navajo, Zuni artisans and other artisans; there is also an upswell of broader interest in and commitment to arts and culture, as shown in new initiatives in downtown revitalization.
- 5 HIGHER EDUCATION** – Each county in the region hosts strong post-secondary institutions, uniquely tailored and responsive to the region’s population and gearing up to meet the demands of the emerging 21st century workforce. These institutions serve more Native American students than any other region in the country.
- 6 LEADERSHIP** – The region’s governmental and civic leaders represent uniquely tested governing and professional skills, now being increasingly committed to socioeconomic innovation through downtown revitalization and economic development organizations operating in each county.

Weaknesses

- 1 INFRASTRUCTURE** – A common refrain is that the needs outweigh the resources available when it comes to built infrastructure (roads, water & wastewater, electricity, broadband, etc.), with many rural communities and households lacking even the most basic amenities, while the region’s transportation plans show a “power of 10” shortage in resources for roads, highways, bridges and transit. Additionally, while there are strong transportation assets (rail and interstate) traversing the region’s southern tier, the energy and agricultural fields of the San Juan Basin lack both interstate and rail infrastructure to facilitate the transport of goods to markets.
- 2 INDUSTRIAL ADAPTATION** – Recent market changes affecting the region’s historic economic drivers – i.e., mining & energy and tourism & artisan trade – reveal a lack of long-range strategic planning, adaptability and preparedness in the face of regulatory and market forces – thus making the economy vulnerable to boom-and-bust cycles and now, creating “emergency” demands for proactive diversification.
- 3 HUMAN RESOURCES** – While leaders uphold the belief in the region’s people as its most valuable asset, we lag behind in education, training, employment, child wellness, and overall health, well-being and prosperity. In particular, our workforce has been seen as unprepared to meet the requirements of economic-base jobs.
- 4 WIDESPREAD POVERTY** – Chronic structural poverty is reflected in low per capita income and high unemployment in our rural communities, a phenomenon that historically has not yielded to decades of government investment.
- 5 BUREAUCRACY** – Progress in governmental services and business performance is seen by many stakeholders to be bogged down by jurisdictional fragmentation, excessive regulation & bureaucratic barriers.
- 6 QUALITY OF LIFE** – Site selectors and development experts advise that modern workers and families seek out higher levels of civic and cultural amenities and other factors than are present in our communities, which need a major “facelift.”
- 7 LACK OF ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE** – In the majority of communities in the region, economic opportunity and security are largely led by the public sector, and small business development is found to be extremely difficult in rural communities, for a range of historical and economic reasons – predominant among them a relative lack of entrepreneurial knowledge & experience, limited access to capital, and prohibitive regulatory barriers to business permitting and development.

INTERNAL: CAPACITY FACTORS

Opportunities

- 1 ENERGY, LOGISTICS & MANUFACTURING** – The region’s economic development organizations are tapping new opportunities for leveraging economic growth through linking energy-related industry in the San Juan Basin and other sites in the region with major east-west transcontinental corridors featuring Interstate-40 and the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad. This movement, supported by significant private and public investment, is creating new economic capacity in the region’s Energy, Logistics & Manufacturing cluster.
- 2 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION** – Given both the historical inter-cultural and inter-jurisdictional challenges characterizing the region’s history and the hard-earned experience of leaders and planners in addressing those challenges, there are new opportunities, building on recent successes (e.g., in the “water commons,” featuring the \$1 billion, federally-authorized Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project), for overcoming historical fragmentation between jurisdictions and embarking on projects of mutual benefit to tribal and non-tribal communities.
- 3 TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION** – There is increasing conversation, and some movement, around opportunities in the region for applying and commercializing new technologies, not only for export to market, but more compellingly, to meet the unique public and private needs of the regional community itself, including alternative energy solutions for a predominantly rural population.
- 4 TOURISM** – Based on the region’s considerable cultural, archaeological, recreational and geographical assets, but in light of changing trends in global tourism, there is opportunity to reinvent and reinvigorate regional tourism, including capitalizing on recent designation by National Geographic Magazine of the 4 Corners Geotourism Mapping region and its world-class geotourism assets.
- 5 AGRICULTURE** – Productive agriculture constitutes a small proportion of the region’s cash economy, but there is an upsurge of interest and activity in restoring community agriculture and its role in developing and managing local and regional food systems and providing new pathways to livelihood for rural families and entrepreneurs.
- 6 DOWNTOWNS** – Lying at the heart of our villages and towns, our downtowns represent an important venue for economic revitalization, and there is a strong and growing interest and investment in downtown redevelopment, including in the country’s first Native American MainStreet community, the Pueblo of Zuni.
- 7 INFRASTRUCTURE** – Despite the current gaps between needs and resources, there has been significant investment in regional infrastructure in recent years, notably the \$1 billion Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project ensuring sustainable water supply for Gallup and over 40 rural Navajo communities, and the upgrading of the north-south US 491 corridor with 4-laning and other major infrastructure capacity.

Threats

- 1 MARKET IMPACTS** – The fortunes of the regional economy have long been tied to the cyclical nature of the energy industry, and environmental, regulatory and global market factors may marginalize some regional energy assets as economic drivers. In particular, it is difficult to transition laid-off miners to alternative jobs that require different skills sets and that pay lower wages. Dependency on traditional natural resource industries will need to transition to a more diversified stable of economic drivers and opportunities.
- 2 URBANIZATION** – Regional stakeholders have noted the “urban bias” in public policy and investment at all levels of government and private sector activity, and it is felt that this may continue to widen the resource gap between the urban “haves” and the rural “have-nots.” The professional and technical expertise is often lacking in rural and small-town communities that would enable them to compete for resources; thus, resources may continue to flow toward urban numbers and densities and away from rural landscapes.
- 3 OUTMIGRATION** – Locals sometimes refer to our region’s unique “brain drain” experience as “Rez flight,” reflecting the trend of younger generations from Native American reservations seeking out educational and economic opportunity away from home. The region experienced flat population growth in the last decennial period, with net population loss in McKinley County. The lack of local amenities and job opportunities may continue to depress population growth in the region, thus depriving our communities of vital energy and our workforce of young talent.
- 4 DROUGHT**– Despite the construction of the \$1 billion Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, featuring a water pipeline that will serve over 40 communities in the region with sustainable surface water supply, extended drought and other climate factors may stress water resources and limit growth opportunities.
- 5 PRODUCER-DEPENDENT RATIO** – In consultation with the State’s Jobs Council, planners have noted the adverse trend of a growing Dependent class and a shrinking Producer class, which may threaten the region’s economic stability, vitality and viability.
- 6 FUNDING** – Since the recent recession, planners and leaders have noted the intensification of the crisis in federal, state and local budgets, with compounded consequences for government services, the “opportunity ecosystem” and social and economic well-being in rural communities.

IV. STRATEGY

The Framework

The **La Ristra Northwest** Strategy draws from the new **La Ristra New Mexico** framework adopted by New Mexico’s seven Economic Development Districts (also known as Councils of Governments or “COGs”), who banded together under the umbrella of the New Mexico Association of Regional Councils (NewMARC) to fashion a Statewide strategy. The statewide initiative sets the template for and draws from the seven regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS), as well as from other economic development initiatives and strategies across the State. Planning work has been supported and funded, in part, by the US Economic Development Administration (EDA), and has followed EDA’s newly published CEDS Guidelines.

Three core objectives have driven this statewide and regional planning effort:

- ✍ **STRATEGIC VISION** – Forging a unified vision for development
- ✍ **CLEAR TARGETS** – Creating bold goals and strategies, and
- ✍ **COLLABORATIVE PROCESS** – Developing a simplified planning and collaboration process to better plan, manage and measure economic performance and prosperity.

Drawing from robust research into best practices across the nation, and adapting them to the New Mexico cultural and economic landscape, NewMARC created an overall framework that it named “La Ristra” – reflecting the New Mexico symbol of the bundles of red and green chiles that hang in kitchens and on porticos for use in the state’s iconic regional cuisine but representing the ability of La Ristra to tie together and harness regional resources for growth and prosperity. The strategies, then, are represented by chiles, organized into three primary “bundles” or visions:



Empower People – growing individual and household prosperity



Build Community – creating great places to live, work, play and stay



Create Jobs & Enterprise – putting the region’s workforce to work

The **La Ristra** framework identifies 7 top-level goals and 19 related strategies. A summary chart illustrating the *La Ristra Strategic Vision* is displayed below. We then proceed to tie our strategies to the “SWOT” Analysis summarized in the above section, followed by a detailing of those strategies, as well as major projects and programs with high promise and potential to move the region’s economy forward.

La Ristra Northwest is now a “living document,” designed to be updated on a regular basis and to enable users to make informed decisions based on real-time data and feedback on regional accomplishments, results and shortfalls.

This comprehensive approach provides a platform for organizing and coordinating multiple strategic inputs and a common language for aligning analysis, deliberation and priority setting from different strategic planning processes.

In 2013, over 100 economic development stakeholders in the State responded to a survey administered by the New Mexico Association of Regional Councils (NewMARC), in which a key question was: “How would you define economic development?” The wide range of responses reflected the entire spectrum of perceptions about the economic development task. As one tool in addressing this diverse range, NewMARC composed the below schematic model depicting three levels of consideration:

- ✍ the three traditional disciplines of professional economic development, i.e., industrial recruitment, business retention and expansion, and business startups;
- ✍ the system-support disciplines required to create capacity for economic development activity, reflected in various statewide and regional plans in various combinations of community development strategies; and
- ✍ the wide range of stakeholders involved in various facets of the overall economic development enterprise.

NewMARC then researched several efforts across the country to produce statewide economic strategies, drawing upon and customizing organizing concepts and best practices. In Florida, for example, the economic development support system is represented by “6 pillars” of Florida’s future economy. For New Mexico, the model evolved to include seven strategic paths, depicted metaphorically as “chiles” tied together in a traditional “ristra” – the bundle of chiles seen hanging on porches, windows and porticos across the Land of Enchantment.

In addition to the capacity-building and support system strategies common to many statewide plans, NewMARC’s La Ristra Strategic Vision also includes the strategy of “Direct Job Creation,” representing the call for investments in the professional work of creating high-quality jobs in economic-base industries through the traditional methods of recruitment, retention and expansion, and startup support.

The model represents human inputs, systems, material resources, and institutions comprising a blueprint for wealth creation and prosperity captured metaphorically by seven “Chiles.” The overarching vision and meaning of each strategic goal follows.

La Ristra is the symbolic name for the economic development strategies being developed both regionally and collectively statewide by the seven economic development districts across the State of New Mexico. **Region 1** is administered by the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments.

La Ristra serves as a blueprint for strategic planning, collaborative action and shared accountability in fostering economic prosperity for all New Mexican citizens. The blueprint draws from many sources, from many conversations, conferences and planning sessions and from the collective experience of citizens, academics, public officials and professional planners and developers from throughout the State of New Mexico.

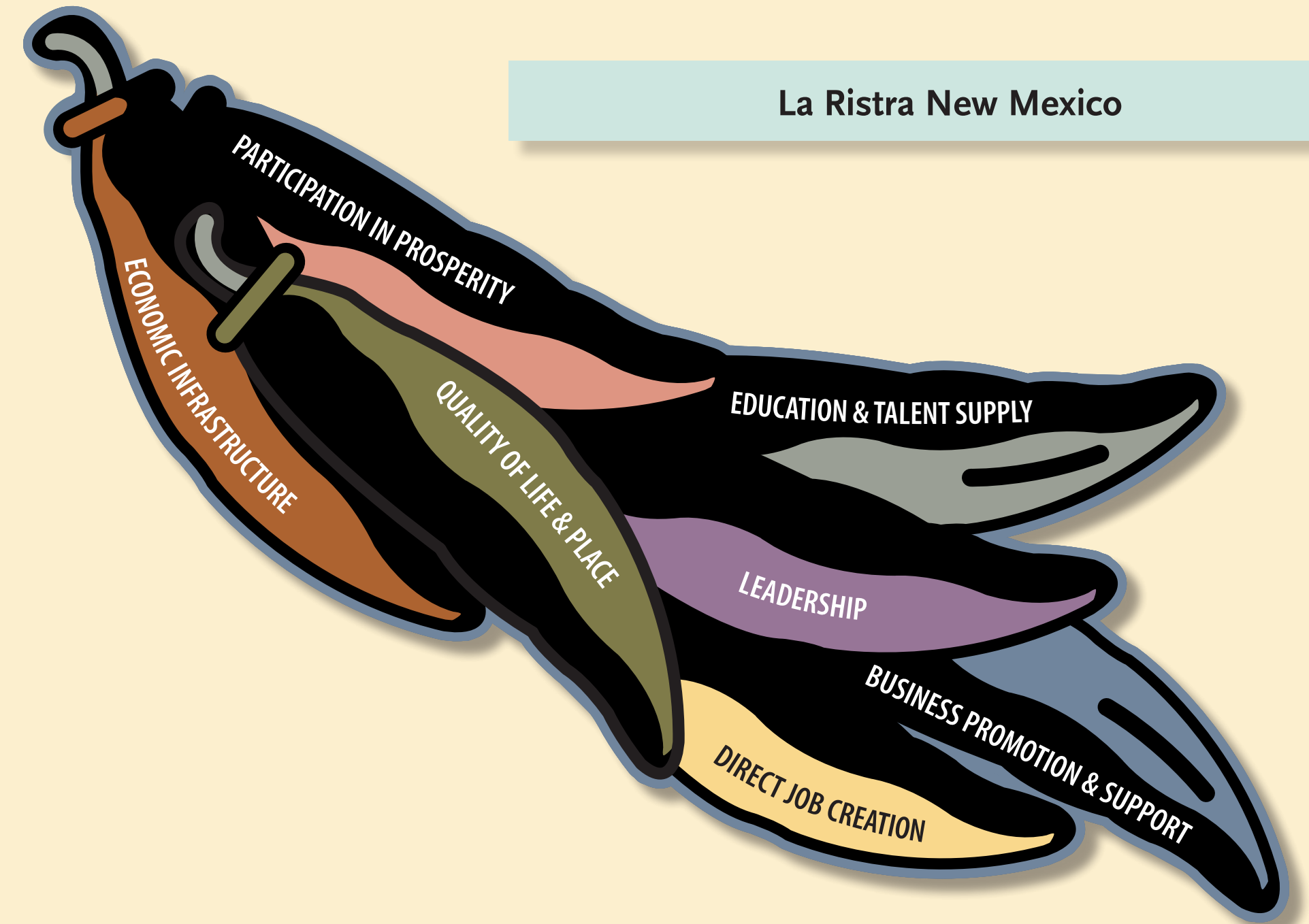
La Ristra is designed to be both

- ✍ a snapshot in time of needs, strategies and priorities for the State and its seven regions, and
- ✍ a dynamic tool to be continually updated, refined and utilized to guide, coordinate and monitor economic development activities carried out by the many stakeholders involved in the economic development mission.

Vision

New Mexico will be restored, sustained and transformed by growing individual, household and community prosperity (empower people); by creating great places to live, work, play and stay (build community); and by putting the state's workforce to work (create jobs & enterprise).

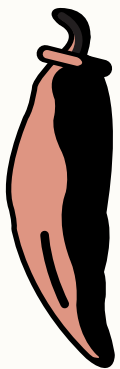
La Ristra New Mexico



La Ristra Strategic Vision

A Strategic Path for Growth and Prosperity in New Mexico

VISION: People Growing Individual & Household Prosperity		VISION: Community Making the State a Great Place to Live, Work, Play & Stay			VISION: Jobs & Enterprise Putting the State's Workforce to Work	
 GOAL 1 Participation in Prosperity Empower individuals and families to build economic assets and participate more fully as beneficiaries and contributors in the state's economy	 GOAL 2 Education & Talent Supply Create a robustly effective talent development system linked to future economic opportunity	 GOAL 3 Leadership Grow the state's social and political capital to produce broad-based, informed and cooperative economic leadership into the future	 GOAL 4 Quality of Life & Place Promote stewardship of cultural, physical, natural, recreational, residential and visitor assets that attract and keep people and businesses in the state	 GOAL 5 Economic Infrastructure Develop catalytic, strategic physical and financial infrastructure that is based on sound and coordinated planning and that creates capacity for long-term, multi-sector development	 GOAL 6 Business Promotion & Support Establish an attractive environment for business and robustly support new and sustained business in the state	 GOAL 7 Direct Job Creation Target growth in businesses and industrial clusters to produce new jobs for the state's workforce
Strategy 1.1: Asset-Building Increase investments in programs and services that empower individuals and families to reduce debt, increase savings, manage personal, family and business finances, acquire property, and improve access to quality education and healthcare	Strategy 2.1: Educational Excellence Support inter-institutional collaborations in the state that target dramatic systemic improvements in educational processes and outcomes, and strengthen the connection between school and economic livelihood	Strategy 3.1: Institutional Leadership Provide transparent, proactive, coordinated, sustained and accountable leadership of the comprehensive statewide strategy	Strategy 4.1: Live-Work-Play-Stay Promote and invest in physical, cultural, social and other assets that create attractive, safe and vibrant communities	Strategy 5.1: Built Capital Prioritize and invest in the development and long-term sustainability of infrastructure assets that solve gaps in the factors of production needed to attract and retain high-quality businesses and jobs	Strategy 6.1: Business Climate, Policy & Competitiveness Promote the design and shaping of a local and statewide regulatory environment that proactively supports the attraction, start-up and growth of enterprise in the state	Strategy 7.1: Economic-Base Recruitment Invest in activities that resolve factor-of-production gaps and target the creation of jobs in economic-base industrial sectors and clusters with the greatest potential to grow in the state
Strategy 1.2: Technical & Policy Support Create a statewide nonprofit corporation designed to create an Empowerment Fund and promote public policy initiatives that increase asset opportunities for individuals and households and reduce barriers to prosperity	Strategy 2.2: Workforce Development & Deployment Improve the quality, flexibility, employability and placement of the statewide workforce in relation to employer labor needs and opportunities	Strategy 3.2: Social Capital Develop, support and expand activities and initiatives that build bridges between communities, sectors and agencies and that strengthen collaborative partnerships at the local and statewide levels	Strategy 4.2: Local Reinvestment Support and invest in "wealth that sticks" through growing assets that are locally owned, controlled and reinvested and through reducing resource leakage by promoting statewide food and energy systems and "grow/sell/buy local" initiatives	Strategy 5.2: Financial Capital Develop, innovate and expand access to financial resources and instruments responsive to the characteristics, needs and opportunities of statewide businesses, communities, downtowns and entrepreneurs	Strategy 6.2: Business Retention & Expansion Invest in programs and services that retain and create jobs through working directly with locally-owned businesses to solve problems, access capital, provide coaching and technical support, and generally increase business success	Strategy 7.2: Labor-Driven Employment Identify and create employment opportunities that tap the skill sets of the existing statewide workforce
	Strategy 2.3: Youth Retention Create incentives, amenities and career opportunities for the state's youth, encouraging them to remain in or return to the community to apply their education and training in the statewide economy	Strategy 3.3: Training & Development Expand upon and customize programs and initiatives to develop local and statewide economic leadership	Strategy 4.3: Resiliency Build local and statewide resiliency through economic diversification, natural resource stewardship and the application of sustainability principles and practices		Strategy 6.3: Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Startup Invest in programs and services that foster and support new entrepreneurship, with particular attention to moving the state into the global "innovation economy" through developing, commercializing and adapting new technologies responsive to both the global marketplace and the unique needs and challenges of the region's population	Strategy 7.3: Solo/Location-Neutral Work Identify and capitalize on opportunities to support, attract and retain independent, self-employed workers



EMPOWER PEOPLE

Growing Individual & Household Prosperity

Success Factor 1 / Participation in Prosperity

Decades of battles in the war on poverty have failed to produce breakthroughs or sustained progress in the economic well-being of large numbers of families and individuals in the Northwest New Mexico region. The provision of housing, welfare and other social programs has alleviated the depth of the struggle for many, but has not succeeded in altering the structure of the economy in terms of universal participation by citizens as beneficiaries of and contributors to the economy. Although cash often flows through our communities to support consumer spending on life’s basic provisions, many families lack the assets necessary to improve their life condition or to access opportunities and resources that lift them out of poverty.

The *La Ristra Northwest* strategy, then, sets a priority on empowering individuals and family households to acquire the assets –such as in the form of savings accounts, homeownership, automobiles, education and training, business startups and access to healthcare – that reflect economic well-being and set a foundation for further opportunity.

CHALLENGES

There are many structural barriers in the region to full participation by the generality of the population in the wealth and opportunities represented in the broader economy.

Decades of federal regulation and control over tribal lands and businesses have served to suppress economic opportunity on Native reservations, and most tribal communities do not generate the economic revenues necessary for local self-governance and development. In the absence of local financial resources, communities remain dependent on outside funding from federal and state governments, and such resources tend to meet only a fraction of local demand for basic infrastructure and community development. With few job opportunities and without a tribal banking system, many families scramble to make ends meet, becoming vulnerable to high-interest predatory lending.

Educational attainment across the region continues to lag behind state and national averages, and low employability skill levels render access to jobs extremely difficult.

Conclusions from a 20-year-old study of the region by the Corporation for Enterprise Development remain essentially true today, namely, that cash is not the problem; rather, the chronic issue is very low asset acquisition, such as in property ownership, family savings, and access to higher education and training.

OPPORTUNITIES

Dating back 20 years to the CFED report on the region’s household assets profile, several efforts have been initiated to introduce asset-building opportunities for individuals and families, including small business loan funds and individual development accounts. Some work continues in that arena, with asset-building programs primarily administered by nonprofits corporations from outside the region.

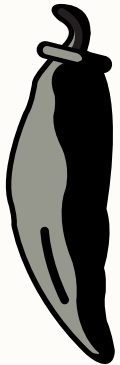
Financial literacy training opportunities have substantially increased in recent years, led by the First Financial Credit Union.

The ACT WorkKeys and KeyTrain programs have begun to be institutionalized in our postsecondary and workforce training centers, thus providing more specific pathways for career development and job acquisition for local citizens. The City of Farmington has achieved certification as a “Work Ready Community,” with both employers and training institutions engaged in a partnership to get the local workforce qualified for available jobs.

The Northwest New Mexico COG and its partners have undertaken microenterprise and local micro-agriculture initiatives in rural corridors, geared toward assisting local arts and farm producers to formalize their work and increase income from their production.

Goal 1: Empower individuals and families to build economic assets and participate more fully as beneficiaries and contributors to the region’s economy.

Strategy	Objectives	Tactics	Contributors & Stakeholders	Metrics & Performance Measures
1.1 <i>Asset-Building</i>	Increase investments in programs and services that empower individuals and families to reduce debt, increase savings, manage personal, family and business finances, acquire property, and improve access to quality education and healthcare.	(a) Identify existing programs, services, agencies and funding streams serving the asset-building mission in the region. (b) Convene a regional asset-building conference to share information and build momentum in the implementation of asset-building in the region.	• ProsperityWorks • State Human Services offices in the region • State Workforce Connection offices in the region • Community-based nonprofit organizations identified in regional survey	• Numbers of individuals enrolled in Individual Development Accounts. • Numbers of individuals enrolled in Children’s Savings Accounts. • Numbers of financial literacy courses offered in the region; numbers enrolled. • New bank accounts opened. • Changes in total savings.
1.2 <i>Technical & Policy Support</i>	Create a regional nonprofit corporation designed to create an Empowerment Fund and promote public policy initiatives that increase asset opportunities for individuals and households and reduce e barriers to prosperity.	(a) <u>Empowerment Fund</u> . Create a regional nonprofit corporation designed to establish an Empowerment Fund and promote public policy initiatives that increase asset opportunities for individuals and families and reduce barriers to prosperity.	• Northwest New Mexico COG, in consultation with North Central New Mexico EDD • Northwest New Mexico Enterprise Loan Fund and community lending partners	• Establishment of an Empowerment Fund in support of asset-building investments.



EMPOWER PEOPLE

Growing Individual & Household Prosperity

Success Factor 2 / Education & Talent Supply

Shared with most of New Mexico and the nation, we face a “crisis in human capital” – a growing unmet need for a skilled and educated workforce. We know that the labor asset has replaced physical infrastructure as the top demand of companies seeking to site-locate their operations. Our challenge is especially steep, due to low student performance in our schools and the shortage of skill sets required by our employers. We can point to some examples of educational excellence, and there is now a momentum of progress, but overall we lag behind on many achievement indicators. The response must include and coordinate all educational efforts from early childhood through adulthood.

Business and industry demand rapid turn-around training of local workers to feed the labor needs of those companies. Post-secondary institutions also have an urgent call on pre-K to 12 school systems to produce graduates with higher skill levels and readiness to pursue work and career. And all, in turn, have a call on our families and communities. The need for collaboration between education, business, community and family has never been greater.

Most alarming, we have experienced increased “youth flight” as younger generations seek out places that offer more opportunities for education, employment, and modern quality-of-life amenities. The challenge is to create economic and social conditions that attract the return of young people to their home communities, where they can contribute to and enjoy new prosperity.

CHALLENGES

The region wrestles with unique educational challenges. For many schools, attaining student performance standards has proven difficult, and many remain ranked at the bottom of the list. Educational shortfalls are found at the K-12, adult education and postsecondary levels, and early childhood education in the region is limited and expensive. Many single parents or young families cannot afford the tuition.

Community conditions are often not conducive to success and achievement. The region is challenged by high crime rates within juvenile and adult age groups, and drug and alcohol abuse plague our population. Many of these issues are a direct cause of poverty, rurality and unemployment. Our skilled students often flee to metropolitan areas of the state and in neighboring states, seeking higher wages, better quality of life, and career opportunities.

A major challenge is the need to more effectively link employers and educators, accompanied by a more agile and responsive system of training for employability in high-demand and economic-base jobs.

OPPORTUNITIES

The region hosts important positive human resource assets, which can be tapped to tackle the challenges. Parents and students are demonstrating higher awareness of the value of education, and more of us are seeking postsecondary educational opportunities.

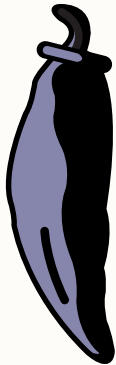
There is an abundance of artistic talent in the population, which can support an asset-based approach to education and training for the creative economy.

The region’s educational facilities are becoming better equipped to encompass all facets of 21st century education, offering classrooms that allow alternative approaches to teaching and learning. Our colleges are also developing programs that are tailored to the region’s economy.

Given the vital role played by the region’s educational institutions, their contributions to new breakthroughs in human resource development will be critical to the achievement of a sustainable economy.

Goal 2: Create a robustly effective talent development system linked to future economic opportunity.

Strategy	Objectives	Tactics	Contributors & Stakeholders	Metrics & Performance Measures
2.1 Educational Excellence	Support inter-institutional collaborations in the region that target dramatic systemic improvements in educational processes and outcomes, and strengthen the connection between school and economic livelihood.	(a) Research and implement alternative types of educational models; (b) Strengthen Leadership and Policy (c) Stabilize Funding	• School Board Districts • Education Institutions (K-12, Secondary/Post-Secondary) & Educators • Policy Officials • Regional Communities/Parents & Students	• High School Graduation Rates • Schools overall grade through NM PED • Grade 8 Math, Reading & Science Performance • STEM Talent • Kindergarten Readiness • Certifications
2.2 Workforce Development & Deployment	Improve the quality, flexibility, employability and placement of the regional workforce in relation to employers’ labor needs and opportunities.	(a) Connect opportunities with students outside of school (b) Alternative Job Training Approaches (c) Improve & Expand Existing Job Training Programs (d) Implement the Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board strategic plan to build a collaborative regional workforce system.	• School Board Districts • Education Institutions & Educators • Policy Officials • NM Workforce Connection agencies and offices • Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board • Regional Industries with Demand • Existing & Upcoming Regional Workforce	• Educational Attainment • High School Graduation Rates • Schools overall grade through NM PED • # of students receiving local scholarships • # of regional jobs filled by regional citizens
2.3 Youth Retention	Create incentives, amenities and career opportunities for the region’s youth, encouraging them to remain in or return to the community to apply their education and training in the regional economy.	(a) Deployment & Placement Programs (b) Cultivate youth leadership and participation in local Quality of Life improvement initiatives (c) Target Educated Youth with employment opportunities, including specific assistance to certified and degreed youth still out of work.	• Existing Institutions & Places of Service • NM Workforce Connection agencies and offices • Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board • High occupational demand Regional Industries • Upcoming Entrepreneurs (to cater to the younger generations) • Regional & Local Economic Development Organizations • Downtown Districts • Local Government Agencies	• Educational Attainment • Employment per Sector • Labor Force Data; Unemployment Rates • Diversity of the Economy • Migration and Out-Migration



EMPOWER PEOPLE

Growing Individual & Household Prosperity

Success Factor 3 / Leadership

To elevate our competitiveness and economic progress, a common and broad-based plan is needed, reflecting the unique diversity of the region's economies and populations. At the same time, we need to move beyond adversarial relationships – unifying the conversation and focusing resources where positive impact can be greatest.

We understand that “economic development” involves, not only the traditional disciplines -- recruitment, business retention & expansion, and startups – but also investment in a range of success factors that create an environment where those core job creation activities can be most productive. It involves a “full circle” of stakeholders and partners, from business and industrial leadership to financial, educational and healthcare institutions to local government to community-based organizations, and others.

We see that sustainable prosperity will largely depend on the social and political capital in our communities and region. This includes financial and governance structures that lead and support economic development, along with quality leadership that can set compelling vision, bring together diverse interests and constituencies, and invest resources aligned with prosperity goals and sustainable public benefit. Such community capital also includes public engagement by local citizens on how communities work to build prosperity.

CHALLENGES

While there are positive examples of visionary leadership in our region, barriers remain to creating unified direction across the diverse cultures, jurisdictions and geographies of the region. Local leadership is often constrained by political and bureaucratic forces, and in rural communities, by lack of access to flexible resources that are responsive to local needs.

Our stakeholders note a lack of collaboration between institutions and sectors, citing a complex web of jurisdictions comprising the regional community, as well as a legacy of inter-community competition and mistrust that limits cooperative efforts that could scale up to benefit all citizens. Educational Institutions show low graduation rates, reflecting the challenge of producing a workforce qualified for a high-tech, knowledge-based economy. School-business partnerships have been insufficient to build a workforce ready to meet employers' demands.

Stakeholders also note the difficulty of sustaining long-term plans, due to cyclical changes in political leadership. There is a tendency to focus on short-term achievements and local issues, with less commitment to longer-term, more regional strategies and partnerships. Funders, however, encourage regional approaches and sustainability of initiatives over time.

We see a need for greater investment in our social and political capital – groups and processes demonstrating ability to collaborate for common benefit. Our recent efforts to establish a USDA “SET” region revealed the challenge of communicating and collaborating across vast distances, which could be met more successfully by investing in a cadre of “boots on the ground” community facilitators.

OPPORTUNITIES

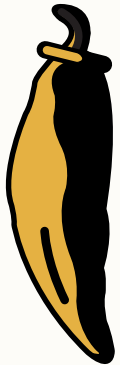
Despite unique challenges, stakeholders note the strong sense of community and cultural identity that is nurtured in most of our cultures, households and communities. Residents have strong ties to the region and generally prefer to stay close to home for long-term residence and work. This sense of community appears to be a strong social asset that leaders can call upon to address the challenges of the future. In modern times, even in rural outposts, there is growing access to Internet and social media, presenting new opportunities for connecting residents with each other and with community conversations and initiatives.

Our region's five higher education institutions provide a significant human resource development asset that can be increasingly tapped to cultivate the next generation of community leaders across the many disciplines of community development. They can also increase their outreach and relationship with local business and industry, thereby forging effective career pathways for the 21st century workforce.

There is an opportunity to achieve new breakthroughs in support of sustainable development in communities along our rural corridors – including most prominently the US Highway 491 corridor now hosting construction of the \$1 billion Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, which in coming years will join other modern infrastructure to support new economic development. Success in that endeavor will require new approaches, investments and partnerships aligned with the collaborative vision of multiple leaders and stakeholders.

Goal 3: Grow the region's social and political capital to produce broad-based, informed and cooperative economic leadership into the future.

Strategy	Objectives	Tactics	Contributors & Stakeholders	Metrics & Performance Measures
3.1 <i>Institutional Leadership</i>	Provide transparent, proactive, coordinated, sustained and accountable leadership of the comprehensive regional strategy.	(a) Invest in and recruit strategic partners that will actively contribute to a collaborative approach to leadership development and training (e.g. colleges, governmental entities & business that provide opportunities for internships, professional development, apprenticeship, etc.). (b) Institutional collaboration and leaders addressing local economies as a system, rather than as individual jurisdictions and political mandates. (c) Strategic coordination, proactive planning, efficient/targeted investments, and systemic implementation of regional projects that support and sustain regional economic development over the long-term.	• Federal, State, & Tribal Governmental Institutions • Colleges & Universities • Local Businesses & Regional Industries • Community leaders and community members	• High School Graduation Rates • Schools overall grade through NM PED • Grade 8 Math, Reading & Science Performance • STEM Talent • Kindergarten Readiness • Certifications
3.2 <i>Social Capital</i>	Develop, support and expand activities and initiatives that build bridges between communities, sectors and agencies and that strengthen collaborative partnerships at the local and regional levels.	(a) Connecting communities with valuable resources throughout the region via networking, professional training, workshops, etc. as to build capacity. (b) Provide more opportunities for collaboration, inclusive roundtable discussions, idea-sharing, etc. (build trust with rural communities and thus, better cooperation and confidence in participating). (c) Involve more community members into the decision-making process.	• Federal, State, & Tribal Governmental Institutions • Local Community Members • Community Leaders • Community Organizations • Local Business and colleges	• Number of neighborhood/ community associations, community organizations, charitable clubs, churches, etc. • Voter participation numbers • Number of community volunteers/ active community groups • Attendance numbers at local government & community meetings, & public participation
3.3 <i>Leadership Training & Development</i>	Expand upon and customize programs and initiatives to develop local and regional economic leadership.	(a) Invest in programs that align with emerging industries preparing qualified workforce. (b) Collaborate with educational institutions and local businesses to design curriculum that will help train and develop competent workforce. (c) Connect regional residents with professional development workshops, training opportunities and educational institutions.	• Federal, State, & Tribal Governmental Institutions • Colleges & Universities • Regional business & industry • Community members	• # and frequency of leadership development workshops, conferences, & training sessions • # of internships & apprenticeships available; how many people these programs recruit and graduate • Number of educational programs that are geared towards local emerging industries



BUILD COMMUNITY

Creating Great Places to Live, Work, Play & Stay

Success Factor 4 / Quality of Life & Place

Recent economic development research has uplifted the importance of “place” as an integral component of prosperity, noting the shift from generations that once chased “the job” first, wherever it took them, to the current generation that tends to select “place” first and job second.

Our future depends on preserving and enhancing a wide range of integrated elements that together express the robustness of our culture and the positive perceptions of those things that make us healthy, safe, comfortable, secure and involved.

And herein lies one of New Mexico’s “hidden assets,” only made public in recent years by Xavier University in its reports on the “American Dream Composite Index” (ADCI), which measures the sentiments of residents in each of the states regarding the extent to which they feel their state is where they can best achieve their vision of the American Dream. On recent years’ ADCI, New Mexico has ranks as high as #2 in the overall ranking, with favorable scores on the five indices measured by the project.

CHALLENGES

Our high plateau country offers a unique palette of life-enhancing places and opportunities for residents and visitors, but overall quality of life is stressed by the undertow of broadly experienced, endemic poverty and under-developed amenities and modern infrastructure. For example, the region’s *Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway* features many geographical, archaeological and cultural treasures, but was unable to gain Federal designation due to the lack of supportive facilities and amenities on large portions of the byway.

Many rural residents in the region continue to live in what is sometimes referred to as “Third World” conditions. Case in point: the federally authorized, \$1 billion Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project was given top priority when Congress learned that 40% of rural households in the service area had never had public water supply.

While most rural residents are attached to their homelands, their quality of life often suffers from lack of local opportunity for employment and services, exacerbated by the ravages of widespread alcoholism and domestic violence. Younger generations increasingly seek livelihood and opportunity away from their home communities, as reflected in the region’s negative population growth in the last 15 years.

As new economic development initiatives are pursued, we find that site selectors look to several quality-of-life factors as part of the screen for placement of industry, such as quality of education, aesthetic townscapes, cultural events, clean and safe streets and spaces, recreational opportunities and quality health care. While we measure up in some ways, and in some communities, we are often not competitive.

OPPORTUNITIES

The Four Corners region can boast numerous cultural, economic and geographical assets, on which improvements in quality of life and place can be based. Our freedom from catastrophic weather events renders the region a haven for people seeking to avoid the extremes of heat and cold, as well as the dangers of hurricanes, earthquakes and tornados.

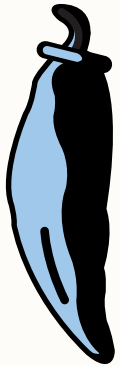
The region’s indigenous peoples are tied to the sacredness and continuity of their Place in the world, and many of their neighbors consider the region’s cultural diversity a major reason for making this their home. Emerging from this milieu is the production of world-class fine arts and crafts bearing the distinctive artistry and materials of the Navajo, Zuni and other native artisans. The power of this diversity and cultural expression can also serve as a basis for cooperative efforts to uplift our quality of place.

The Navajo Nation continues to emerge as a major institutional and economic player in the region, and strengthened partnerships with America’s largest indigenous tribe will benefit all our populations. The same is true for our neighbors in the Four Corners states, who share the commonality of being isolated from the states’ metropolitan centers.

Our community colleges provide affordable access to postsecondary education, collectively serving more Native American students than any other region, and providing a gateway to careers and further education. Our region is also home to a resurgence in the redevelopment of our downtowns at the heart of our communities, building on our historic past while catering to modern interests and opportunities — including the fashioning of live-work-play-stay environments, walkable streets, arts and entertainment spaces, and local business venues.

Goal 4: Promote stewardship of cultural, physical, natural, recreational, residential and visitor assets that attract and keep people and businesses in the region.

Strategy	Objectives	Tactics	Contributors & Stakeholders	Metrics & Performance Measures
4.1 <i>Live-Work-Play-Stay</i>	Promote and invest in physical, cultural, social and other assets that create attractive, safe and vibrant communities.	a) Promote the downtown redevelopment movement in the region’s small towns. b) Re-vision and energize regional tourism through cooperation & new investment.	• Small Business Development Centers • Business Incubators • Local Economic Development Organizations • Higher education institutions • Council of Governments • Local nonprofit agencies	• Increased occupancy by small business in downtown properties • Increased tourism business & revenues.
4.2 <i>Local Reinvestment</i>	Reduce economic leakage by stimulating business start-ups and expansions that provide goods and services within the region that were formerly supplied from outside the region.	a) Develop recruitment and R&E strategies based on leakage, target industry & supply/value chain studies in sub-regional development areas to increase in-region goods & services for local industry.		• New recruitment & business development targets based on the research. • Number of new businesses tied to existing local business clusters.
4.3 <i>Resiliency</i>	Build local and regional resiliency through economic diversification, natural resource stewardship and the application of sustainability principles and practices.	a) Expand the local entrepreneurship base through increased investment in business incubation, access to capital and other supports. b) Increase investment in economic-base enterprise & industry. c) Increase in-region manufacturing and deployment of alternative energy technologies.		• Increase public & private investment in small business incubation. • Increased lending activity to local entrepreneurs. • Number of new economic-base businesses & jobs.



BUILD COMMUNITY

Creating Great Places to Live, Work, Play & Stay

Success Factor 5 / Economic Infrastructure

As in the state and nation, infrastructure is a critical factor in the attraction, development and sustainability of business and industry in our region. Fundamental contributions to economic vibrancy are made by investments in transportation, communications, energy, water, housing, utilities and strategic land use.

In the economic development context, infrastructure is made strategic by its clear relationship to job creation objectives across the region’s highest-yield industrial sectors and clusters. It is made sustainable by solid planning, coordination and commitment to long-term management and stewardship of our built capital assets, along with ensuring the provision of the financial capital necessary to initiate and sustain development.

In addressing infrastructure investments for such long-term value, the *La Ristra Northwest* Strategy provides for both (a) general, systemic infrastructure development —community facilities, capacities, capital resources and amenities as a foundation for growth and development, and (b) cluster-specific or project-specific development, which creates infrastructural capacity directly tied to the successful location, startup and/or retention and expansion of specific types of business operations.

In alignment with the framework designed by the New Mexico Legislature’s Jobs Council, this strategy is alert to investments needed to fill the gaps in the “factors of production” required for economic recruitment and job growth. To support this focus, we will vet projects and programs, and track their progress, according to economic factors and criteria.

CHALLENGES

In our regional conversations, a common complaint is that our communities’ Infrastructure needs outweigh the resources available; in rural communities, even basic public infrastructure is lacking. For example, recent regional transportation plans reveal a tenfold shortfall between identified needs for upgraded all-weather roads and resources available to construct them. A similar gap is reflected in infrastructure capital improvement plans updated each year by cities, counties and tribes for use by State agencies in allocating funds. A major regional water supply system is currently under construction to serve a rural region in which over 40% if the population do not have a public water supply.

These infrastructure shortfalls are further challenged by current trends in local, state and federal budgets, where “budget cuts” are called for at all levels, with local communities feeling the compounded impact of those reductions. In light of shrinking purses at all levels, the challenge is to set priorities according to critical needs and strategic objectives, and to bring forward highly competitive projects that rise to the top of the list. Unfortunately, many communities have the disadvantage of lacking the developmental expertise and resources to fully “projecteer” initiatives from “need stage” to investability.

In the recruitment and retention of industry, many communities lack some of the infrastructure sought by site selectors, such as available buildings and properties for locating business operations. Whereas Gallup and Grants are positioned along the east-west route of Interstate-40 and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, other communities are far from such transportation assets.

Access to capital for locally-owned businesses has tightened up in recent years, and new mechanisms are needed to assist entrepreneurs to access the capital needed to grow their businesses.

OPPORTUNITIES

In recent years, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad has increased interactions with communities strategically located along its corridor. In our region, the Cities of Grants and Gallup potentially figure prominently in BNSF’s plans for investment and business development. Gallup’s Energy Logistics Park recently achieved BNSF’s Site Certification and is poised to attract a cluster of businesses associated with the community’s logistics assets.

Related to this rail-related initiative, in more of a planning vein, Farmington and its neighbors in San Juan County and southern Colorado are actively exploring construction of a rail line northward from the BNSF Transcon line into the San Juan Basin, as a long-term investment in moving economic resources into global markets.

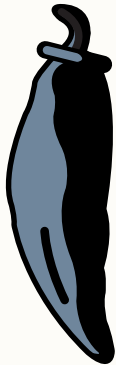
As revealed in the master utility plan study for San Juan County, the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project pipeline being constructed to run parallel to US Highway 491 will join other modern utility infrastructure installations along that corridor, thus setting that corridor up for significant potential economic development.

To support the location of industry in New Mexico’s rural communities, our region has led a statewide effort to seek legislative support for a rural investment tax credit, providing incentives to expand building square footage for industrial use. The Northwest New Mexico COG is working with nonprofit lending institutions to strengthen the corpus and the lending expertise of its Revolving Loan Fund.

Our stakeholders place a high priority on infrastructure investments that are strategically related to economic development outcomes. In support, the COG has spearheaded development and adoption of a web-based tool based on *Panoramic*® software technology to support documentation and tracking of the region’s infrastructure projects.

Goal 5: Develop catalytic, strategic physical and financial infrastructure that is based on sound and coordinated planning and that creates capacity for long-term, multi-sector development.

Strategy	Objectives	Tactics	Contributors & Stakeholders	Metrics & Performance Measures
5.1 <i>Built Capital</i>	Prioritize and invest in the development and long-term sustainability of infrastructure assets that solve gaps in the factors of production needed to attract and retain high-quality businesses and jobs.	a) Increase basic capacity of the region’s infrastructure to help attract industries. b) Increase and expand the broadband network of the region c) Develop an initiative or agreement to increase the collaboration between Federal, State, Local, and Tribal Governments	• Local economic development organizations: • Cibola Communities EDF • Greater Gallup EDC; • Four Corners Economic Development	• # of infrastructure projects in the region (by type) • Dedicated infrastructure funding (by type) • # of ROW acquisitions and average length of time to complete • Broadband capacity Data • # of industries recruited to the region
5.2 <i>Financial Capital</i>	Develop, innovate and expand access to financial resources and instruments responsive to the characteristics, needs and opportunities of regional businesses, communities, downtowns and entrepreneurs.	a) Convene regional lenders forums. b) Consult with tribal agencies to remove barriers to lending and investment in Native American communities. c) Establish a regional business lending collaborative.	• WESST • Northwest New Mexico COG and Enterprise Loan Fund • NMSU-Cooperative Extension • Community Lenders • Local economic development organizations	• Dollars loaned to small business. • Dollars in the business lending pool.



CREATE JOBS & ENTERPRISE

Putting the Region's Workforce to Work

Success Factor 6 / Business Promotion & Support

It can be intimidating for rural and small-town communities to compete for investments in technological innovation and commercialization, or to get attention from industrial site locators. At the same time, our region can boast unique asset values, as well as opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship. Our high plateau country, home for example to the *Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway* and the *Four Corners Geotourism Initiative* and their cultural and archaeological treasures, has many qualities to attract and sustain business, including quality of life amenities of value to workers and families. We are also taking advantage of major regional infrastructure (e.g., an interstate and rail corridor, expanded highway capacity, and a \$1 billion water pipeline), as well as assets inherent in the region's natural, constructed and human resources in tourism and in energy-related industries.

To build competitiveness in the global economy, we need to differentiate ourselves from other regions. A major challenge is to create a stronger entrepreneurial culture, which must include broad-based support for starting, retaining and expanding businesses in the community – including continued reform of regulations that impede business development, especially on Native American reservations.

Legacy industries, such as in natural resource extraction or the arts & crafts trade, are witnessing erosion or transformation, as global markets change and new industries emerge. Regionally and locally, technology can be applied toward meeting basic economic needs. For example, many rural households are without basic utilities, and innovative work will need to be done to apply solar, water reuse and other technologies to the well-being and sustainable development of rural communities.

For private business to serve as a productive source of employment, we must address factors of importance to entrepreneurs, such as tax policy, regulation, business incentives, technical and financial support for businesses, and a hospitable reception and support for businesses and their employees.

CHALLENGES

The northwest New Mexico COG region ranks below the 50th percentile among Economic Development Districts throughout the nation on most measures related to business formation and capital investment, and near the bottom of the list in proprietorship.

Based on input from our regional stakeholders, several factors stand out as gaps and barriers related to innovation and business climate, most prominently:

- Inadequate broadband connectivity;
- Deteriorating and inadequate community infrastructure, depressing business retention and growth;
- Multi-jurisdictional and regulatory complexity;
- Depressive public regulation;
- Limited access to business capital;
- Lack of suitable land and building inventory for new enterprise;
- Lack of competent workforce – both hard and soft skills;
- High gross receipts tax rates and inadequate incentives to ease the cost of doing business;
- Lack of collaboration among public agencies, and poor communication generally among community groups;
- Instability in our core industries, depressing confidence in new business activity.

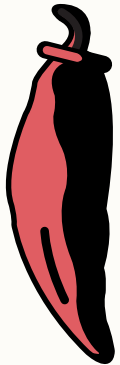
OPPORTUNITIES

Regional stakeholders identified a number of community strengths and assets to build on as related to the growth of business enterprise, including:

- Quality-of-life features, including temperate and disaster-free climate, abundant geographic spaces and landscapes, natural beauty and open spaces, diverse cultural resources, and low cost of living;
- Strong higher education and health care facilities and institutions;
- Significant legacy of natural resource-based industry and employment;
- World class indigenous arts and crafts industry;
- Locational assets: transportation and logistics corridors; geotourism sites; recreational venues; proximity to four neighboring states;
- Legacy businesses and wealth centers that could be tapped for new investment and support of new enterprise;
- Strong retail sector, providing a cohort of employees with skills that can take them to next-level employment and careers;
- Commitment and support for revitalization of our downtowns as core economic units in our communities;
- An available and under-tapped workforce.

Goal 6: Establish an attractive environment for business and robustly support new and sustained business in the region.

Strategy	Objectives	Tactics	Contributors & Stakeholders	Metrics & Performance Measures
6.1 Business Climate, Policy & Competitiveness	Promote the design and shaping of a local and regional regulatory environment that proactively supports the attraction, start-up & growth of enterprise in the region.	a) Engage local, state & federal stakeholders in regulatory analysis & reformulation to improve support for growing & sustaining profitable business in the region's communities.	• Small Business Development Centers • Business Incubators • Local Economic Development Organizations • Higher education institutions • Council of Governments • Local nonprofit agencies	• New business-friendly local, state & federal regulation, in balance with environmental protection objectives.
6.2 Business Retention & Expansion	Develop, support and expand activities and initiatives that build bridges between communities, sectors and agencies and that strengthen collaborative partnerships at the local and regional levels.	a) Continue & expand upon local business R&E initiatives through broader partnerships, to attract resources & implement strategies that support local business activity.		• Expanded partnerships in support of local business R&E. • Number of locally-owned businesses retained & expanded.
6.3 Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Start-Up	Invest in programs and services that foster and support new entrepreneurship, with particular attention to moving the region into the global innovation economy through developing, commercializing & adapting new technologies responsive to both the global marketplace & the unique needs & challenges of the region.	a) Strengthen business-education partnerships to develop, commercialize and deploy alternative energy technologies to residential and commercial applications in the region. b) Bring new resources into the region's incubators to support new technology.		• New programs to grow and incubate enterprise in applied technologies.



CREATE JOBS & ENTERPRISE

Putting the Region’s Workforce to Work

Success Factor 7 / Direct Job Creation

The Northwest region actively participated in the three-year planning and investment process undertaken by the New Mexico Legislature’s Jobs Council. Emerging from this involvement is the awareness that the professional tasks and processes associated with job creation -- e.g., via the disciplines of industrial recruitment, business retention & expansion, and business startups -- require solving critical gaps in the success factors (or “factors of production”) that would be needed to support the job creation enterprise. Thus, New Mexico’s “Ristra” model provides for the coordinated consideration of, and potential investment in, all of these factors in support of direct job creation activities.

The professional job creation enterprise itself has gone underfunded for years, allowing neighboring and other states to far outpace New Mexico -- and its regions -- in achieving economic growth. The statewide “Ristra” framework calls for significant new investment in the economic development enterprise, thus increasing the cohort of trained, certified and capable economic development professionals throughout the State, along with the provision of tools that can be leveraged to increase recruitment success -- such as supportive local and state policies and procedures, closing funds, in-plant training and other incentives. The Northwest region supports this initiative and includes full engagement of the region’s economic development organizations.

Although the emphasis is on “economic-base” jobs, there remains both need and opportunity for addressing the employment and income needs of New Mexico citizens “as they are,” i.e., creating enterprises that put people to work tapping existing skill sets, while continuing to provide support for further skill development.

Additionally, an entire sector has emerged characterized by individuals working outside of the conventional place-based employment setting, known variously as “solo” or “location-neutral” workers. Work must be done to attract and support this growing cohort of workers.

CHALLENGES

Instead of achieving new employment, the region lost 5,000 jobs in the past 6 years -- mostly related to cyclical downturns in the energy economy. For every economic-base job lost, at least one service-sector job was also lost.

Employment opportunities throughout the region are spotty at best. The most robust employment, even in recessionary times, in in San Juan County, while the impacts of down-sizing at coal mines and power plants are also strongly felt in McKinley and Cibola Counties. It has become clear that it will be very difficult -- often impossible -- to “replace” the high-paying jobs that were lost in the coal, oil & gas, and power industries with equivalent wages in other occupations.

More chronically, in most of the region’s 77 rural and unincorporated communities -- the majority of them on Native American lands -- unemployment rates continue at much higher rates than in the urbanized communities, often exceeding 50% of the workforce. In many cases, the most able and enterprising community members migrate away from home for education and work -- a pattern reflected, for example, in the negative population growth in McKinley County reported in the most recent census.

Going forward, the region has committed to the Jobs Council a target of 6,000 new economic-base jobs over the next 10 years -- a daunting objective that will require new approaches, investments and partnerships.

OPPORTUNITIES

The region’s county-based economic development corporations have been proactive in rising to the job creation challenge.

In San Juan County, a new group invested in serious study of the area’s economic situation and in 2013 established Four Corners Economic Development, Inc., with significant investment and leadership from both the private and public sectors. It has identified 6 primary target sectors for recruitment and development, and has led major workforce coordination efforts in creating the “work-ready community.”

In McKinley County, the private sector-led Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation, Inc. was formed 5 years ago and has made great strides in creating new economic opportunity by tapping the community’s economic assets in the energy and logistics sectors -- recently achieving a coveted site certification from Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad.

In Cibola County, the Cibola Communities Economic Development Foundation has been active at the local, regional and state levels in pursuing all opportunities for putting its workforce to work. Most promising is its pilot “SoloWorks” project, in which local citizens get IT-based training and then get hired by outside employers, while performing the work at home.

Goal 7: Establish an attractive environment for business and robustly support new and sustained business in the region.

Strategy	Objectives	Tactics	Contributors & Stakeholders	Metrics & Performance Measures
7.1 <i>Economic-Base Jobs</i>	Invest in activities that resolve factor-of-production gaps and target the creation of jobs in economic-base industrial sectors and clusters with the greatest potential to grow in the region.	a) Focus recruitment efforts on job-creation program theaters with highest potential, i.e.: Local Business; Energy; Tourism; & Agriculture. b) Expand civic leadership in targeting & attracting economic-base industry into the region. c) Implement programs to support transformation of workforce development systems & their connection with business & industry.	• Small Business Development Centers • Business Incubators • Local Economic Development Organizations • Higher education institutions • Council of Governments • Local nonprofit agencies • Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board • New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions	# Economic-Base Jobs in Program Theaters: • Local Small Business: 3,625 • Energy & Extractives: 2,200 • Federal Government: 2,185 • Visitor-Driven: 1,000 • Agriculture: 825 • Emerging Technology: 500 • Solowork & Other:645
7.2 <i>Local-Driven Employment</i>	Identify & create employment opportunities that tap the skills sets of the existing regional workforce.	a) Utilize workforce skill assessment studies to identify existing skill sets & job experience of in the region, and to identify & recruit employment opportunities to match those skill sets.		• # Jobs created in all industrial sectors • # new businesses created in all industrial sectors
7.3 <i>SoloWork</i>	Identify and capitalize on opportunities to support, attract and retain independent, self-employed workers.	a) Support, expand on & replicate the Cibola SoloWorks Job Creation Center initiative. b) Develop recruitment & support systems to attract & sustain location-neutral business.		• New investments in SoloWork support in the region’s communities • # of SoloWorks graduates employed by out-of-state employers.

Strategic Clusters & Program Theaters

In crafting the region’s general strategy, several approaches were used to identify economic clusters, around which economic development efforts could best be organized:

- 1) **County Strategy Sessions.** Broadly inclusive strategic planning sessions were held in the winter of 2014 in each of Cibola, McKinley and San Juan Counties, resulting in a rich body of input from local stakeholders on needs and priorities in the respective counties. These sessions were augmented by frequent consultation with local economic development organizations, in particular Cibola Communities Economic Development Foundation, Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation, and Four Corners Economic Development, Inc., all of which formed the primary basis of the “SWOT analysis summarized in above sections of this general plan, as well as providing data for action strategies going forward.
- 2) **SET.** One approach drew from models and approaches promoted by Mississippi State and Purdue Universities under the national USDA program, “Stronger Economies Together” (SET). The Northwest New Mexico region was designated as a SET planning region and produced a regional rural development strategy approved in 2016-17 by USDA-Rural Development. The SET process involved a series of meetings held in each county of the region for nearly two years, during which time the participants were trained in the use of statistical data and other resources to devise plans customized to the region’s rural corridors. Emerging from this process was the identification of four primary development clusters:

- ✍ Agriculture and Local/Regional Food Systems
- ✍ Manufacturing
- ✍ Tourism & Artisan Trade
- ✍ Capacity Building, focused on Workforce & Entrepreneurial Development

- 3) **Jobs Council.** The Northwest region was a strong and consistent participant in the three years of work of the New Mexico Legislature’s Interim Jobs Council, which adopted a methodology based on an analysis of economic-base employment patterns throughout the state. The Jobs Council’s analysis resulted in the calculation of job targets by employment sector (later termed “program theaters”) and by region and county. Within this developmental system, then, decisions could be made around specific levels of professional job creation effort (“programs” supported by professional development expertise) that would be required to target business and industry, resolve gaps in local factors of production, and recruit and retain economic-base employers. Emerging from this analysis were 9 “program theaters” clustered according to the kind of economic development program effort would be needed for job-creation. These included Local Small Business; Energy & Extractives; Federal Government; Visitor-Driven; Agriculture; Emerging Technology; Solowork; and Other. The schematic on the following page shows the interplay between the IJC model and the comprehensive “La Ristra” framework being utilized by the Northwest COG and its regional partners in the New Mexico Association of Regional Councils (NewMARC), and includes the job targets for each program theater

Based on these approaches, along with ongoing research and consultation, priority strategic clusters for this regional CEDS were identified as follows:

- ✍ Energy Logistics & Manufacturing
- ✍ Agriculture & Regional Food Systems
- ✍ Tourism & Recreation
- ✍ Downtown Revitalization

La Ristra Northwest Economic Development Schematic

Integrating the La Ristra Strategic Framework and the Jobs Council Program Theaters



Strategic Clusters | Focal Points for Development

Our greatest opportunities for development lie within a few economic clusters, customized for their relevance to the Northwest New Mexico economy. In the diverse conversations informing this regional framework, these clusters have been identified on the basis of:

- ✦ *Location Quotient* – the relative prominence of that cluster in the economic activity of the region, as compared with other regions of the country; i.e., does this cluster represent a higher or lesser portion of the regional economy than the national norm?
- ✦ *Retrospect and Prospect* – the extent to which a cluster of economic activities has played a significant role in the regional economy, as well as the extent to which that cluster may continue to be a driver in the future – although in different form. Do our regional assets – human skill base, location, infrastructure, market position, etc. – align with continued growth in this sector? Does it represent a synergy of inter-related economic activities?
- ✦ *Commitment & Interest* – has the regional community expressed interest, passion and commitment to an economic cluster, even if it falls short of other measures of prospective success? Did it emerge as a priority? Can it be re-kindled, re-positioned, and re-energized to create new economic opportunity for the region’s citizens and communities? Might it uniquely reach and benefit sectors of the regional population? Does it have a champion to lead the initiative?

Emerging from the planning process, the following Synergistic Clusters have risen up for targeted research, development, investment and action:

Energy, Logistics & Manufacturing [E-L-M]

Economic initiatives to grow economic-base industry and employment through building on the strong asset-base of the region, including: major transportation facilities running east-west and northward to the San Juan Basin; 100+ years of history in energy-related industries; continued natural resource availability, including renewables, for development and contribution to the national and regional energy portfolio; and a workforce ready for retraining and deployment in new E-L-M employment opportunities.

Agriculture & Regional Food Systems

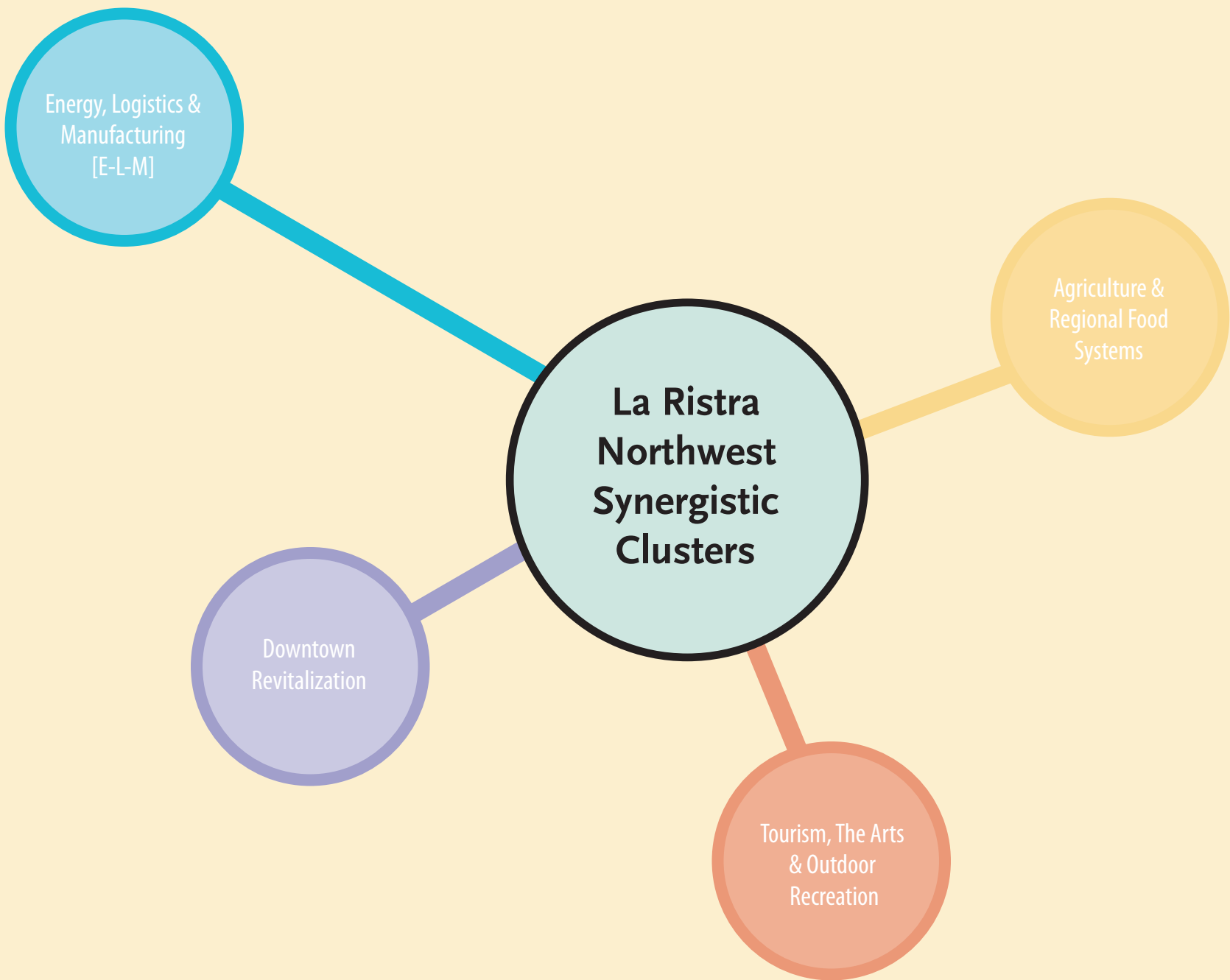
Economic initiatives to renew and expand the historical agricultural activity of the region as a means of building new regional and local food systems that stimulate and support agricultural production and distribution in communities, eliminate food deserts and patterns of obesity and malnutrition, empower local and family-based self-sustenance and livelihood, and increase the economic viability of cooperative agricultural enterprise.

Tourism, The Arts & Outdoor Recreation

Economic initiatives related to stimulating new enterprise and employment through re-positioning and re-branding the region as a destination for uniquely authentic, culturally rich, robust and transformative tourism experiences, including targeted work in adventure tourism (including the outdoor recreation industry), artisan trade & entrepreneurship, regional marketing & customer experience, and geotourism inter-connected with attractions in the broader Four Corners region.

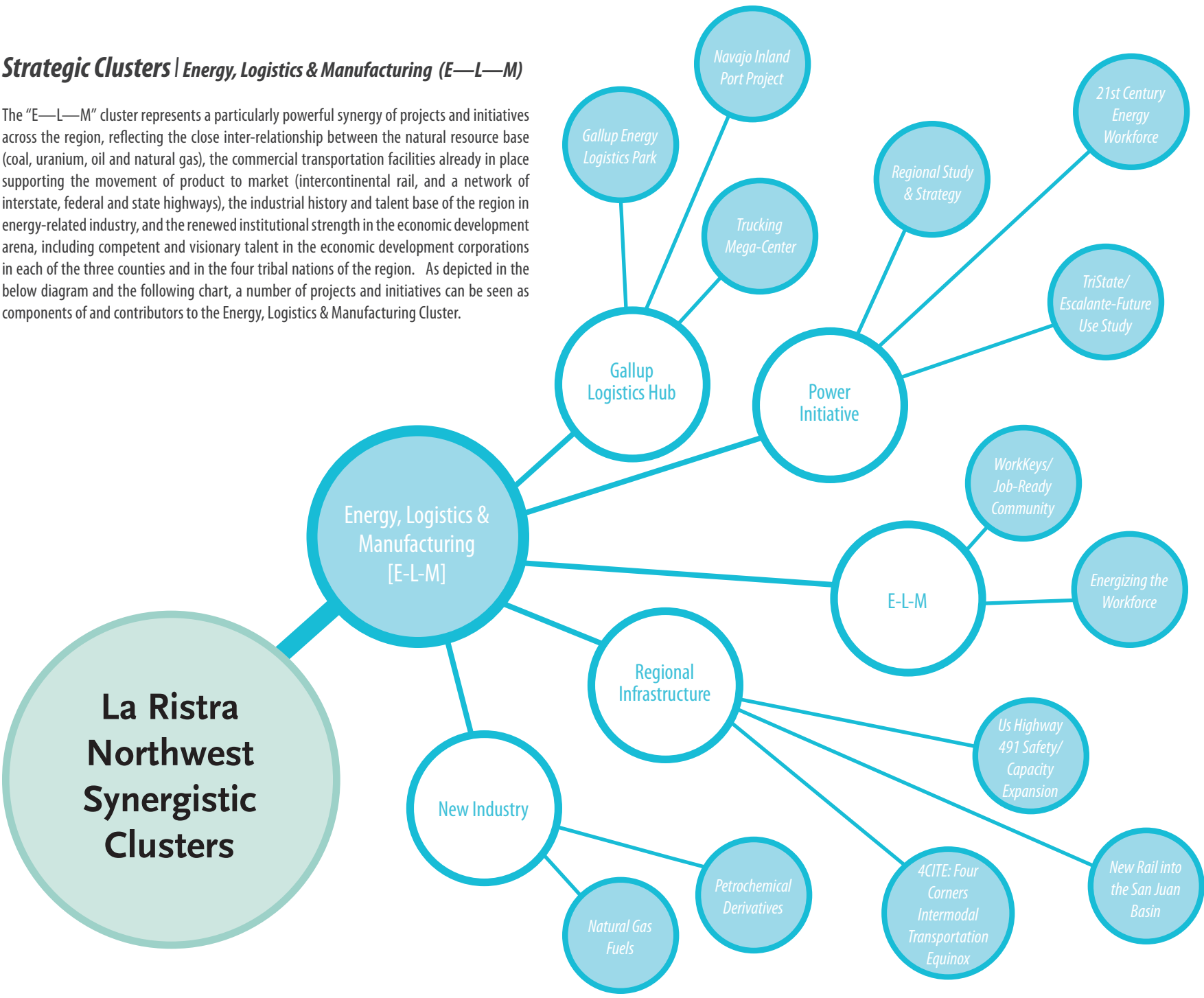
Downtown Revitalization

Economic initiatives organized around the revitalization and redevelopment of downtown centers in our urban and rural communities by uplifting the townscape through progressive design and physical improvements, restoring economic and cultural viability at the “heart” of these communities, attracting new enterprise and magnetizing investment and the flow of people and activities into these vital centers.



Strategic Clusters | Energy, Logistics & Manufacturing (E—L—M)

The “E—L—M” cluster represents a particularly powerful synergy of projects and initiatives across the region, reflecting the close inter-relationship between the natural resource base (coal, uranium, oil and natural gas), the commercial transportation facilities already in place supporting the movement of product to market (intercontinental rail, and a network of interstate, federal and state highways), the industrial history and talent base of the region in energy-related industry, and the renewed institutional strength in the economic development arena, including competent and visionary talent in the economic development corporations in each of the three counties and in the four tribal nations of the region. As depicted in the below diagram and the following chart, a number of projects and initiatives can be seen as components of and contributors to the Energy, Logistics & Manufacturing Cluster.



Strategic Clusters: Projects & Initiatives

Cluster:	Energy, Logistics & Manufacturing(“E-L-M”)		5-Year E-Jobs Target: 2,200
Project/Initiative	Goal/Intent/Outcomes	Leadership/Resources	Status/Next Steps/Support Needed
Gallup Logistics Hub			
Gallup Energy Logistics Park	New economic-base investment, payroll & infrastructure via energy logistics transloading hub, working as strategic link between energy resources & markets. Master-planned as 2,000-acre business park anchored by 9,000-foot rail loop.	Greater Gallup EDC, with Gallup Land Partners, BNSF Railroad, NMDOT, others	In full collaborative development; BNSF book-of-business certification achieved; seeking \$6M for critical broadband & road infrastructure.
Navajo Inland Port Project	Navajo Nation-based logistics-related development & possible foreign trade zone, in parallel and synergy with GELP to stimulate business, investment & local job creation	Navajo Nation Economic Development, with Manuelito, Rock Springs & Tsayatoh Navajo Chapters, GGEDC, GLP & others	Preliminary feasibility study complete; Need next-phase feasibility plan, market study, site master plan & development/investment strategy.
Trucking MegaCenter	New job & business creation via comprehensive mixed-use service center/ 11-hour hub for trucking industry on I-40 near New Mexico-Arizona border.	Greater Gallup EDC & others	Feasibility planning underway.
POWER Initiative			
Regional Study & Strategy	EDA grant under the federal inter-agency POWER initiative, to generate an economic assessment of the coal-reliant 4 Corners region, with diversification strategy.	Northwest New Mexico COG, in partnership with San Juan College, others	The COG District hired staff and commissioned assessment study from Highland Economics; report was completed & delivered in February 2017. Now in Implementation Phase, kicked off by Four Corners Future Forum in Fall 2017.
21st Century Energy Workforce	EDA POWER grant to upgrade training equipment in San Juan College School of Energy & strengthen re-training linkages with the energy industry in San Juan Basin.	San Juan College, in partnership with NWNMCOG & others	College staff hired; equipment procured; retraining program initiated; college-industry linkages strengthened.
TriState/Escalante-Future Use Study	Pursuant to the Greater Gallup EDC business retention & expansion initiative and NM House Memorial 72 (2017), collaborate with three departments of State government to study markets and options for future optimization of the natural, technical and human resources associated with the Escalante Generating Station.	NWNMCOG; TriState Generation & Transmission; Escalante Generating Station; Greater Gallup EDC; Cibola Communities EDF; Continental Divide EC; NM Departments of Economic Development, Energy & Workforce	Acquired funding for planning; conduct target industry study; conduct supply chain analysis; prepare presentations to the Legislature; develop recommended options for future economic development
E-L-M Workforce			
WorkKeys/ Job-Ready Community	Establish real-time San Juan County-wide database on industry skill requirements and workforce skill levels, linked with skill-specific training & local job placement	Four Corners Economic Development, San Juan College & others	Leading the State in the public-private infrastructure needed to tap the potential of the ACT WorkKeys skill assessment system to make the local workforce job-ready.
Energizing the Workforce	Create a nimble & effective workforce training program in McKinley County responsive to industry requirements by forging partnerships between industry, higher education, economic development and State agencies.	GGEDC, University of New Mexico-Gallup, Associated General Contractors & others	ETW partnership established by joint MOU, with program development underway and funding being pursued for full build-out of a rapid-response training system.
Regional Infrastructure			
US Highway 491 Safety/Capacity Expansion	Advance regional industrial infrastructure capacity supportive of economic activity via 4-laning USA Highway 491, Enhance traffic safety & commercial corridor capacity on US Highway 491 between Gallup and Shiprock	New Mexico DOT, in partnership with Navajo Nation & others	Designed, funded and in implementation, segment by segment; completion anticipated by 2018.
New Rail Into the San Juan Basin	Create a rail link between the transcontinental line of Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and the San Juan Basin energy fields, optimizing economic potential with efficient access to markets.	4 Corners Economic Development, in partnership with NM Economic Development, Navajo Nation & others	New Mexico Legislature-funded feasibility study completed and under review for next-step planning by 4CED, the Navajo Nation and partners.
4CITE: “Four Corners Intermodal Transportation Equinox”	Complete and implement the findings from the planning study to assess strategic transportation infrastructure needs and design solutions in connection with current & proposed developments associated with the Gallup Energy Logistics Park	Northwest New Mexico COG, in partnership with NM DOT, GGEDC & others	Study was funding and awarded to the COG District in 2015; the plan has been completed, and specific project planning and financing have commenced.
New Industry			
Petrochemical Derivatives	Determine the feasibility of manufacturing methane derivatives in the Four Corners region by examining barriers to development & market potential. Move toward implementation per market study results.	4 Corners Economic Development & others	Project is under active study and development by 4CED; Phase 1 study completed on “monetizing Methane in the Four Corners for Economic Growth”; needing a detailed economic market analysis.
Natural Gas Fuels	Localize natural gas utilization and move toward regional energy independence through developing infrastructure and fleet configurations for use of liquefied and compressed natural gas as fuel of choice for the region’s vehicles.	4 Corners Economic Development & others	Under study and development, with initial LNG/CNG stations established and planning underway for conversion of commercial and public vehicle fleets.

Strategic Clusters | Agriculture & Regional Food Systems

The Agriculture cluster reflects emergent priorities in the region around creating local and regional food systems less dependent on globalized food production and transportation networks, while expanding opportunities in rural communities for sustenance, livelihood and quality of life. The region acknowledges the presence of the Navajo nation’s large commercial farm enterprise, Navajo Agricultural Product Industry (NAPI) located south of Farmington, and is prepared to support new advances there particularly in value-added agricultural production. It is also recognized, however, that agriculture comprises only a slight percentage of the overall economic output of the region, and that the region-wide practice of farming has declined in recent decades – just now showing signs of revival. For developmental focus, then, there is growing interest in locally-grown food, farm-to-table connections within the region, positive impacts on nutrition and health, and growth of community-based and cooperative agriculture as an economically viable enterprise. Our region’s USDA-sponsored “Stronger Economies Together” (SET) initiative identified this cluster as a rural development priority, though many of the identified strategies shown below are in early developmental stages.



Strategic Clusters: Projects & Initiatives

Cluster:	Agriculture & Local/Regional Food Systems		IJC 2024/E-Jobs Target: 825
Project/Initiative	Goal/Intent/Outcomes	Leadership/Resources	Status/Next Steps/Support Needed
Regional Accelerator/ Food Hub	Plan, design and construct an Agribusiness Accelerator and Food Processing & Distribution Hub. This center will support value-added agri-business activities and offer the opportunity for “local” producers to understand mechanisms needed to get product from farm to store to table; act as a “one-stop-shop” where the value-added products can be shipped to local communities & institutions for consumption in-region. Read More: LINK	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SET Partners/Ag & Food Committee• NWNMCOG• USDA-Rural Development, NRCS, FSA• Diné College• NM State University-Cooperative Extension• Tribal & Local Government• heep Springs Community Gardening Project	1) Convene SET committee and partners to establish project resource needs and set tasks, assignments and timelines.
Farm-to-School/ Farm-to-Table	Increase in-region production and consumption of food products through formalized relationships between growers and institutional buyers.		
Local Production/ Community-Based Farming & Gardening	Increase by 30% the number of businesses in the region engaged in the production of healthy foods and value-added agribusiness products that build on the region’s rich history of traditional Native American crops and goods.		1) Education, training & peer networking with local producers and new startups. 2) Institute cooperative buying & marketing strategies. 3) Develop institutional connections for sale of ag products.
Value-Added Production, Processing & Marketing	Increase the profitability of the region’s agriculture activity by planning, promoting, financing and establishing value-added technologies and businesses.		1) Convene SET committee and partners to establish project resource needs and set tasks, assignments and timelines.
Food Systems/ Regional Food Sovereignty	Establish a regional collaborative organization that focuses on food policy, resource development, leadership training, co-operative development and system infrastructure in support of localized and regionalized food systems.		1) Convene SET committee and partners to establish project resource needs and set tasks, assignments and timelines.
Health Promotion/ Disease Prevention	Expand partnerships between healthcare and other community agencies to promote healthy food and nutrition as a primary key to disease prevention and community health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SET Partners• US Indian Health Service – Navajo Area Office, Northern Navajo Hospital; Gallup Indian Medical Center• San Juan Regional Medical Center• Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services	1) Convene SET committee and partners to establish project resource needs and set tasks, assignments and timelines.

Strategic Clusters | Tourism, The Arts & Outdoor Recreation

Northwest New Mexico is blessed with an abundance of spectacular beauty, natural wonders, cultural heritage, rich history, national parks and monuments, scenic byways and world-class artisan trade. Featuring such assets as the Navajo Nation, and Pueblos of Acoma, Laguna and Zuni, Chaco Cultural National Historic Park, the Bisti Wilderness, Route 66, and producing 70% of Native American art, Northwest New Mexico is ideally suited to continue its efforts to develop a thriving tourism industry to attract outdoor adventurers, art lovers and cultural seekers.

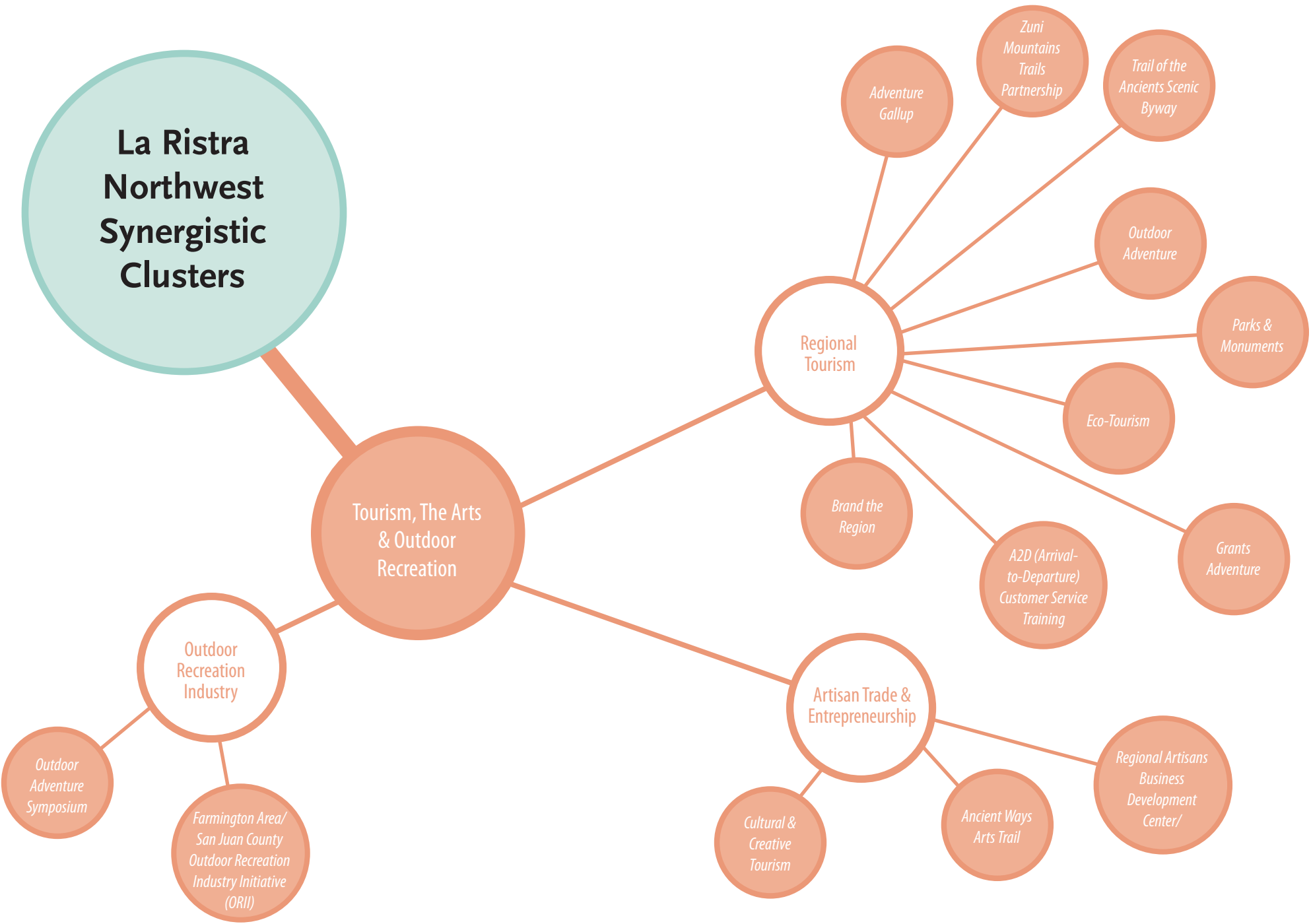
The Tourism, Outdoor Recreation and Artisan Trade synergistic cluster identifies vital projects and programs to re-energize regional visitation and enhance traveler experiences and offerings. The goal is to create more economic-based jobs and local businesses devoted to outdoor equipment manufacturing, guiding, outfitting and creative entrepreneurship.

Farmington initiatives include the “Jolt Your Journey” community branding effort to energize life journeys of outdoor lovers and active families. These efforts are increasing visitor awareness, interest and visitation. The community is currently developing the Farmington Area Outdoor Recreation economic sector to complement the existing oil and gas industry. The City of Farmington, Farmington Convention & Visitors Bureau, San Juan College, San Juan County and Four Corners Economic Development are partnering to support this endeavor.

Gallup launched its new community brand of “Gallup Real True” that strives to provide true, life-changing moments for residents, businesses and visitors. Gallup is expanding its tourism marketing and will soon offer Journey A2D training customer service training to local businesses and hospitality professionals.

And Grants recently opened its Route 66 neon drive-through signage to entice travelers to take a selfie and explore the community.

To advance this synergistic cluster, Northwest New Mexico should continue to harness the marketing power of the New Mexico True brand to promote regional tourism assets while enhancing overall experiences and offerings along Route 66, Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway, and the Four Corners Geotourism - NatGeo Mapping Project. Further, the region should develop specific treks and adventures to accommodate the growing Chinese market.



New Mexico Demographics

“ New Mexico is a Minority-Majority state. Hispanics currently make up 47 percent of New Mexico’s population, the largest Hispanic percentage in any state in the nation. Combining New Mexico’s Hispanic population with its Native American community (10.2 percent) makes New Mexico one of the few minority-majority states in the country.”

Gabriel R. Sanchez and
Shannon Sanchez-Youngman
New Mexico 2050

Strategic Clusters: Projects & Initiatives

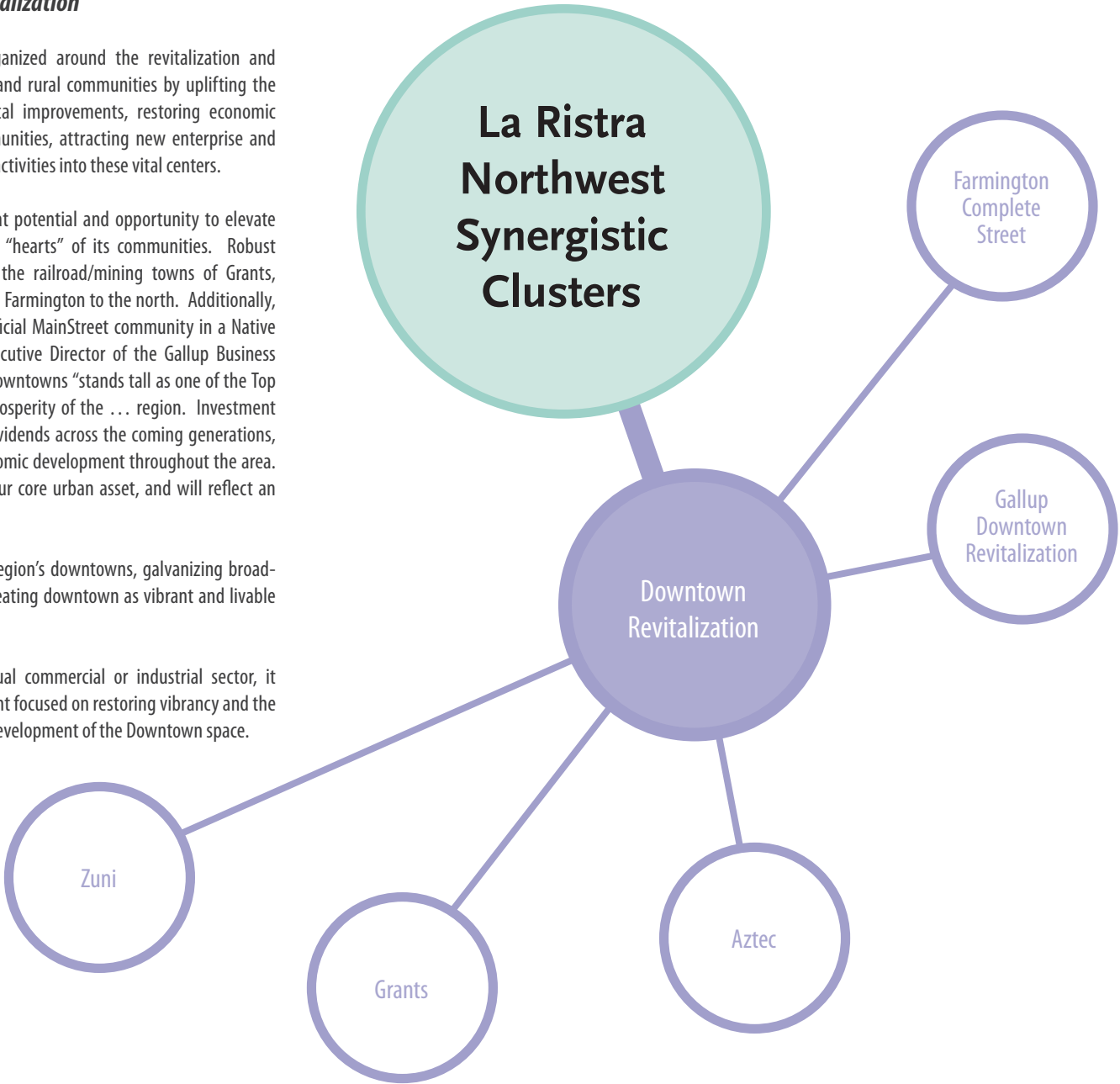
Cluster:	Tourism, Outdoor Recreation & Artisan Trade			Cluster:	Tourism, Outdoor Recreation & Artisan Trade				
Project/Initiative	Goal/Intent/Outcomes	Leadership/Resources	Status/Next Steps/Support Needed	Project/Initiative	Goal/Intent/Outcomes	Leadership/Resources	Status/Next Steps/Support Needed		
Regional Tourism				Artisan Trade & Entrepreneurship					
Adventure Gallup & Beyond	Develop & promote outdoor venues and adventures, create outstanding tourism experiences and generate new tourism revenues and business opportunities in the Gallup/McKinley County region.	✓ Adventure Gallup & Beyond, Inc. • Gallup Land Partners; NWNMCOG • McKinley County; City of Gallup • Youth Conservation Corps • Gallup-McKinley Chamber of Commerce • Greater Gallup EDC; Gallup Trails 2010	Adventure Gallup & Beyond, Inc. has been well-established for over 15 years, serving as a catalyst, trail-developer, advocate, gatekeeper & marketing force for expanding outdoor adventure experiences in the Greater Gallup area for both local residents & visitors. The challenge remains to convert these assets into local business & economic development.	Regional Artisans Business Development Center/ Network	Increase economic viability of the artisan trades through strengthening trademark protections, business training & the development of cooperative purchasing, production, management & marketing.	• Tribal & Local Tourism Offices • 4 Corners Economic Development • Greater Gallup EDC • Cibola Communities EDF • Small Business Development Centers	• Pursue establishment of the “New Mexico True Certified” brand for authentic locally-crafted arts. • Convene stakeholders to develop a focused plan for cooperative development & finance.		
Zuni Mountains Trails Partnership	Create a world-class outdoor recreation resource in the Zuni Mountains through a 70-mile system of interconnected mountain biking and multipurpose trails, thus promoting local quality of life and a magnetic attraction for tourists & visitors.	✓ NWNMCOG • Cibola County & McKinley County • USFS/Cibola National Forest • Greater Gallup EDC; Cibola Comm. EDF • Gallup Trails & others	Environmental Impact statement has been prepared and finalization and decision making underway to		Ancient Way Arts Trail	Promote local artists along the Highway 53 corridor by web-based mapping of home studios and biographical & product marketing of the artists.	• Pueblo of Zuni Tourism • Region 1 Tourism Marketing Co-op • Local artists & associations • Local & tribal government • NWNMCOG	• The AWAT is well-established but needs additional resources to sustain & expand its effectiveness on behalf of artists in this rural corridor.	
Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway	Create new economic revenues & opportunities by optimizing scenic, geographical & cultural assets through developing & promoting infrastructure, visitor amenities & tourism experiences along the 300-mile highway loop interconnecting world-class archaeological sites in the NW New Mexico region.	✓ NWNMCOG • Region 1 Tourism Marketing Cooperative • NM Tourism Department • Local & Tribal Government & Tourism Ofcs	Applications for federal byway designation were not successful, so next steps include shoring up infrastructure & visitor amenities better aligned with national byway standards.			Cultural & Creative Tourism	Optimize opportunities for local artisans and traditional communities to interface with the tourism market through formalizing & expanding marketing specific to local cultures & the creative economy.	• NM Tourism Department • Region 1 Tourism Marketing Co-op • Local & tribal governments & tourism offices • Local arts organizations	The potential is great for increased success in this arena. The key is focusing on local producers as entrepreneurs – either individually or cooperatively – and building profitable connections with tourism & other markets.
Outdoor Adventures	Create vibrant outdoor recreation offerings of tours and experiences	• Farmington CVB • Greater Gallup EDC					Outdoor Recreation Industry Farmington-Area/San Juan County Outdoor Recreation Industry Initiative (ORII)	Develop thriving outdoor recreation industry of guides, outfitter and outdoor equipment manufacturing	• Farmington CVB • 4 Corners Economic Development • City of Farmington • San Juan County • San Juan College & Enterprise Center
Parks & Monuments	Expand awareness and offerings at regional national and state parks and monuments	• Local and triball tourism organizations in partnership with national and state parks		Outdoor Adventure Symposium	Create “outdoor recreation industry” identity for the Farmington/San Juan County area by convening a major industry exhibition event.			• NWNMCOG • Oil & gas companies • BLM	Currently a line item in Farmington’s Outdoor Recreation action plan; planning to be developed in 2018
Eco-Tourism	Inventory current business and projects related to this area, form regional tasks forces to identify opportunities and develop offerings	• Local & Tribal Tourism Offices • NWNMCOG • 4 Corners Economic Development • Greater Gallup EDC • Cibola Communities EDF							
Grants Adventure		• Grants-Cibola Chamber of Commerce • City of Grants • Cibola Communities EDF							
Brand the Region	Uplift the global market presence of the region through local and regional branding (place-making and place-marketing) and increased inter-agency coordination between tribal and non-tribal tourism organizations to maximize the regional tourism experience while protecting culture, archaeology & environment.	✓ NWNMCOG • Region 1 Tourism Marketing Co-op • NM Tourism Department • Local & Tribal Tourism Offices • 4 Corners Economic Development • Greater Gallup EDC • Cibola Communities EDF	• The “Jolt Your Journey” brand is developed & actively marketing the Farmington area. • The “Gallup Real True” brand is developed & being socialized in the Gallup area. • Next steps: 1) Identify stakeholders and processes for building up the regional brand & tying it to the Four Corners & Southwest. 2) Sustain & optimize utilization of the 4 Corners Geotourism Mapping Website.						
A2D (“Arrival-to-Departure”) Customer Service Training	Improve the region’s customer service culture through enhanced training opportunities for tourism professionals & local retail staff.	• Gallup-McKinley Chamber of Commerce • Farmington CVB, Greater Gallup EDC,	Journey A2D program is underway in Farmington and Gallup						

Strategic Clusters | Downtown Revitalization

This cluster encompasses economic initiatives organized around the revitalization and redevelopment of downtown centers in our urban and rural communities by uplifting the townscape through progressive design and physical improvements, restoring economic and cultural viability at the “heart” of these communities, attracting new enterprise and magnetizing investment and the flow of people and activities into these vital centers.

Northwest New Mexico’s downtowns represent great potential and opportunity to elevate economic activity and quality of life assets in the “hearts” of its communities. Robust downtown revitalization efforts are underway in the railroad/mining towns of Grants, Milan and Gallup, as well as in Aztec, Bloomfield and Farmington to the north. Additionally, the Pueblo of Zuni has been designated the first official MainStreet community in a Native American Nation. As asserted by Francis Bee, Executive Director of the Gallup Business Improvement District, revitalization of our historic downtowns “stands tall as one of the Top Three paths to the overall economic stability and prosperity of the ... region. Investment in our downtowns will build wealth and produce dividends across the coming generations, and will support and complement all efforts at economic development throughout the area. Failure to invest will result in the deterioration of our core urban asset, and will reflect an overall decline in the fortunes of the community.”

There is significant energy and momentum in the region’s downtowns, galvanizing broad-based participation, assembling resources and re-creating downtown as vibrant and livable spaces in our communities. Although the “Downtown Revitalization” cluster does not represent any individual commercial or industrial sector, it nevertheless represents both a venue and a movement focused on restoring vibrancy and the spirit of community through proactive and creative development of the Downtown space.



Strategic Clusters: Projects & Initiatives

Cluster:	Downtown Revitalization		IJC 2024/E-Jobs Target: TBD
Project/Initiative	Goal/Intent/Outcomes	Leadership/Resources	Status/Next Steps/Support Needed
Farmington Complete Street	Goal: Reclaim Main Street, Towards a Prosperous Future, through utilization of progressive urban tools: Tool 1) Right-Sizing Streets Tool 2) Narrow Travel Lanes Tool 3) Safer Intersections Tool 4) On-Street Parking Tool 5) Street Trees Tool 6) Security & Lighting Tool 7) Sidewalk & Street Furnishings Tool 8) Wayfinding		
Gallup Downtown Revitalization	1) Expand financing/funding sources and Invest in Downtown Infrastructure. 2) Finance and install state-of-the-art broadband capacity in Downtown Gallup. 3) Increase workforce deployment to complete downtown redevelopment priorities. 4) Develop a comprehensive incentives plan and policy for attraction and retention of business in the Downtown. 5) Establish a Downtown Innovation & Entrepreneurship Incubator, with particular support for startups in digital media and creative economy. 6) Continue to strengthen and resource Downtown leadership & innovation through use of the MainStreet model. 7) Build a Downtown Volunteer Corps to assist with implementation of plans & programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gallup Business Improvement DistrictGallup MainStreetallup Arts & Culture DistrictGallup Metropolitan Redevelopment DistrictCity of GallupgallupArtsNWNM Council of Governments	1) Implementing an “Event Street” design and development plan for Coal Avenue in Downtown Gallup, under funding from National Endowment of the Arts.. 2) Completing design and pre-construction on transformation of selected alleyways in the Downtown to serve as safe and attractive, full-use pedestrian and commercial corridors. 3) Need to establish and finance a Downtown Development Fund, in conjunction with BID and other resources, to accelerate implementation of plans for the overlay districts of the Downtown.
Aztec	To be completed		
Grants	To be completed		
Zuni	To be completed		

V. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The evaluation framework for **La Ristra Northwest** is embedded in the strategy.

- ✦ For each of the 7 “chiles”, or strategic goal areas, there is a summary plan that lays out objectives, tactics, stakeholders and metrics. All of these details are amenable to updating, modifying and replacing over time, but lend themselves to measurement and monitoring along the way.

Achievement of goals and objectives within this framework can be tracked as milestones are reached, captured as “outputs” from the system of tactics and activities undertaken by the region’s stakeholders.

- ✦ For the Northwest New Mexico economy as a whole, we have identified a number of key metrics that are updated in the *Innovation 2.0* program in StatsAmerica.com, independently of local data development by the COG District or its partners. Baseline data for our region are summarized above in the Background section. These measures lend themselves to tracking and monitoring over time, in comparison with the region’s own past measures, as well as with the statistics showing up by county, by region across the state, and by district across the country.

These metrics may be considered “synergistic,” as changes in their profiles result from a combination of factors, only some of which are under the control of stakeholders within the region. For example, positive change in educational attainment measures

may result from asset-building programs in support of families, from curricular breakthroughs in the schools, and/or from increased employment opportunities for breadwinners across the region. Positive change in the number of persons employed in high-tech jobs may result from the interplay of several concurrent initiatives, such as incubator support for new entrepreneurship, new housing for all levels in the residential market, targeted industrial recruitment and/or a newly funded program at the local community college.

Reference to the **Innovation 2.0** measures can provide comparative information for local planners and leaders, on which to assess the health and progress of the local and regional economy.

The *La Ristra* strategy as currently summarized here needs to be further operationalized through collaborative assignment of specific roles and responsibilities, prioritization of work to be undertaken and establishment of accountability timelines for implementation of actions in service to the over-arching strategies.

As the region’s federally-designated Economic Development District, the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments, will serve as overall facilitator and coordinator of the *La Ristra* Strategy, with work to be accomplished and tracked via numerous partnerships – existing and new – throughout the region.

New Mexico Cultural Affairs and the Arts

“A long period of transition and adjustment might be coming to a head by 2050, resulting in a new concept of economic vitality, one based on quality of life rather than on mere physical expansion. If quality of life becomes the new standard by which to judge economic and social success, then creative workers will have a vital role to play no matter what else happens.”

V.B. Price
New Mexico 2050

VI. MOVING FORWARD

Update 2018

A. 5-Year Picture, 2014-2018

Foundational work was done in 2013, including the holding of county-level strategic planning sessions in Cibola, McKinley and San Juan Counties that involved over 100 participants. The results from these workshops were compiled and then integrated with the statewide planning model being developed under the auspices of the New Mexico Association of Regional Councils (NewMARC).

To facilitate this integration, in 2014 the Northwest New Mexico COG contracted with NewMARC's consultant, Jim Glover of The Idea Group of Santa Fe, to assist with development of the Northwest plan in accordance with the new Guidelines being drafted by the US Economic Development Administration for the *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy* (CEDS) process. The Northwest New Mexico COG invested considerable effort in the development of the statement "CEDS" — **La Ristra New Mexico**. As a result, **La Ristra Northwest** reflects both (a) the EDA guidelines, as they became finalized and published, and (b) the general template and development themes contained in the statewide *La Ristra New Mexico* framework.

A particular innovation incubated within the statewide *La Ristra* strategic planning process was the design and piloting of a system for documenting, sharing and tracking economic development projects, as well as a range of projects across the spectrum of community development, at all stages of development. Building on the *Panoramic*® technology backbone crafted by Paladin Data Systems of Poulsbo, Washington, the COG and its partners in NewMARC created the web-based "*La Ristra Model*" program knowledge tool for use by COG Districts and local and State partner agencies to capture, map and display projects by selective layer — project type, geographic area, geopolitical district, etc. For the Northwest District, the time is at hand for putting this pilot tool into full practice through populating the *La Ristra* system with all economic development and other projects throughout the region.

Accompanying the *La Ristra Model* development was the design of a project prioritization and investability process, whereby projects can be classified by readiness (stage of development) and by a range of other factors, so that investments can be better targeted and timed in accordance with projects' developmental schedules. Of particular value will be the use of

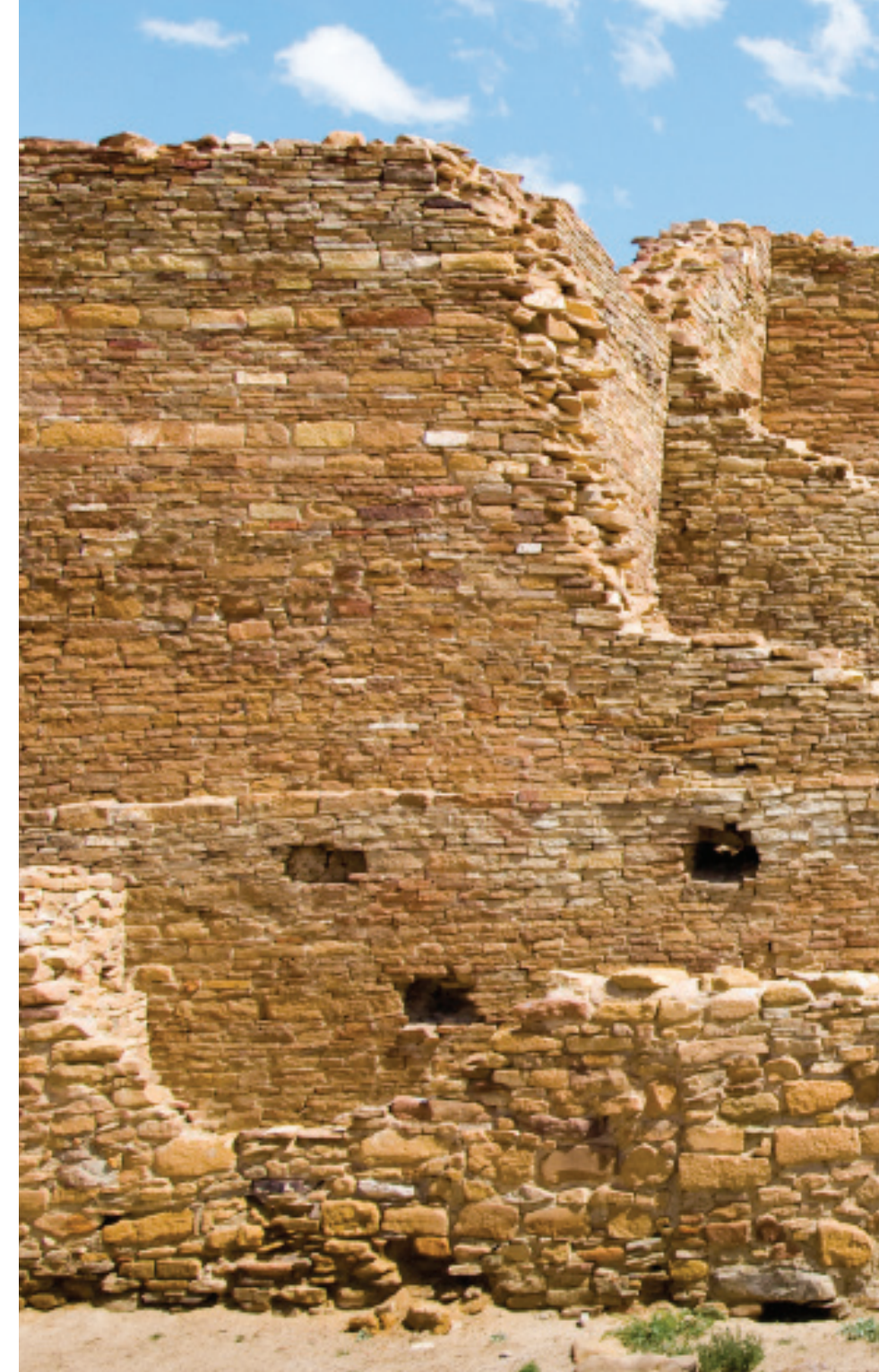
the *La Ristra* Strategic Framework — the "7 Chiles" — as a screen for classifying projects for economic development investment.

During development of the Northwest strategy, which provided a dynamic process and document for cooperative work with the regional partners, the COG was invited to help lead a regional process, in collaboration with New Mexico State University-Cooperative Extension Service, being rolled out in 2014-15 by USDA-Rural Development, the "**SET**" process ("**Stronger Economies Together**"). While productive and valuable — resulting in a USDA-certified "high quality plan" under the banner "*Trail of the Ancients* Economic Development Plan" — the process consumed considerable COG time and staff resources and, unlike EDA investments in the region, for the most part did not include financial support to the District for the developmental processes involved. To some extent, the resulting data and strategies emerging from this SET process were integrated into the *La Ristra Northwest* CEDS document as a rural development element of the broader plan. Much more needs to be done in the next iterative stages of *La Ristra* planning and development to further articulate, integrate and implement SET strategies, with particular focus on seeking sustained federal investments from USDA-Rural Development and other public and private sources.

In the intervening years, the COG also received and implemented a special grant from the US Economic Development Administration under the federal "POWER" Initiative ("Partnerships and Opportunities in Workforce and Economic Revitalization"), in tandem with a POWER grant to San Juan College. Emerging from the COG's regional economic assessment and the investments in workforce re-training at San Juan College was a regional collaborative effort that resulted in the *Four Corners Future Forum*, held in Farmington, New Mexico in November 2017, attended by over 140 participants for all four states of the Four Corners region. This effort continues forward in a broad-based implementation format, with steps being taken to form up a Four Corners Regional Consortium to shepherd cross-jurisdictional collaboration and increase investment into the region.

In parallel with these processes, the economic development corporations in each of Northwest New Mexico's three counties have proceeded forward with initiatives that promise to strengthen and diversify the local economies. Prominent examples include:

- 1) Impressive work by the new Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation in partnering with private sector property owners, developers and investors to establish the Gallup Energy Logistics Park and achieve designation as a certified site by Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad. Additionally, the GGEDC has also undertaken a strong business retention and expansion effort, resulting in cutting-edge work in planning with a local coal-fired power plant to optimize that industry's economic and human resource assets toward future economic diversification. This effort is also a highlighted component of the emerging McKinley Workforce Pathways initiative in concert with the WK Kellogg Foundation.
- 2) Remarkable progress by Four Corners Economic Development, Inc. in the establishment of San Juan County as a Work Ready Community aligned with ACT's WorkKeys program to assess knowledge and skill levels of the workforce, and carried out in collaboration with local employers. Additionally, as 4CED's host institution, San Juan College has celebrated the opening of its School of Energy, followed by the POWER grant award which supported the installation of new instrumentation and controls technology in that School's new facility.
- 3) In the southern tier of the Northwest New Mexico region, Cibola Communities Economic Development Foundation has championed the development of broadband capacity, particularly to support new business and economic development in the Cibola County community. It has also led the statewide charge in piloting a State-funded "SoloWorks" job creation center in Grants, New Mexico, which is succeeding in enrolling out-of-work local citizens, training them in digital technology skills and connecting them to employment with out-of-state employers while keeping them home as location-neutral workers.



La Ristra Northwest Action Plan

	ACTIVITY	2014-2018 COMPLETED	2018-2022 MOVING FORWARD	
	County Level Strategic Planning Sessions	✍		
	La Ristra Model (Panoramic)	✍		
	La Ristra Prioritization & Investability	✍		
	La Ristra Strategic Vision Framework	✍		
	La Ristra New Mexico CEDS	✍		
	Trail of the Ancients Stronger Economies Together	✍		
	POWER Initiative	✍		
	Four Corners Future Forum	✍		
	Gallup Energy Logistic Park (GGEDC)	✍		
	Business & Retention (GGEDC)	✍		
	McKinley Workforce Pathways	✍		
	ACTs WorkKeys (4CED)	✍		
	School of Energy (San Juan College)	✍		
	POWER Grant Award	✍		
	Broadband Capacity (CCEDF)	✍		
	Soloworks Job Creation Center	✍		
	NWNMCOG La Ristra Training		✍	
	Regional La Ristra Training		✍	
	La Ristra Innovation 2.0 Training		✍	
	La Ristra Strategic Vision Framework Training		✍	
	La Ristra Prioritization & Investability Training		✍	
	Regional La Ristra Model Training & Project Input		✍	

New Mexico Indian Tribes & Communities

“ New Mexico’s tribes in 2050 will be very much a part of New Mexico but will continue to maintain the way they carried on to speak the languages they spoke when Coronado arrived around five hundred years ago. The tribes and the state will be complementary, separate sovereigns sharing the splendor that makes New Mexico the Land of Enchantment.”

Veronica E. Tiller
New Mexico 2050



RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Name

Link

New Mexico Organizations

Ristra Project	http://www.ristraproject.com
NewMARC	http://www.reachthenewmarc.com
Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments	http://www.nwnmcog.com/
North Central New Mexico Economic Development District	https://www.ncnmedd.com/
Mid-Region Council of Governments	https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/
Eastern Plains Council of Governments	http://www.epcog.org/
Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments	http://www.swnmcog.org/
Southeastern New Mexico Economic Development District	http://snmedd.com/
South Central New Mexico Council of Governments	https://www.sccog-nm.com/
New Mexico Economic Development Department	https://gonm.biz/
New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions	https://www.dws.state.nm.us/
Bureau of Business & Economic Research (UNM)	https://bber.unm.edu/
New Mexico Tourism Department	https://www.newmexico.org/industry/
New Mexico Municipal League	https://nmml.org/

Name

Link

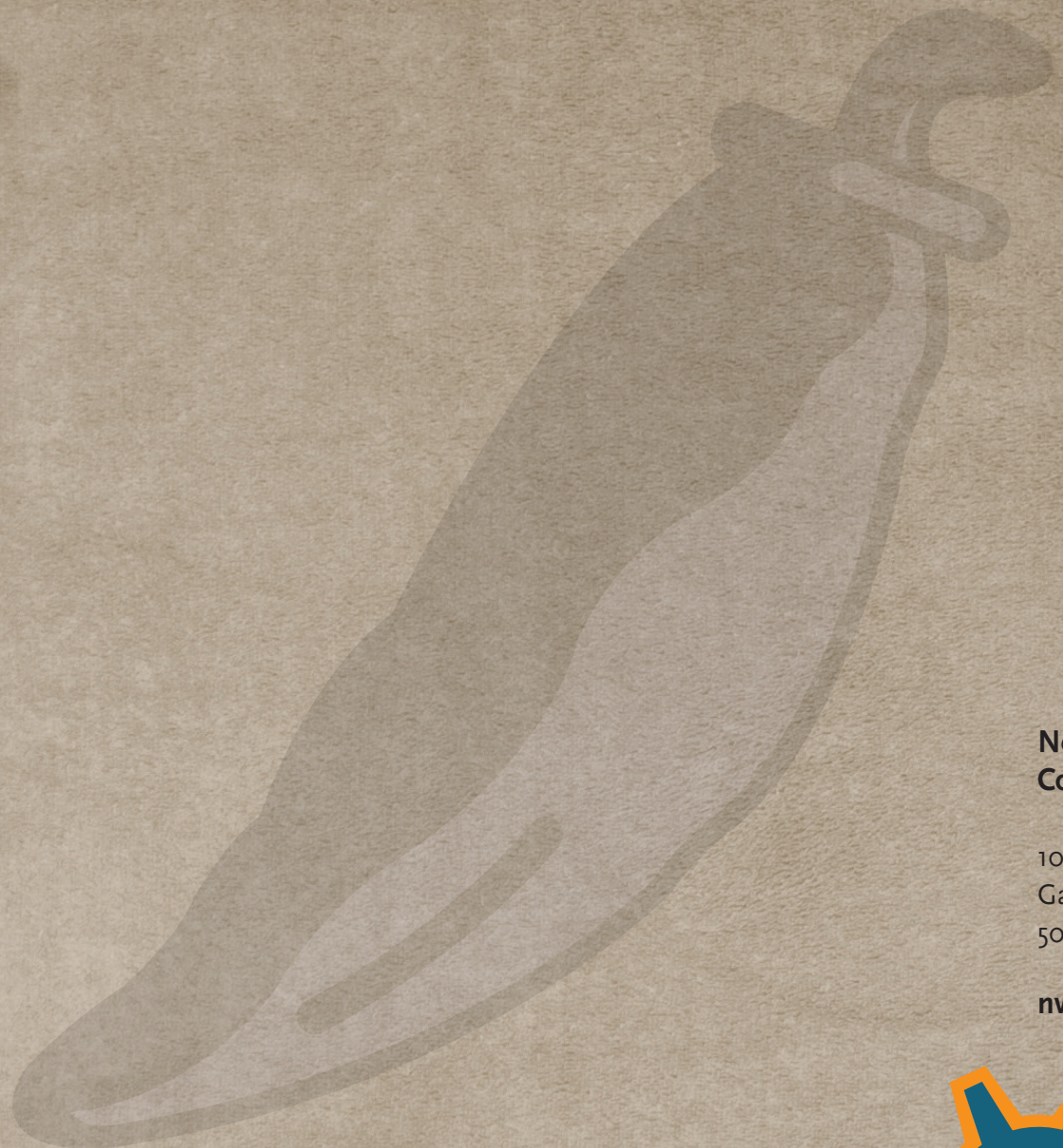
New Mexico Organizations

New Mexico Association of Counties	http://www.nmcounties.org/
New Mexico Association of Commerce & Industry	http://www.nmaci.org/
New Mexico Manufacturing Extension Partnership	http://newmexicomep.org/
New Mexico Small Business Development Center	http://www.nmsbdc.org/
Community Economics Lab	http://www.thecelab.org/

New Mexico Plans, Data & Documents

Innovation Index/StatsAmerica	http://statsamerica.org/
New Mexico Economic Development Department 5 Year Plan	https://gonm.biz/uploads/documents/publications/nmedd5YearStrategicPlan.pdf
New Mexico Job Creation Assessment (Interim Job Council)	http://nmdashboard.thecelab.org/
2016 Statewide Town Hall: Economic Security and Vitality for New Mexico – Background Report	http://nmfirst.org/literatureretrieve.aspx?ID=232600
2016 Statewide Town Hall: Economic Security and Vitality for New Mexico – Recommendations Report	http://nmfirst.org/literatureretrieve.aspx?ID=234317
2012 New Century Economy Summit	http://nmfirst.org/literatureretrieve.aspx?ID=154426
New Mexico Gross Receipts Data	https://www.nmfa.net/investors/general-information/new-mexico-gross-receipts-data/
Lodgers Tax Report	http://nmdfa.state.nm.us/Financial_Distribution.aspx
New Mexico Transportation Plan	http://dot.state.nm.us/content/nmdot/en/Planning.html
New Mexico Water Plan	http://www.ose.state.nm.us/Planning/
New Mexico Energy Policy & Implementation Plan - 2015	http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/EnergyPolicy/
New Mexico Cultural Economy	http://www.newmexicoculture.org/about/cultures-impact
New Mexico Progress Report	http://nmfirst.org/library/2015/2015-new-mexico-first-progress-report/index.html
UNM Fact Book	https://oia.unm.edu/facts-and-figures/index.html
New Mexico 2050	http://unmpress.com/books.php?ID=20000000006124
A Better New Mexico	http://www.onenewmexico.com/abetternm/
New Mexico's Economic Development Strategy, NewMARC White Paper	https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/7b4d37_54d95a3351884820b13b041a03e2354b.pdf

Name	Link
Northwest New Mexico Plans, Data & Documents	
Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board – Strategic Plan	
Trails of the Ancient SET Plan	
Long Range Transportation Plan Northwest New Mexico	
Northwest New Mexico Jobs Council Report	
Power Report	
Four Corners Future Forum Report	



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