

**COUNTY OF TAOS
STATE OF NEW MEXICO**

f.r Bob Romero	District I
Miguel Romero jr.	District II
Darlene J. Vigil	District III
AnJanette Brush	District IV
Ronald Mascarenas, chair	District V



**TAOS COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

JESSICA STERN
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
OFFICE PHONE – (575) 737-6346

BRENT JARAMILLO, COUNTY MANAGER
OFFICE PHONE – (575) 737-6304

PRESS RELEASE:

Contact Information

Jessica Stern, Economic Development Director
(575) 737-6346 | jessica.stern@taoscountynm.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Taos County Receives Nearly \$150,000 in Federal, State and Local Funds to Support the Cultural Treasures Project

Taos, NM – October 8, 2025 Taos County is honored to recently be awarded three funding opportunities from Federal, State and Local sources to support the Cultural Treasures Project (CTP). Taos County has received a \$65,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts' (NEA) Our Town program; \$22,300 from the New Mexico Tourism Department's Destination Forward Program; and a generous, \$61,800 investment from the Town of Taos. This infusion of resources is in addition to the initial and foundational funding received from the LOR Foundation, Taos County and the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area.

The NEA Our Town program supports creative placemaking projects that integrate arts, culture, and design in efforts to advance local economic, physical, and other community-desired outcomes, such as supporting local artistic and cultural resources, improving a neighborhood's design, and/or strengthening local economies to promote investment and job creation. The County's Our Town project will support youth internship participation in the CTP through the Taos Center for the Arts' Inter-Arts Internship Program in coordination with research and data analysis at the Couse-Sharp Historic Site and Lunder Research Center. It will also support accessibility resources for the CTP, such as translation services, ASL interpretation and other accessibility services as needed.

The New Mexico Tourism's Destination Forward program was originally created to support the planning and implementation of tourism infrastructure projects that enhance the visitor experience at tourism-related amenities, facilities and points-of-interest throughout the state. The County's Destination Forward grant will support the creation of interactive StoryMaps on the CTP's publicly accessible ArcGIS map. StoryMaps are digital storytelling tools that can overlay narrative with GIS mapping software, so that users can have access to a more interpretive and impactful experience with a map.

The Town of Taos' generous funding agreement with the CTP will support marketing, advertising, community engagement, and communications for all CTP activities in 2025 and 2026.

“Taos County is humbled to receive such significant support from a variety of funders. It shows that this project, and our efforts to safeguard through policy, planning and education the people, places, spaces, and activities that make this county special, is resonating broadly,” said Jessica Stern, Economic Development Director for Taos County and Project Director for the Cultural Treasures Project.

The **Cultural Treasures Project (CTP)** is a community-led effort to identify, catalogue, and honor the places, practices, and people that matter—before they’re erased, paved over, or forgotten. With increasing gentrification and economic pressure, we risk losing what makes this place home. Spearheaded by Taos County Economic Development and a diverse advisory group of local residents, the project gathers community input through surveys, interviews, and focus groups. Elders, youth, long-time locals, newcomers—everyone is invited to share what matters to them. The County is documenting not only buildings and landscapes, but also traditions, celebrations, gathering places, and the people who keep culture alive. Collected treasures will be represented in a public, interactive map to support planning, policy, education, and community pride. It is placekeeping for ourselves and future generations.

Cultural Assets or Cultural Treasures are people, groups, customs, places, the natural world and events that hold meaningful aesthetic, knowledge and/or historic value that establish shared individual and community identity. Cultural treasures can be tangible, intangible, emotional, and/or spiritual.

Community members can participate in the Cultural Treasures Project by completing the online questionnaire (<https://taoscounty.org/496/Cultural-Treasures-Project>), or by attending a public event and completing a survey. Spanish-language materials are available.

For additional information, please contact Jessica Stern, Taos County Economic Development Director at 575-737-6346 or jessica.stern@taoscountynm.gov

###