What’s in a Plan:
Comprehensive Planning Approaches
that Build on the Assets of New Mexico Communities

Phyllis Taylor
Sites Southwest
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Issues in Rural Communities

- Demographics
  - Older population; long-time residents

- Changing rural economies
  - Tourism/second home development
  - Self Employment
  - Retirees
  - Stress on extractive industries, agriculture
  - Retail leakage to larger communities
Issues in Rural Communities

- Rural growth patterns
  - Communities can experience extremes
    - Overwhelming growth, influx of newcomers
    - Stagnation or decline
  - Conflicting community values regarding growth
- Vulnerability to outside forces
Issues in Rural Communities

“I wish things could be like they were thirty years ago.”

AND

“We need to provide jobs so our kids don’t have to move away.”
Rural Values

- Rural lifestyle
- Friendly people
- Mutual assistance
- Farms and ranches – working landscape
- Open space
- Personal freedom / Being left alone
- Property rights
- Opposition to government regulation
- Importance of personal relationships
Implementation Capacity

- Small staff
- Limited information available
- A challenge to take care of the basics
- Limited local financial capacity to carry out plan recommendations
- Experts at obtaining funding for basic infrastructure
Questions to Ask

- What are the community’s values?
- What changes are affecting the community?
- How are these changes affecting the things that the community values?
- How will this community deal with change?
Questions to Ask

- If community has no zoning, is it necessary?
- How do you mesh aesthetic sensibilities in a working landscape?
- What are appropriate subdivision design standards for rural areas?
Discovering the Place

- Steering Committee
- Public Meetings
- Community Survey
- Community Mapping
- Interviews
- “Hanging Out”
Aztec - Community Mapping

- Rapid growth in the City’s PPJ
- Concern about impact on schools and community services
- City response was application of City’s subdivision standards in rural area
- Mutual frustration
Aztec - Community Mapping

- Assets
  - Affordable land/home packages
  - Ownership opportunity
  - Strong economy
  - Scenic character of river corridor
  - Federally owned open land
  - Town Center/Main Street
Aztec - Community Mapping

- Community mapping captured visual image of resident values
- Goal was mutually acceptable approach to managing growth in the PPJ
- Process identified
  - Important places to be protected
  - Areas appropriate for rural subdivisions
  - Rural development standards
Aztec - Community Mapping

- Important agricultural land
- Public open land
- Community landmarks
- Oil and gas fields - basis of local economy
Aztec - Community Mapping

Development suitability ranges from light (most suitable) to dark (not suitable)
Aztec - Community Mapping

- Potential regulatory approaches
  - Flexibility in subdivision standards
  - Rural appropriateness
    - Roadway standards
    - Curb & gutter
    - Lighting
Elephant Butte - Community Character

- Tourism-based economy
- Retirement community

Assets
- Recreational amenities
- Small town atmosphere
- Proximity to services
Elephant Butte - Community Character
Elephant Butte – Community Character
Elephant Butte - Community Character

- Aesthetic enhancements
  - Entryways
  - Main Street design enhancements
  - Enhancements for boat/RV storage
Elephant Butte - Community Character

- Potential regulatory approaches
  - Design overlay and streetscape - NM 171 and NM 195
  - Town center district
  - View protection
  - Annexation approaches - Lake interface
Hatch - Land Use and Community Design

- Agricultural economy
- Assets
  - Green chile
  - Traffic on NM 26
  - Main Street character
Hatch - Land Use and Community Design

Community Goals → Land Use Concept → Future Land Use Plan → Zoning Map

[Map of Hatch Community Design Concepts]
Hatch - Land Use and Community Design

- Implementation
  - Rezoning along main street for more compatible uses
  - Preference for project level implementation rather than regulation
    - Streetscape improvements
    - Façade improvements
    - Mural program
    - Gateways
Eagle Nest - Recreational Assets

- Tourist-based economy
- Goal to grow
- Assets
  - Eagle Nest State Park
  - Scenic setting
  - Historic character
  - Main Street
  - Excellent environment for residents
Eagle Nest - Recreational Assets
Eagle Nest - Recreational Assets

- Land Use Concept
  - Improve link to State Park
  - Accommodate economic diversity
  - Improve/protect residential neighborhoods
  - Move incompatible uses to more suitable locations over time
Eagle Nest - Recreational Assets