

**County of Grant**  
**Resolution No. R-12-17**

**ADOPTING AND AUTHORIZING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GRANT COUNTY  
MASTER PLAN AS SUBMITTED BY ANGELOU ECONOMICS**

WHEREAS, the County of Grant applied for and received an EDA Community Trade Adjustment Assistance Program Opportunity Grant for economic development planning; and

WHEREAS, the County of Grant contracted with Angelou Economics of Austin, Texas to develop a strategic plan to guide Grant County's economic development efforts to improve the local economy; and

WHEREAS, Angelou Economics Strategic Recommendations & Action Plan is the final report delivered to Grant County as part of the Grant County Economic Development Master Plan, developed from the findings in the Market Assessment and the Target Industry Analysis; and

WHEREAS, The Economic Development Master Plan includes goals, strategies, and action items that respond to Grant County's unique economic challenges and opportunities. It also includes an implementation matrix which identifies the organizations responsible for carrying out the initiatives identified in the Economic Development Master Plan, as well as timelines to assist with strategy implementation.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS TO:

1. Accept the Economic Development Master Plan (Exhibit A) as a guide for economic development, employment opportunities, business development and business retention within Grant County.
2. Utilize the Strategic Recommendations & Action Plan submitted to the Governing Body as a basis for actions taken by Grant County to enhance opportunities for economic growth and prosperity.
3. Coordinate with the Gila Economic Development Alliance, and the Grant County Economic Development Coalition for Progress to develop and initiate mutually agreed upon goals and objectives.

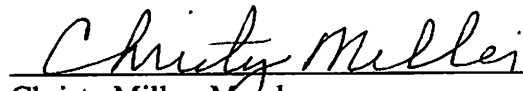
County of Grant  
Resolution No. R-12-17

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 24<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2012.

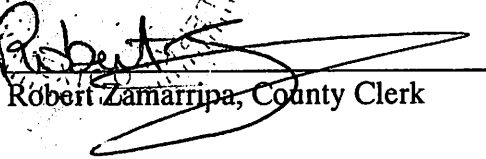
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

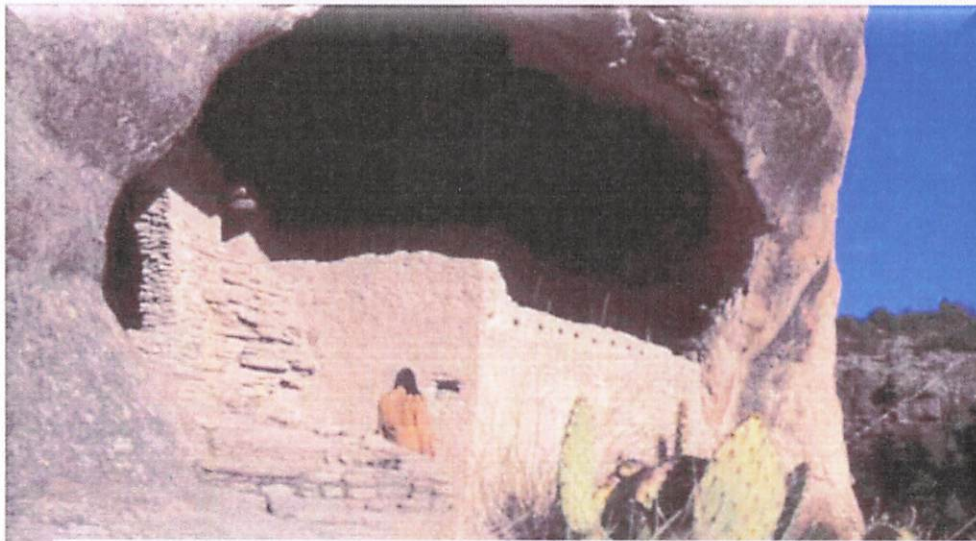
  
Brett Kasten, Commission Chair

  
Gabriel Ramos, Member

  
Christy Miller, Member

Attest:

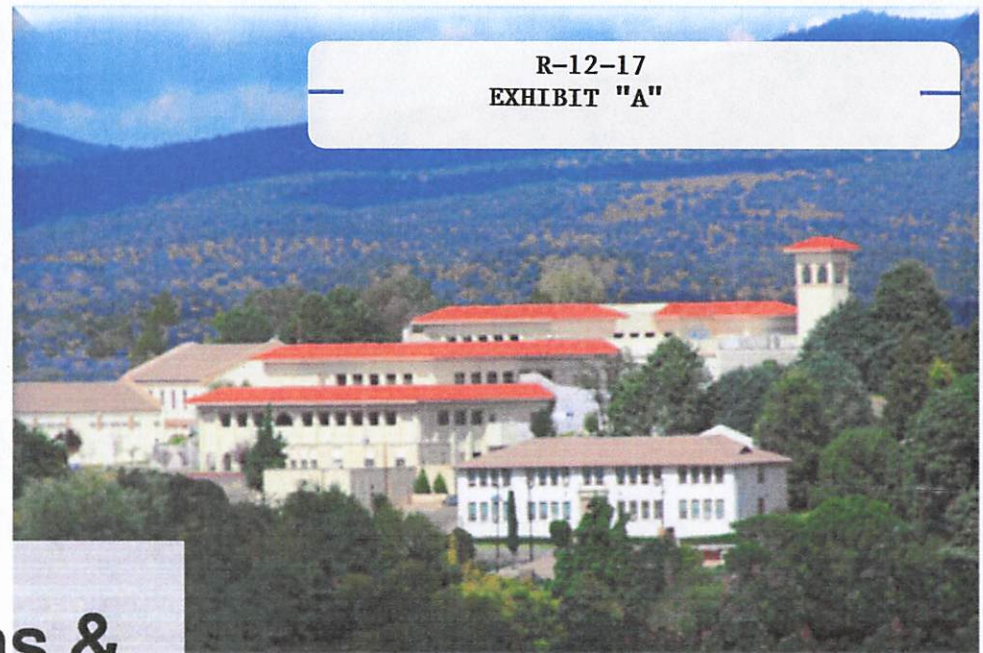
  
Robert Zamarripa, County Clerk



Grant County, New Mexico

# Strategic Recommendations & Action Plan

April 5, 2012



R-12-17  
EXHIBIT "A"

 **AngelouEconomics**  
GLOBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT





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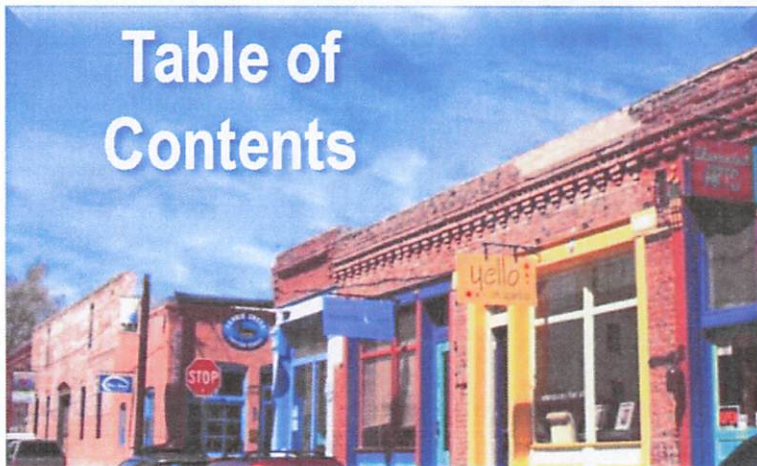
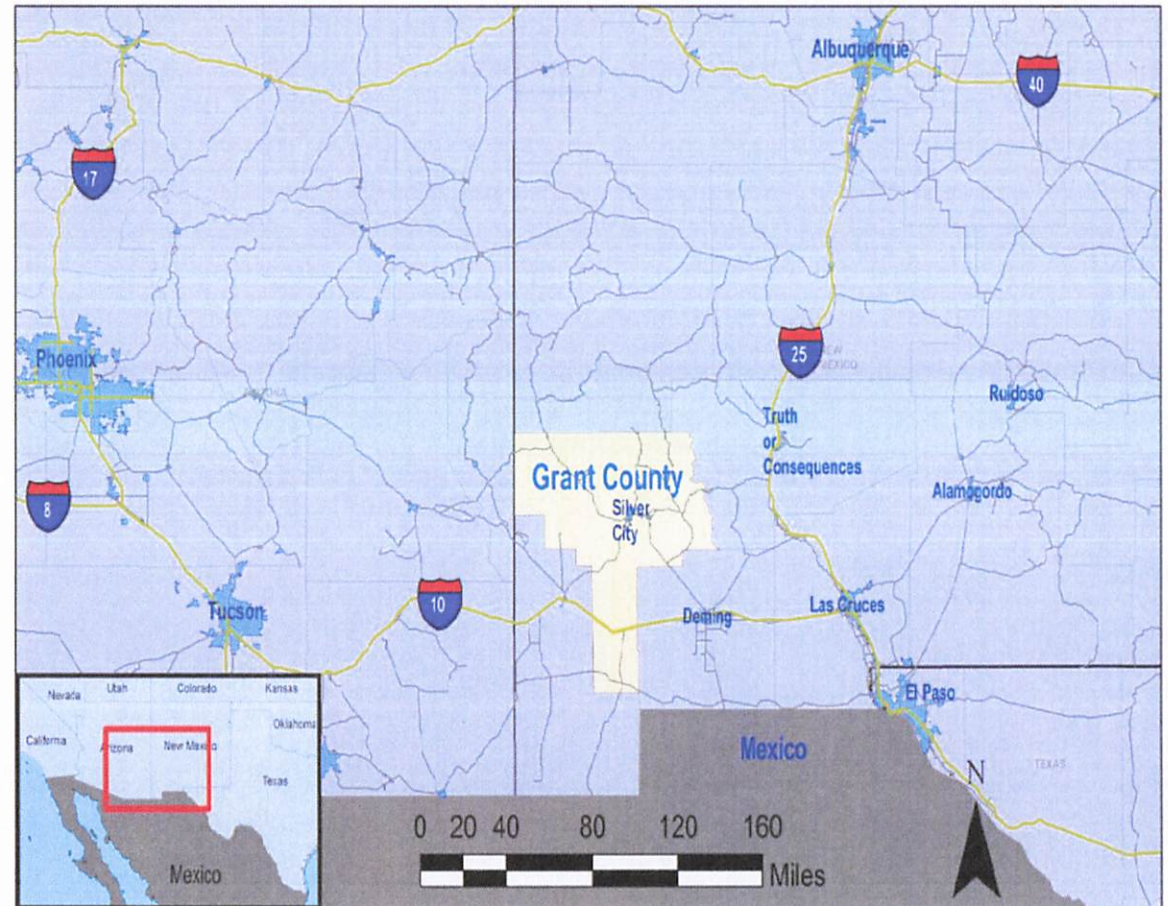


Photo: Mary Alice Murphy

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 AngelouEconomics





Photo: Mary Alice Murphy

## Foreword

AngelouEconomics is pleased to present the Strategic Recommendations and Action Plan to Grant County. This document is the product of the fourth and final phase of an economic development study designed to provide direction for Grant County in its efforts to improve the local economy.

The project was greatly enhanced by the generous support and input of numerous organizations and community and business leaders within Grant County and the individual towns within it. This invaluable participation on the part of the community helped to shape the recommendations found in this report.

Our sincere thanks to all of the individuals and organizations who have participated in the creation of this plan. All of the Grant County Economic Development Master Plan reports are available online at [www.qilaeda.com](http://www.qilaeda.com).





Photo: Mary Alice Murphy

## Introduction

AngelouEconomics was hired by Grant County to develop a strategic plan to guide Grant County's economic development efforts. This report, the Action Strategy and Final Recommendations, is the third and final report delivered to Grant County as part of an Economic Development Master Plan. It builds upon the findings in the first two reports, the Market Assessment and the Target Industry Analysis.

The Economic Development Master Plan includes goals, strategies, and action items that respond to Grant County's unique economic challenges and opportunities. Many of the goals and strategies described in this report apply to all of the target industries determined in the previously released Target Industry Analysis and the entire Grant County economy. The target industries include: **Natural Resources & Mining, Renewable Energy, Regional Goods & Services, Tourism & Recreation, and Small Business / Entrepreneurship.**

This report also includes an implementation matrix which identifies the organizations responsible for carrying out the initiatives identified in the Economic Development Master Plan as well as timelines to assist with strategy implementation. Specific performance measures are also suggested to help project partners effectively measure the implementation of the strategies within this plan.

The recommendations presented in this report include a broad range of goals, strategies, and actions that reflect Grant County's unique economic development needs.

## Report Objectives

The Grant County Strategic Recommendations and Action Plan is the third and final report in the Economic Development planning process. The report summarizes key findings from the previous two reports and presents goals, strategies, and action items which aim to:

- Strengthen existing industry clusters and develop new clusters of recommended target industries;
- Support the continued success and expansion of existing businesses;
- Foster entrepreneurship and small business development;
- Build and sustain a talented, skilled, & motivated workforce;
- Improve and maintain Grant County's business climate, image, and quality of life; and
- Clarify the roles of Grant County's regional economic development partners to improve the efficiency and transparency of economic development efforts.



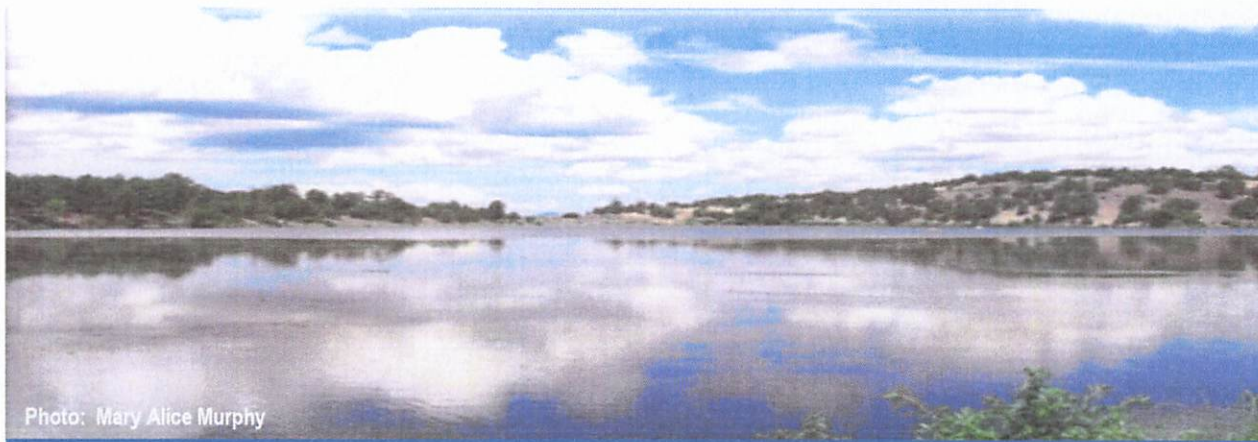


Photo: Mary Alice Murphy

## Executive Summary

In an effort to improve current economic conditions, to better leverage its economic assets, and to support the creation of a shared vision for increasing its competitiveness within the region, Grant County engaged AngelouEconomics of Austin, Texas to evaluate the present conditions of the local economy and to recommend potential strategies for advancing the county's economic development efforts.

Out of a process that included an in-depth Stakeholder Engagement effort, a Market Assessment, and the evaluation of Target Industries, emerged several important themes that will shape the primary economic development challenges and opportunities within Grant County in the years to come. These include the following:

- Grant County has **many of the elements available to be competitive regionally**. The challenge, however, is **linking these assets together into a cohesive unit**.
- Grant County has a strong **sense of what defines it and what sets it apart**, however, the **marketing message is convoluted and lacking continuity**. This is causing the area to miss out on a number of exciting opportunities.
- There is a **strong awareness of what the challenges are**, but **successful outcomes will require the desire of implementation**.
- Despite Grant County's numerous economic strengths, its **economy is stagnant** and its leadership needs to develop policies and incentives **to be better positioned to act quickly and decisively when the opportunity presents itself**.

## What is Economic Development?

Successful economic development is defined by:

- Leadership and Vision
- Execution and Collaboration
- The Art of Leveraging Assets
- Continuous Product Improvement
- Creating Sustainable Communities

Economic development can also be described as:

*"The search for citizens among many residents"*

Residents live and work in communities, pay taxes, support local businesses, enjoy the community's quality of life and infrastructure, and participate in public processes when necessary. Citizens, on the other hand, work to promote economic development as a way to improve the quality of their communities for future generations. Citizens continuously seek solutions to problems and challenges.



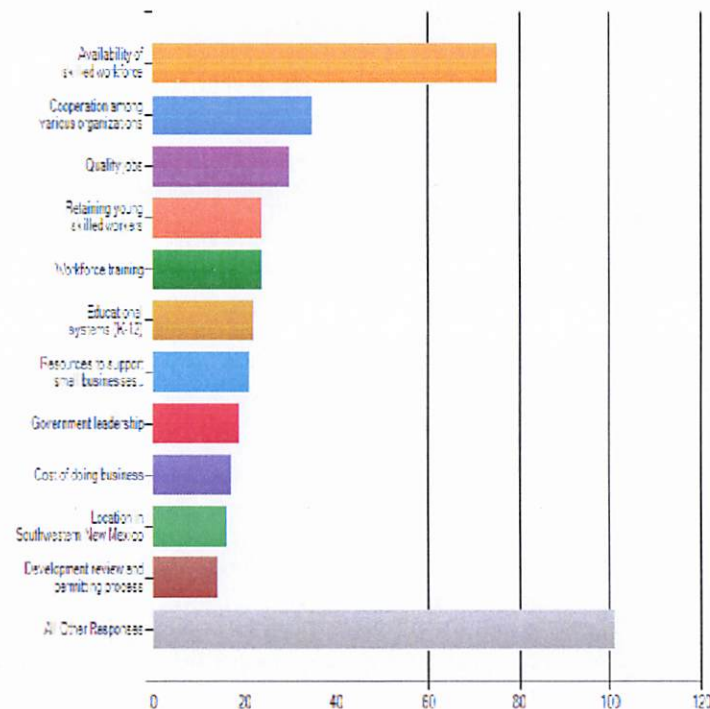
Photo: Mary Alice Murphy

## Executive Summary: Strategic Goals

The Strategic Recommendations and Action Plan comprises a set of goals, strategies and key economic development initiatives organized around the following eight goal areas:

- Goal 1:** Clarify and formalize the roles and responsibilities of Economic Development partners in Grant County.
- Goal 2:** Prepare real estate options and infrastructure to support economic development goals and Target Industries.
- Goal 3:** Ensure that Grant County's existing workforce meets the needs of the employers and supports Target Industries as well as the broader Economic Development goals.
- Goal 4:** Leverage small business resources and assets to support entrepreneurship, retention and expansion of existing businesses, and the attraction of new businesses.
- Goal 5:** Strengthen Target Industry support by pursuing sector-specific strategies.
- Goal 6:** Fully capitalize on the unique opportunities provided by Western New Mexico University.
- Goal 7:** Position Grant County to develop stronger international ties and increase focus on preparedness for international business opportunities.
- Goal 8:** Develop a clearly identifiable, marketable, and easily communicated Brand for Grant County.

What are the most significant challenges facing Grant County as it works to improve job and economic growth? (Choose up to three.)







## Executive Summary: Top 15 Priority Strategies

- Strategy 1.2 : Position the Gila EDA to act as a central coordinating body for economic development activities in the County, working with towns and municipalities to collaborate and coordinate economic development efforts to meet mutually-agreed upon goals and objectives.
- Strategy 1.5: Implement a formalized Business Retention and Expansion Program (BREP) that provides regular outreach to existing Grant County businesses.
- Strategy 2.2 : Establish a tax increment financing zone (TIF) in downtown Silver City and identify additional funding streams for downtown infrastructure improvements.
- Strategy 2.3 : Develop an industrial park to capitalize on opportunities associated with the region's renewable energy potential as well as the existing mining industry.
- Strategy 2.7 : Develop Ft. Bayard in a manner which maximizes its use such as a workforce development center, a high-end wellness center/medical diagnostic center, and/or a tourism center.
- Strategy 2.8 : Develop a portion of Grant County Convention Center into a business incubator.
- Strategy 3.3: Align Grant County's workforce development programs and educational institutions with the region's target industries.
- Strategy 3.4: Work with K-12 schools and WNMU to address unmet workforce needs and develop a trained workforce that aligns with target industries and growth opportunities.
- Strategy 4.3: Develop a support strategy for spin-offs from area major employers.
- Strategy 4.4: Develop a "Certified Entrepreneurial Community" program that recognizes communities in Grant County that meet a basic set of standards for the support and development of entrepreneurial ventures and for the creation of a strong environment for entrepreneurial activity.
- Strategy 5.1: Implement a more aggressive and targeted incentive program that is widely publicized and is spelled out (quantified) and tied to target industries.
- Strategy 5.7: Focus resources on retaining and expanding retail options throughout Grant County.
- Strategy 6.3 Leverage WNMU's unique strengths for economic development purposes and provide support to WNMU programs related to Grant County's target industries.
- Strategy 7.2 Become the only designated Regional Immigrant Investment Center in New Mexico through the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Pilot program.
- Strategy 8.1 Develop an aggressive stand-alone marketing and branding strategy for Grant County.





Photos: Mary Alice Murphy

## Project Work To Date

### Stakeholder Engagement

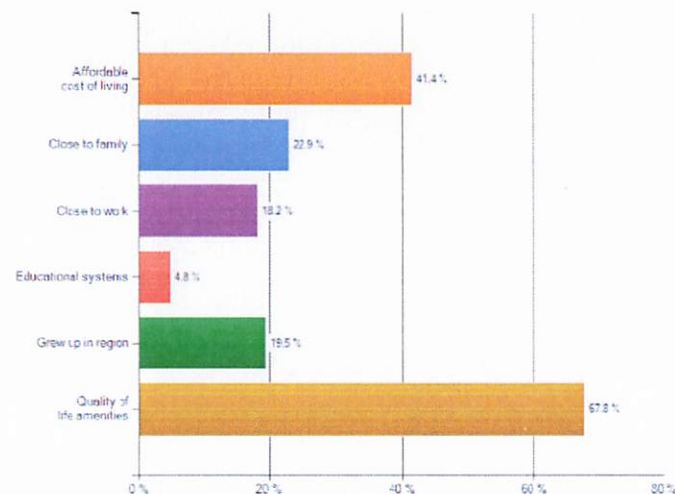
AngelouEconomics, with invaluable support from Grant County and several organizations throughout the community, conducted an extensive stakeholder engagement process to identify the key assets, challenges and opportunities in the local and regional economy surrounding Grant County. These activities included numerous focus groups and interviews that allowed for direct input from members of the community and from various leaders in the public and private sectors.

Also as part of the stakeholder engagement process, two online surveys were developed to capture insight from Grant County community members on topics related to economic development. One survey was directed at Grant County residents, the other was for employers. The resident survey was completed by 388 residents, and the business survey was completed by 113 employers.

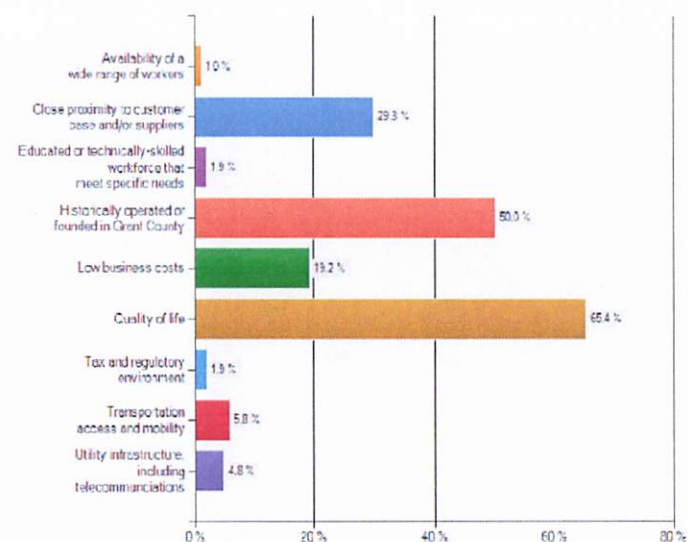
The input provided by these individuals was invaluable to the project team and helped to more clearly identify the most pressing challenges and most promising opportunities in Grant County. This input also helped to determine which industries and particular strategies are most appropriate for Grant County to pursue now and in the years to come.

It will be important for Grant County to continue this process of stakeholder engagement upon completion of this project and as it executes the strategies presented in this report.

What are the three primary reasons you have chosen to live in Grant County?



What are the three primary reasons your business is located in Grant County?







Photos: Mary Alice Murphy

## Project Work To Date

### Market Assessment

The Market Assessment involved a review of both qualitative and quantitative information about the local economy, the area workforce, and market characteristics. The chief purpose of the Market Assessment is to obtain a clear understanding of the primary challenges facing Grant County, opportunities that the community might be well positioned to act on, and the assets that may be leveraged in Grant County's economic development efforts.

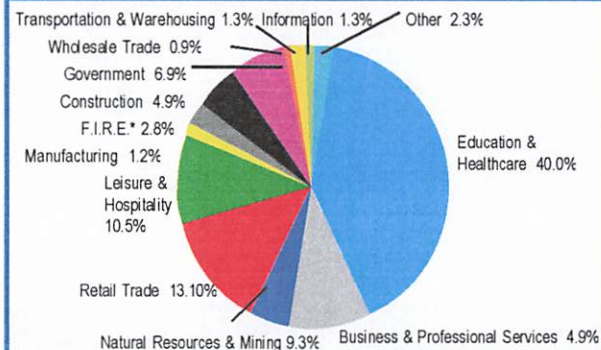
Grant County benefits from the presence of several core assets, including the mining operations of Freeport McMoran, Western New Mexico University, quality of life, and others. The County also boasts a number of strong entrepreneurial environment that includes success stories such as Sysergys Tile and Ace Hardware. However, Grant County is also not without its challenges, and a number of demographic trends are expected to continue that will exacerbate many of these problems if left unattended. The solutions to the vast majority of the challenges currently facing Grant County are well within its reach, provided certain proactive measures are taken across all levels of the County.

Some key findings from the Market Assessment include:

- The Education & Healthcare and Natural Resources & Mining industries have been the most important drivers of economic growth in Grant County
- Grant County offers many unique quality-of-life amenities for residents and visitors including museums, historic sites, and natural resources
- Grant County needs to build on its existing workforce-development resources to improve the skills of its workforce
- Grant County is located in a prime location for solar and geothermal energy production
- There is a need to further enhance small business development and entrepreneurship support and resources

### GRANT COUNTY INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

% OF TOTAL JOBS IN GRANT COUNTY BY SECTOR, 2010

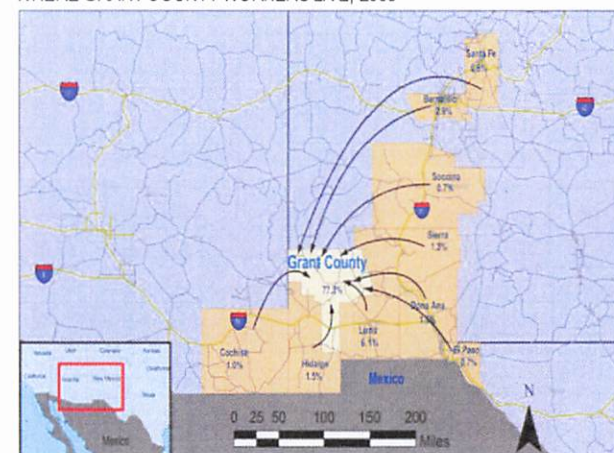


\*Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

### GRANT COUNTY, NM LABOR SHED

WHERE GRANT COUNTY WORKERS LIVE, 2009



Source: U.S. Census LEHD





Photos: Mary Alice Murphy

## Project Work To Date

This section of the Market Assessment highlighted the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) for Grant County, as collected through stakeholder discussions, survey information, and quantitative databases. The following items were derived from the SWOT Analysis.

### Education and Workforce Recruitment, Retention and Development

1. Critical workforce shortages in key occupations exist which limit the growth of existing companies
2. The current workforce is plagued by worth-ethic issues as well as drug/alcohol abuse, making it difficult for businesses to recruit and maintain quality workers
3. Significant workforce development opportunities through Western New Mexico University and the network of public schools within the county
4. Opportunities to further engage K-12 to build a pipeline of technically skilled workers
5. There is a lack of high-paying jobs and amenities to attract/retain young adults, which poses a barrier for recruiting employees

### Business Climate and Retention, Expansion, and Recruitment

6. There is a growing business community within county, particularly in the areas of Healthcare and Natural Resources & Mining
7. Need for further emphasis on retention and expansion opportunities

### Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development

8. Limited local/regional seed/early-stage capital available to support start-up businesses
9. Local businesspeople are highly entrepreneurial and resourceful, however, there are gaps in the entrepreneurial support system
10. Continue to make downtown improvements with ongoing efforts to enhance downtown amenities


*"The quality of workforce is very important as we are a service based business."*

**- Business Response Survey**

*"Having sustainable local businesses based on local investment and talent means that we need to have more small business."*

**- Resident Response Survey**





Photos: Mary Alice Murphy

## Project Work To Date

### SWOT Summary Continued...

#### Regionalism, Marketing, and Economic Development

11. Growing regional trust but significant opportunities to engage further
12. Multiple organizational partners to leverage increased support for economic development (retention, expansion, recruitment, workforce, and tourism)
13. Need to further increase regional economic development marketing
14. Sense of urgency for economic development
15. Strong potential to promote renewable energy development and/or manufacturing (solar and/or geothermal).
16. Local governments need to adopt formal policies and procedures for economic development support and incentives

#### Sites and Infrastructure

17. Scarcity of developed sites and available buildings
18. Limited rail-served sites but ample land to develop
19. With ongoing challenges to maintain and improve existing infrastructure, there is a need for proactive and progressive infrastructure planning to ensure systematic high-quality development

#### Quality of Life

20. High quality of life but need to reduce drug/alcohol addictions
21. Increase marketing and promotion of County's recreational opportunities, arts & culture district, and quality-of-life assets
22. Limited transportation (public and air) options need to be fully vetted in order to expand capabilities

*"The area does seem to be accepting of all types of people and could be considered a successful melting pot.."*

**- Business Response Survey**

*"I believe that our number one asset for attracting larger business development is quality of life."*

**- Business Response Survey**





Photos: Mary Alice Murphy

## Project Work To Date

### Target Industries

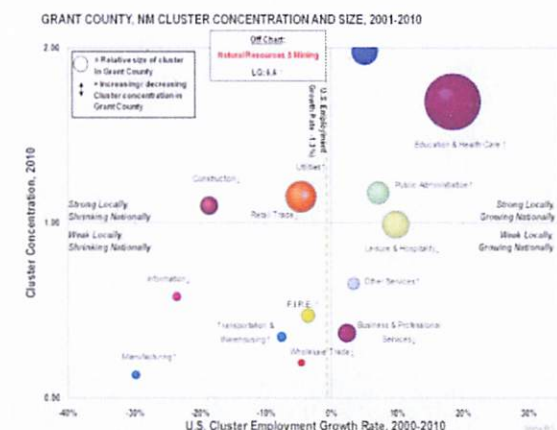
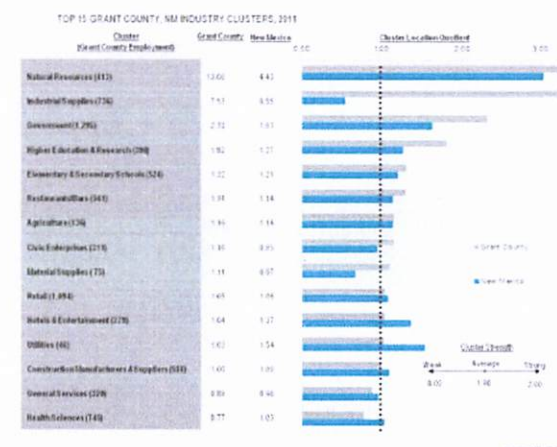
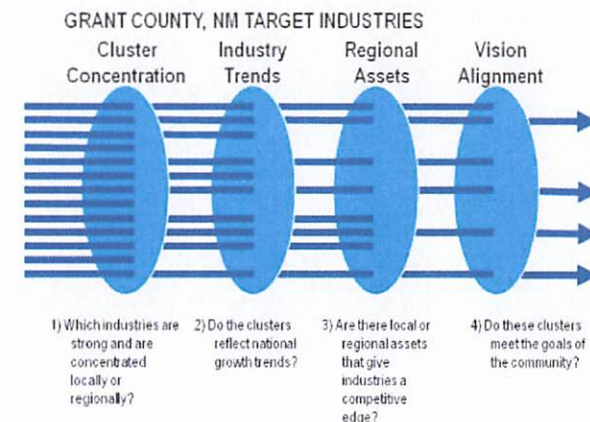
The Target Industry report analyzes a mix of sectors that are best suited to build upon Grant County's existing clusters, unique assets, location, and infrastructure so that Grant County may strengthen key industries already present within the community, diversify into emerging industries, and capitalize upon near-term opportunities for the region.

At the conclusion of the target industry identification process, five industries were selected for recommendation as the focus of business retention, expansion, entrepreneurship, and recruitment efforts for Grant County. These industries stood out as having the best potential for long-term economic growth, and offer Grant County numerous short-term opportunities for retention, expansion, entrepreneurship, and recruitment.

The target industries include:

1. Natural Resources & Mining
2. Renewable Energy
3. Regional Goods & Services
4. Tourism & Recreation
5. Small Business / Entrepreneurialship

In addition to these five target industries, this report presents several niches within each industry as areas of particular opportunity for Grant County, available both now and in the future. The complete list of target industries and niches can be found on the following page of this report.





## GRANT COUNTY TARGET INDUSTRIES AND NICHEs

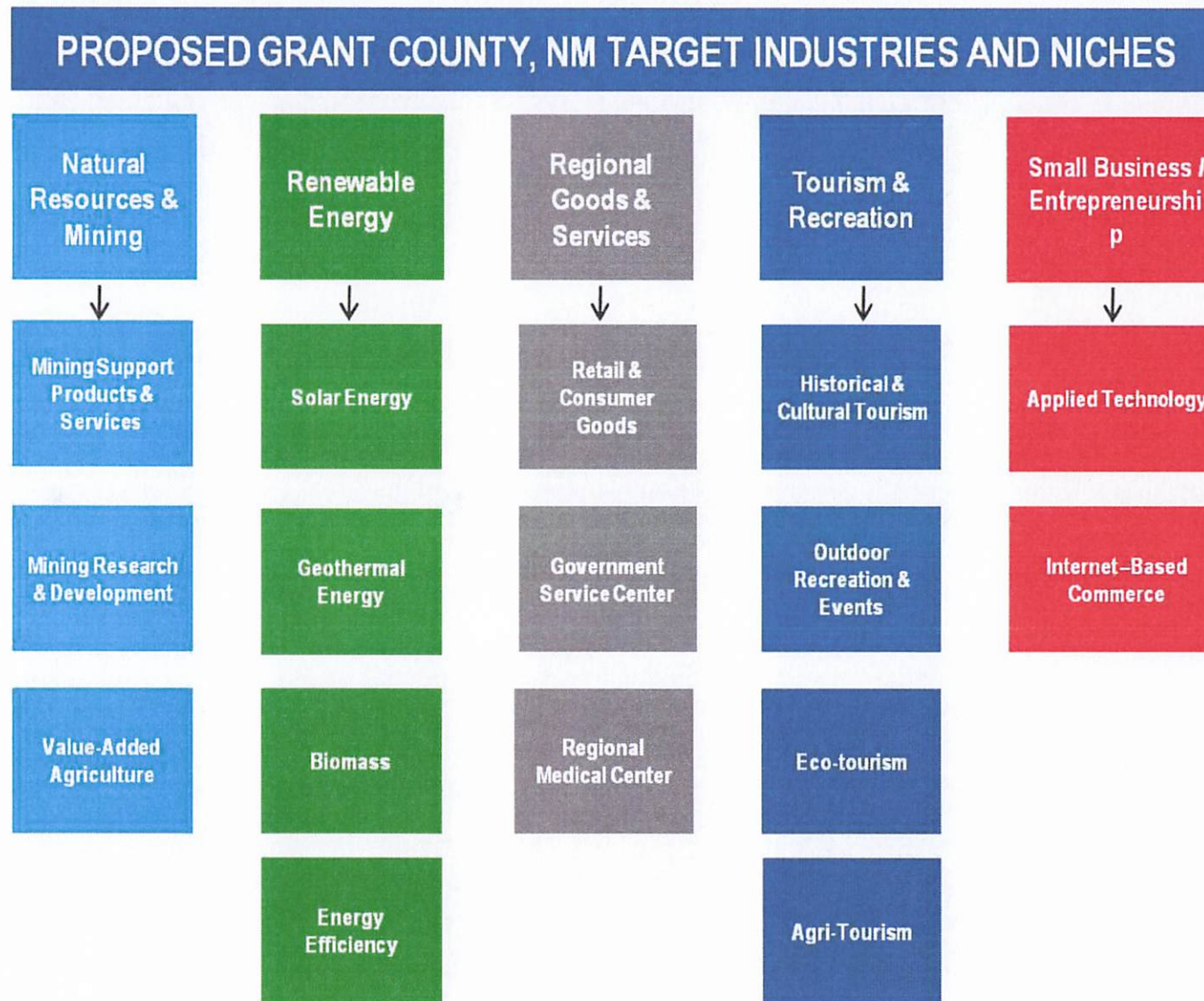


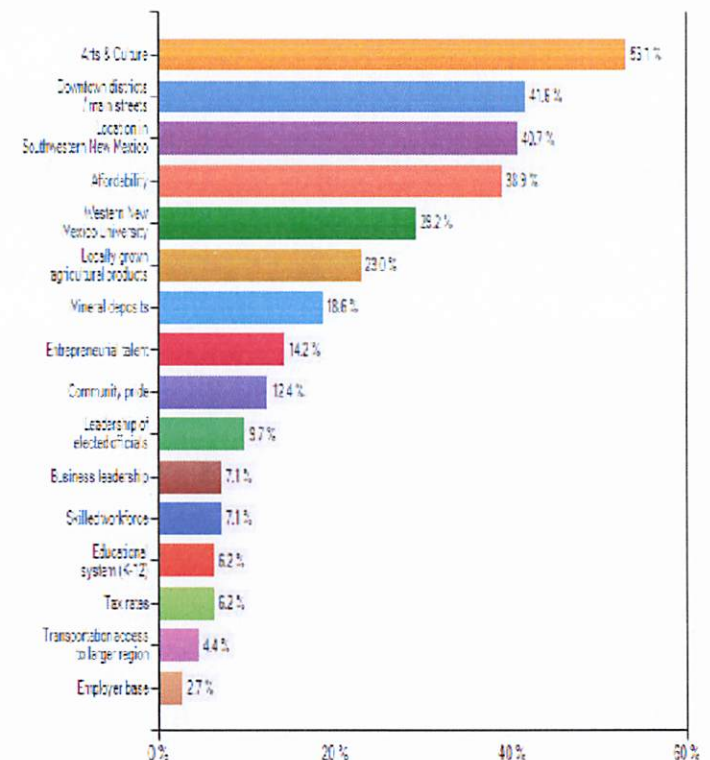
Photo: Mary Alice Murphy

## Introduction to the Strategic Plan

The following pages outline the goals, strategies, and action items that make up the Grant County Strategic Recommendations and Action Plan. The eight goals identified include:

- Goal 1:** Clarify and formalize the roles and responsibilities of Economic Development partners in Grant County.
- Goal 2:** Prepare real estate options and infrastructure to support Economic Development goals and Target Industries.
- Goal 3:** Ensure that Grant County's existing workforce meets the needs of the employers and supports Target Industries as well as the broader Economic Development goals.
- Goal 4:** Leverage small business resources and assets to support entrepreneurship, retention and expansion of existing businesses, and the attraction of new businesses.
- Goal 5:** Strengthen Target Industry support by pursuing sector-specific strategies.
- Goal 6:** Fully capitalize on the unique opportunities provided by Western New Mexico University.
- Goal 7:** Position Grant County to develop stronger international ties and increase focus on preparedness for international business opportunities.
- Goal 8:** Develop a clearly identifiable, marketable, and easily communicated Brand for Grant County.

What are Grant County's greatest assets that can contribute to economic growth?  
(Choose up to three.)



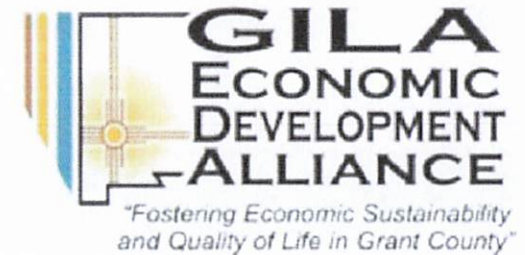




## Goal 1: Clarify and formalize the roles and responsibilities of Economic Development partners in Grant County

There was agreement among Grant County stakeholders that although there are a number of organizations throughout Grant County that hold responsibility for economic development, there exists a lack of unity with regard to the specific roles and responsibilities assigned to each organization. This lack of cohesion, and subsequent leadership, is working against Grant County's economic development efforts.

- 1.1 Ensure the Gila Economic Development Alliance (EDA) has a clear and well-communicated internal structure with well-defined individual roles, responsibilities, and authority for the staff members it is responsible for.
- 1.2 Position the Gila EDA to act as a central coordinating body for economic development activities in the County, working with towns and municipalities to collaborate and coordinate economic development efforts to meet mutually-agreed upon goals and objectives.
  - 1.2.1 Primary role for the Gila EDA should be one of coordinator and central facilitator of major economic development initiatives, primary source of support and organization of response to major site selection inquiries.
  - 1.2.2 Provide leadership in encouraging increased inter-governmental cooperation.
  - 1.2.3 Further define the roles of the two Chambers of Commerce, or consolidate the two organizations.
- 1.3 Agree upon operating guidelines that describe the roles and responsibilities of economic development partners and advance them toward the economic development of Grant County.
  - 1.3.1 Using this plan and its implementation matrix as a starting point, develop a consensus between all of the region's economic development partners of the primary responsibilities for each organization, and create a diagram visually depicting the principal economic development functions of each organization as it reflects their unique strengths and expertise.



**City of Bayard, NM**  
 Founded 1938  
*Hub of the Mining District*







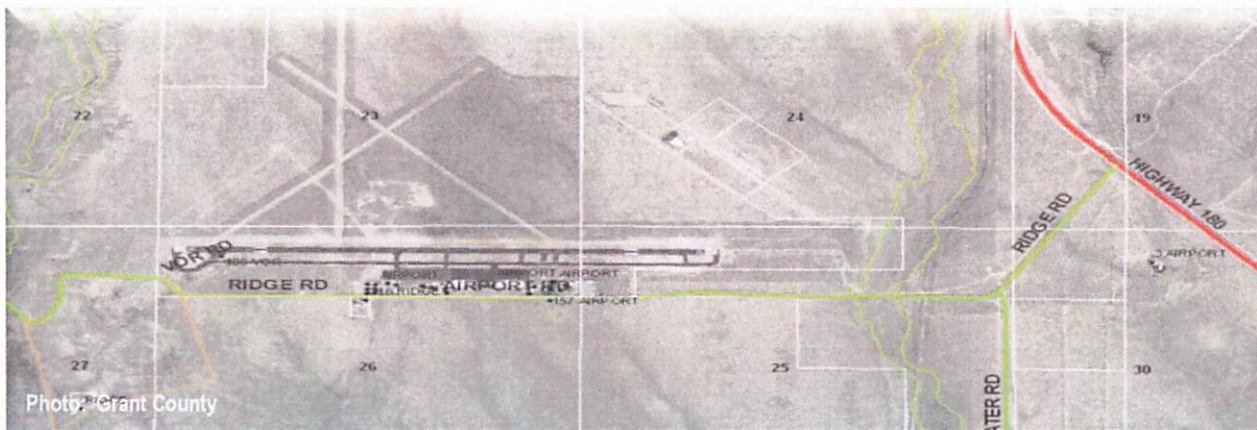
Photo: Grant County

## Goal 1: Clarify and formalize the roles and responsibilities of Economic Development partners in Grant County

- 1.4 Promote economic development success stories:** Identify business success stories and develop written and video testimonials for several communication channels, including website, newsletter, social media, etc.
- 1.5 Implement a formalized Business Retention and Expansion Program (BREP) that provides regular outreach to existing Grant County businesses.**
  - 1.5.1 Explore the option of utilizing the services of a professional fundraising company to assist Grant County in obtaining additional money to help fund such a program.
  - 1.5.2 Focus on building the Gila EDA as a strong economic development organization with a strong and stable financial position providing it with the capability to assist existing Grant County businesses.
  - 1.5.3 Develop goals and performance metrics for the retention and expansion program which should be administered and conducted by the Gila EDA, with involvement from the Green/Grant Chambers of Commerce and other economic development partners as necessary.
  - 1.5.4 Address issues identified by employers by working with city, county, or state officials. Utilize the retention and expansion program to better understand the needs and challenges of local businesses.
- 1.6 Establish a Site Selection Task Force**
  - 1.6.1 Using the reverse site selection document delivered as part of this plan, develop a standardized, collaborative process for responding to site selection inquiries.
  - 1.6.2 Issue memorandums of understanding (MOUs) regarding the mutual roles and responsibilities held by economic development authorities at the county and local levels with regard to the response to site selection inquiries, the organization of site tours and the containment of sensitive information.







## Goal 2: Prepare real estate options and infrastructure to support economic development goals and Target Industries.

Grant County is challenged by the geology of bedrock and by limited land availability via the forest and other land owners. To that end, there is a need to be highly strategic in the identification, preparation, and promotion of sites suitable for development, especially for use by the target industries. As development opportunities become more limited, additional redevelopment opportunities will need to be identified. In all instances, strong consideration should be given to the impact the development or redevelopment of portions of Grant County will have on its ability to meet various economic development objectives.

- 2.1 Complete a full assessment of the current state of Grant County real estate: sites optimal for target industries; infrastructure available for strategically important areas; smaller industrial sites for development; and, sites possessing unique assets or proximity to rail spurs.**
- 2.2 Establish a tax increment financing (TIF) zone in downtown Silver City and identify additional funding streams for downtown infrastructure improvements.**
  - 2.2.1 Consider establishing a tax increment financing zone, Business Improvement District (BID), Public Improvement District (PID), or consider the use of CBDG funds which could provide new funding sources for infrastructure development and services to local businesses in downtown Silver City.
  - 2.2.2 Revenue generated by the new TIF zone, BID, or PID could fund: Streetscape and pedestrian improvements; Downtown directional signage; and, Services to local businesses such as waste/recycling pick-up and joint advertising/marketing. Consider as an example the downtown revitalization of the City of Burbank, CA (see description at right).

### Best Practice

#### The Collections (City of Burbank)

The City of Burbank used a special TIF district called a Community Facilities District (CFD) to help fund its downtown revitalization efforts. The project included a mixed-use development of 118 condominium units, approximately 49,000 square-feet of retail, restaurant and storage space as well as a 700-space parking facility. Only the commercial component of the development was subject to the CFD special taxes. The bonds used were secured by both a special tax of up to \$19.13/square-foot of floor area on the commercial property and 75 percent of the tax increment revenue generated by the properties. Upon full build-out, tax increment revenue provided sufficient revenue to cover debt service on the bonds as long as the Developer provided the deliverables within the projected timeframe. To that end, the CFD special tax never actually had to be levied. The combination of tax increment financing and land-secured financing assisted the City in revitalizing its downtown while putting the risk of development on the Developer. However, the price paid by the Developer for the parking structure, which served the City and commercial tenants and residents of the project, helped to reconcile the total cost of the project.



For more information, visit  
<http://www.ci.burbank.ca.us/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=2814>





Photo: Grant County

## Goal 2: Prepare real estate options and infrastructure to support economic development goals and Target Industries.

### 2.3 Develop an industrial park to capitalize on opportunities associated with the region's renewable energy potential as well as the existing mining industry.

- 2.3.1 In collaboration with local commercial real estate developers, identify sites along Highway 180 between the Grant County airport and Bayard that would be suitable for a large-scale (roughly 50-200 acres) industrial park that could house a wide range of land uses including:
- Modern industrial space
  - Flex space which could be occupied by office or industrial functions
  - R&D or wet lab space
  - Business support services
- 2.3.2 Work with local governments and public and private utility providers to ensure that all necessary infrastructure is in place for an industrial park, including water, wastewater, storm water, electricity, gas, telecommunications, and roadway infrastructure.
- 2.3.3. Identify and aggressively seek opportunities to pursue Economic Development Administration funding for the development of the industrial park. It is prudent to set aside monies in a general fund to match the 20 percent EDA requirement.
- 2.3.4 Explore the option of developing a "Shovel Ready Site Program" which helps to develop sites that currently do not exist, and thereby creating an inventory of prequalified sites available for immediate development. Consider as an example the Iowa City Area Shovel Ready Sites Program (see description at right).
- 2.3.5 Link activities of the potential industrial park to those in Deming's industrial park and the I-10 corridor. Location priority for the park is placed on the site adjacent to the Grant County airport rather than in the populated areas of the County.

## Best Practice

### Shovel Ready Sites Program, Iowa City



The Iowa City Area Shovel Ready Sites Program (SRSP) was developed by the Iowa City Area Development Group and its regional and state partners from November 2008 through May 2010 and is the first program of its kind in the State of Iowa. The purpose of the SRSP is to provide consistent standards regarding the availability and development potential of commercial and industrial sites and to fill identified market gaps in the Iowa City Area's portfolio of sites. The SRSP aims to create sites that do not exist currently or are not in sufficient supply to accommodate the site needs of business prospects that approach Iowa City Area Development Corp (ICAD) for appropriate locations. The goal is to ensure that developers, property owners, cities, utilities and state partners understand and utilize the criteria and standards developed in this program to create an inventory of prequalified, speculative sites ready for immediate development by end-users.

To become a "certified" or "shovel-ready" site means a third-party site selection and/or engineering firm deem the site as having attributes and conditions that meet the demands of current and future commercial development opportunities. All such sites then are added to a local, regional, and statewide inventory of sites with similar qualifications and will be strongly marketed. Project objectives include:

- Filling identified market gaps
- Creating a caliber of site that does not currently exist in the market
- Establishing a high standard for development
- Creating an inventory of "shovel-ready" speculative sites (i.e. being ready before the client/prospect comes to town)
- Winning more projects

For more information, visit  
<http://www.iowacityareadevelopment.com/shovelready/>.



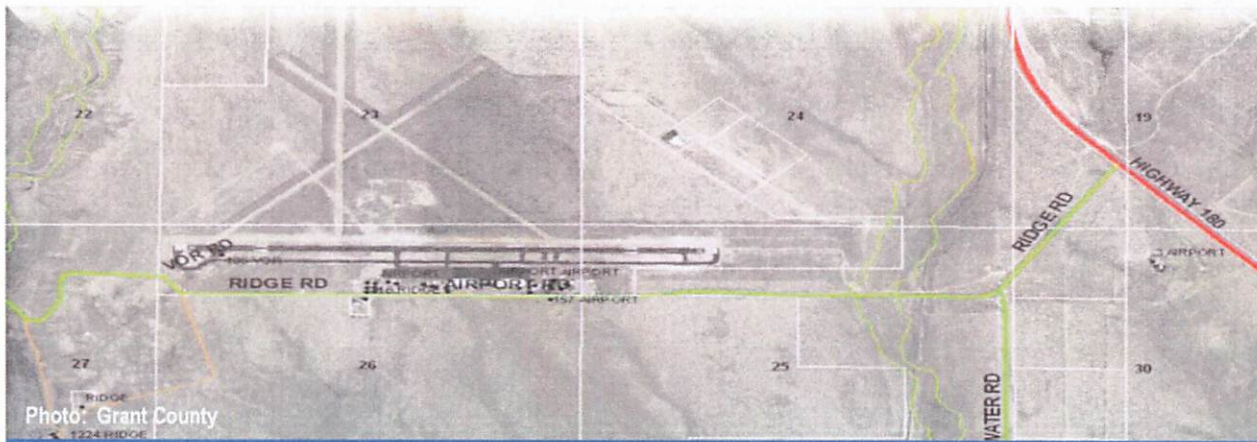


Photo: Grant County

## Goal 2: Prepare real estate options and infrastructure to support economic development goals and Target Industries.

**2.4 Identify specific opportunities for additional businesses and employers to locate in downtown Silver City.** There is strong potential for downtown Silver City to attract new businesses that would serve Grant County and draw visitors from outside of the region.

2.4.1 In creating downtown revitalization momentum, leverage Silver City's growing creative class and small business base to attract and develop more small businesses in the downtown area, focusing on daytime retail, nightlife attractions, and bed and breakfasts.

- Market downtown as the top location within Silver City for start-up ventures as well as expansions or relocations of local businesses currently located outside the downtown area.
- Highlight and promote any growth in new business establishments in downtown Silver City.
- Identify under-utilized, government-owned properties in the downtown area that could be used to attract private investment and support the growth of additional arts, entertainment, and retail businesses.

**2.5 Attract a small-to-mid scale convention hotel into Silver City,** which would serve as Grant County's flagship hotel and would provide a critical boost in the County's ability to draw a greater number of visitors for festivals and larger conferences/conventions.

2.5.1 Consider using a public/private partnership to develop the hotel, in which the Town of Silver City, Grant County, or WNMU would finance and own the conference space and the hotel developer would finance, own, and operate the hotel itself and would also operate the conference space.

- Utilize the vacant lot from the former general hospital, currently owned by town of Silver City, as a potentially strong development site due to its central location and elevated views.
- Consider using incentives to attract the hotel.

"Silver City is the biggest town with the most 'services' where people would look at for business."

- Business Response Survey

"Creating more tourism as well as the continued improvement of downtown will be important for our success."

- Business Response Survey



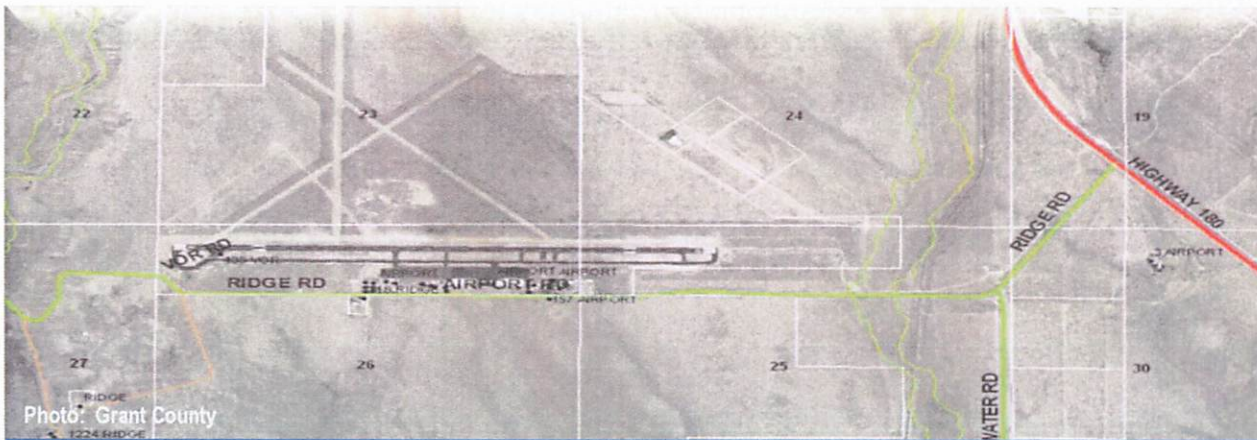


Photo: Grant County

## Goal 2: Prepare real estate options and infrastructure to support economic development goals and Target Industries.

**2.6: Continue to aggressively pursue additional air travel connections.** Air travel connectivity is a crucial site location factor for many types of businesses and would help facilitate the development of an industrial park.

- 2.6.1 Continue to involve regional leaders in the air service and marketing campaign efforts to daily flight destinations to and from Grant County (i.e. Tucson, Phoenix, El Paso).
- 2.6.2 Pursue grant funding through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Small Community Air Service Development Program to expand travel connections and/or airline options. Consider as an example the City of San Angelo, TX case study (see description at right).

**2.7: Develop Ft. Bayard in a way that maximizes its use.** This report echoes the Ft. Bayard Development report, suggesting three of the property's best possible uses as noted below.

- 2.7.1 Phase One of developing Ft. Bayard as a workforce development center could utilize WNMU's Applied Technology program towards asbestos abatement and lead paint removal from the existing buildings. Phase Two could incorporate a vocational program pertaining to the rehabilitation of existing buildings into a workforce development center.
- 2.7.3 Funding for the workforce development center could come from a joint venture between the Applied Technology program and the State of New Mexico.
- 2.7.4 The development of a southwest style, high-end wellness center/medical diagnostic center is another potential use for the property.
- 2.7.5 Cowboy-themed experiential camping, rodeo, chuck wagon venues indicative of the area's history.

**2.8: Develop part of the Grant County Convention Center into a business incubator using funding from the EDA grant.** This would maximize the use of the space and provide a much needed service to the community.

Grant County Economic Development Master Plan

## Best Practice City of San Angelo, TX

San Angelo's transportation connectivity suffered in 2008 with the loss of daily flights to and from Houston through Continental Airlines, leaving the region with Dallas-Fort Worth as the only daily flight destination and American Eagle as the only airline. Because of these efforts, regional business and government leaders have maintained a high level of priority and cooperation to the aggressive pursuit of expanded air travel connections to San Angelo. In September 2011, San Angelo was awarded a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Small Community Air Service Development Program

For more information, visit  
<http://www.sanangelotexas.us/index>

## Potential Funding Sources for Recommended Infrastructure Projects

Recommended Projects	Potential Funding Sources
New Industrial Park (Including Utility Infrastructure)	Economic Development Administration (EDA) U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Dev.
Downtown Revitalization	TIF, BID, PID, CBDG
Expand Air Connections	U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)
Develop Ft. Bayard	WNMU/State of New Mexico
Convention Hotel	Private/Public Partnership
Business Incubator	Existing EDA Grant





Photo by The News Pub.

### ***Goal 3: Ensure Grant County's workforce meets the needs of employers and supports Target Industries as well as broader Economic Development goals***

Grant County is faced with significant workforce challenges and demographic trends that can stifle economic development if left unattended. The biggest challenges are an aging population, loss of young professionals, and an unsatisfactory work ethic among the overall workforce. These demographic trends can, through their effects on workforce availability, directly impact the ability for the local economy to grow and to support new businesses. With this in mind, Grant County should focus on supporting and coordinating efforts to ensure the County has a capable workforce that meets the current and anticipated needs of major employers and businesses in target industries.

**3.1 Build upon the newly established system of regular communication between educators, major employers and economic developers to ensure the alignment of education/training with employer needs and revisit regularly to provide feedback on interest and success.**

**3.2 Address current lack of machinists, welders, and technicians in the local workforce.**

- 3.2.1 Work with Grant County employers, high schools, and WNMU's Applied Technology program to address the current gap in the availability of skilled machinists, welders, and technicians.
- 3.2.2 WNMU should explore expanding its Applied Technology program by incorporating more programs and a training facility near the mining district.
- 3.2.3 With the assistance of educators and employers, highlight the opportunities that are available in Grant County to individuals able to fill these roles, with a particular focus on opportunities for professional growth, career advancement, and experience working in high-profile and emerging industries.

**"Your greatest challenge in economic development in Grant County is lack of a motivated, educated work force."**

**- Resident Response Survey**

**"We need to promote industry or business that can use the skill level of our workforce."**

**- Resident Response Survey**





### ***Goal 3: Ensure Grant County's workforce meets the needs of employers and supports Target Industries as well as broader Economic Development goals***

#### **3.3: Align Grant County's workforce development programs and educational institutions with the region's target industries.**

- 3.3.1 Work with WNMU, the Workforce Connection, the Wellness Coalition, SBDC, and others to increase the availability of industry-specific training programs associated with the identified target industries.
- 3.3.2 For each target industry, consider creating a target industry advisory team, made up of business owners and managers from the private sector and representatives from Gila EDA, WNMU, and the Workforce Connection. The advisory teams should meet quarterly with to address any unmet workforce needs.

#### **3.4: Work with K-12 schools and WNMU to address unmet workforce needs and develop a trained workforce that aligns with target industries and growth opportunities.**

- 3.4.1 Ensure that Grant County's K-12 schools continue to provide leadership in developing a modern, well trained, and versatile workforce by responding to market conditions and by focusing resources on training needs associated with the county's target industries and future growth opportunities.
- 3.4.2 Hold a quarterly meeting with local employers, WNMU, and representatives from each K-12 school district to improve communication and understanding between employers and education institutions and to address unmet workforce needs in a timely fashion.
- 3.4.3 Consider implementing a partnership between the two K-12 school districts, WNMU, and the state of New Mexico to utilize a shared facility for high school and college students. The facility could house classes in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), entrepreneurship, and career and technical education (CTE). An additional funding option is the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Consider as an example "The Bridge of Southern New Mexico" (see description at right).

#### *Best Practice*

### **The Bridge of Southern New Mexico**

The Bridge of Southern New Mexico aims to achieve the highest graduation rate in New Mexico by 2016 and to train students to be valuable assets in the Dona Ana workforce. The intent of the program is to "bridge the Gap" between students and the needs of the local workforce by working to reduce the dropout rate, integrating the educational system with business, and including technical and career education in the curriculum. The primary focus of the organization is to facilitate collaboration and leverage resources between public and private sectors to support educational excellence and optimize the County's workforce. The vision is that all students in Dona Ana County graduate with skills to compete in an international workforce. The Bridge was instrumental in developing New Mexico's First Early College High School (ECHS) housed at Dona Ana Community College. Opened in July 2010, ECHS offers students the chance to earn not only a high school diploma, but also to graduate from high school with an associate's degree and credits toward a bachelor's degree. ECHS curriculum emphasizes science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) classes, entrepreneurship, along with career and technical education (CTE) courses. In 2011, the NM legislature appropriated \$100,000 to NMSU in support of the BRIDGE program. The fund is recurring and was reapproved in January 2012.



For more information, visit <http://www.thebridgeofsnm.com/>





### ***Goal 3: Ensure that the Existing Workforce Meets the Needs of Target Industries and Supports Broader Economic Development Goals***

#### **3.5: Establish a summer internship program to connect high school and college students with local employers.**

- 3.5.1 Consider dedicating a funding source (public or private) to provide paid internships. This would constitute an investment in Grant County's young adults and local businesses and provide a greater incentive for students (including national candidates) to pursue a summer internship and remain in the area. This would also provide additional help to small businesses who otherwise could not afford it.
- 3.5.2 Work with WNMU to advertise available internships with Grant County employers to provide talented interns for local businesses and to develop a greater interest in Grant County among young adults.

#### **3.6: Retain and attract more young people to Grant County.**

- 3.6.1 Work with the WNMU Small Business Development Center and Chambers of Commerce for networking opportunities and Happy Hour events for young professionals.
- 3.6.2 Work with WNMU and local employers to identify opportunities to retain more graduates and attract WNMU alumni back to Grant County.
- 3.6.3 Establish a volunteer "Youth Coordinator" position on the municipal and/or county level to organize youth-centered events, activities, and engagements to spur greater involvement among the young population.
- 3.6.4 Utilize the surveys from this project to measure gaps in Grant County's quality of life amenities and employment opportunities. Engage the Gila EDA, the local Chambers of Commerce, the Town of Silver City, and other economic development partners to develop action plans that address these gaps.

Potential Funding Sources for Recommended Workforce Development Projects	
Recommended Projects	Potential Funding Sources
	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Shared Training Facility for STEM /CTE courses	U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
	New Mexico State Legislature
	Freeport McMoran Funding Committee
Summer Internship program	Public/Private Partnership

***"There is very little opportunity for youth and recently graduated individuals to get involved in the community or even have a place to call their own."***

**- Resident Response Survey**





***Goal 4: Leverage small business resources and assets to support entrepreneurship, business development, retention and expansion of existing businesses, and the attraction of new businesses.***

Grant County is in a particularly strong position to capitalize on entrepreneurship thanks to a highly innovative population, demonstrated by the local businesspeople and their entrepreneurial spirit and resourcefulness. While quality-of-life and an affordable workforce are important assets that Grant County can offer small businesses, many small business owners cited a number of challenges operating in Grant County, such as a lack of infrastructure, a unmotivated workforce, and a limited amount of small business support. An increased level of entrepreneurial activity could propel Grant County's economy into new and exciting areas of opportunity. For that to happen, however, a wide range of interests will need to come together with a commitment to building a stronger culture of entrepreneurship in Grant County.

- 4.1 Develop a local SCORE chapter that draws upon the knowledge and experience of retired executives and professionals in support of increased entrepreneurship.**
- 4.2 Develop and/or promote organizations meant to encourage the role of young entrepreneurs and executives within the business community.**
- 4.3 Develop a support strategy for spin-offs from area major employers.**
  - 4.3.1 Consider developing incentives designed to attract, expand, or retain businesses in the mining district
  - 4.3.2 Establish a general fund to assist Grant County entrepreneurs in securing start-up or expansion capital.
- 4.4 Develop a "Certified Entrepreneurial Community" program that recognizes communities in Grant County that meet a basic set of standards for the support and development of entrepreneurial ventures and for the creation of a strong environment for entrepreneurial activity. Consider as an example AdvantageWest, NC. (see description at right).**

***Best Practice***

**AdvantageWest, NC - Certified Entrepreneurial Community Program**

Chartered in 1994, the AdvantageWest Economic Development Group is a non-profit, public-private partnership that serves the 23-County region of western North Carolina as the regional economic development commission. AdvantageWest developed the Certified Entrepreneurial Community (CEC) Program, an innovative economic development strategy that helps communities become "entrepreneur ready".



For a community to be designated with the CEC certification, it must undertake an intensive process that typically lasts between 18 months and two years, engaging community leaders from the public and private sectors

In order for a community to receive CEC certification, the community must prepare and present a comprehensive book detailing the work above including goals and metrics they set forth on behalf of their respective community. The book and the process are then reviewed by a certification review committee.

The CEC Program provides certified communities with a full range of support from AdvantageWest (training, signage, grant opportunities, and youth engagement) and gives them a marketable asset that can help them promote small business growth. Perhaps equally as important, the process of CEC certification strengthens relationships and builds a collaborative spirit amongst local community and business leaders.





**Goal 4: Leverage small business resources and assets to support entrepreneurship, business development, retention and expansion of existing businesses, and the attraction of new businesses.**

**4.5: Support and promote Grant County's vibrant network of small businesses and entrepreneurs to create a culture of innovation. Tap into the resource pool of retirees for inexpensive, yet experienced assistance.**

4.5.1 Hold an annual conference that brings together small business owners, entrepreneurs, inventors, and investors from southwestern New Mexico.

4.5.2 Prioritize efforts to support Grant County's growing Arts & Culture District.

- Consider establishing an Arts & Culture forum by which local artists could engage with public organizations to address any existing barriers to their success.
- Work with local artists to further expand Grant County's burgeoning Arts & Culture District through "art-friendly" zoning.
- Consider the Live/Work development space in downtown Silver City for artist.

**4.6: In partnership with WNMU, NMSU, and NM Tech, highlight the opportunities for entrepreneurship that are available to professionals from non-business backgrounds, such as engineering, distribution, creative design, dining and entertainment, professional services, and clean energy.**

**4.7 Leverage existing opportunities to become more of a retirement community destination.**

4.7.1 Highlight retiree-specific assets including, but limited to, moderate climate, healthcare availability, outdoor recreations, etc.

4.7.2 Tap into the human capital of existing retirees and utilize for ventures, including workforce development.

***"There needs to be more support to draw entrepreneurial talent to our communities...We have so much to offer that interesting and entrepreneurial people would be attracted to."***

***-Resident Survey Response***

***"We have entrepreneurs, but as long as the local environment refuses to reward these and other positive elements, they are better off going elsewhere."***

***-Business Survey Response***





Photo: AngelouEconomics

## Goal 5: Strengthen Target Industry support by pursuing sector-specific strategies

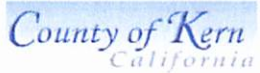
Appropriate target industries and niches are essential for economic development retention, expansion, and recruitment efforts. Among the recommended industries are many that already have a heritage in the region, as well as industries that are emerging nationally. Each target industry and niche has very specific infrastructure requirements, location preferences, and workforce needs that can determine where companies choose to locate. By focusing its resources and efforts on developing and supporting the target industries, Grant County's economic development leaders can not only build upon the community's strengths in existing industries, but also work to diversify the local economy by leveraging local assets that can support emerging opportunities.

### 5.1: Implement a more aggressive and targeted incentive program that is widely publicized, quantified, and tied to target industries. Consider as an example Kern County, CA (see description at right).

- 5.1.1 Establish official tax abatement policies that outline and proactively market the types of projects for which incentives are offered. List all available incentives on marketing materials to help prevent Grant County from being overlooked by prospects, who may otherwise perceive the county to have limited incentives.
- 5.1.2 Ensure that incentives include a requirement or an economic impact study to confirm that fiscal from assisted projects outweighs any public cost (cost-benefit analysis). Also, stipulate that tax abatement will be selectively considered for those projects deemed to be of the most significant value to the growth of Grant County's economy. Incorporate "performance-based" clawback provisions into incentive agreements to help ensure that commitments are met.
- 5.1.3 Incentives should explicitly encourage business expansion or attraction within Grant County's target industries, while not entirely excluding other projects.
- 5.1.4 Market incentives on Grant County and/or Gila EDA websites along with other promotional items.

### Best Practice

#### Economic Development Incentive Program: Kern County, CA

The Kern County Board of Supervisors adopted its  Economic Development Incentive Program to attract new businesses and support the growth of existing businesses, with a strong focus on its target industries. Kern County's target industries are made up of 55 NAICS sectors and subsectors within six broad target industry categories which include: Value-Added Agriculture; Energy & Natural Resources; Transportation, Logistics & Warehousing; Aerospace & Defense; Tourism, Recreation & Entertainment; and Health Services & Medical Technologies.

In addition to serving as a facilitating agency for a variety of local, state, and federal incentives not directly administered by the County, Kern County offers its own economic development incentives, which include:

- Rebates based on Property Tax payments
- Rebates based on Sales and Use Tax payments made to the County
- Assistance in pursuing grant/loan funding from other public agencies
- Other forms of requested assistance as may be approved by the County





Photo: AngelouEconomics

## **Goal 5: Strengthen Target Industry support by pursuing sector-specific strategies**

- 5.2 Develop a support platform to assist Grant County businesses in identifying local suppliers to help source their supplies and services from other businesses based in the County.**
- 5.3 Identify and aggressively seek opportunities to pursue EDA support for key economic development projects.**
- 5.3.1 Such economic development projects should focus on the County's ability to support and attract businesses and activities within target industries and may include the following:
- New industrial park
  - Renewable energy commercialization center based within Grant County
  - Establishment of an energy center at WNMU to study the economics of clean energy
  - Utilize national laboratories such as NREL to exploit renewable energy projects.
- 5.4 Seek opportunities to obtain additional funding sources in support of target industries, and economic development as a whole, in Grant County.**
- 5.4.1 Consider the establishment of a ½ cent sales tax to support economic development efforts in Grant County, with the majority of revenue returned to each municipal economic development authority on a per capita basis.

***"Working on developing more local talent in solar and wind energy design, installation and maintenance is important."***

**-Resident Survey Response**

***"Our unique local environment offers incredible opportunities for sustainable tourism."***

**-Resident Survey Response**





Photo: AngelouEconomics

## Goal 5: Strengthen Target Industry support by pursuing sector-specific strategies

### 5.5 Reach out to commercial real estate brokers throughout Grant County to promote existing opportunities in Grant County, particularly those involving target industries, and develop a means of regular communication to obtain feedback on areas of interest and concern.

- 5.5.1 Work with real estate brokers to identify and market sites ideal for large-scale solar energy
- 5.5.2 Work with real estate broker to develop an inventory of best sites for outdoor recreation

### 5.6 Seek innovative opportunities to grow niches in target industries.

- 5.6.1 Consider using "Mission Focused Medicine" to recruit physicians with a wider range of specialties who are interested in assisting a medically under-served population (see summary at right).
- 5.6.2 In partnership with the Grant County/Silver City Joint Office of Sustainability and WNMU, establish a business plan competition for university students at the undergraduate and graduate levels (inviting national and perhaps international participants) that focuses on Clean Energy Entrepreneurship.
  - As an example of a similar competition, see the Venture Labs Investment Competition (formerly Moot Corp), supported by the University of Texas (see summary at right).

### 5.7 Focus resources on retaining and expanding retail options throughout Grant County. The limited number of retailers and restaurants was noted by stakeholders as a challenge facing all of Grant County. However, the availability of shopping options is critical to the long-term economic health and quality of life in the county.

- 5.7.1 Perform a retail leakage analysis and utilize results to develop incentives that are designed to attract or expand retail in rural communities.
- 5.7.2 Attend ICSC conferences to promote Grant County to retailers.

## Best Practice

### Venture Labs INVESTMENT COMPETITION

With aspiring entrepreneurs soliciting start-up funds from experienced investors, the Moot Corp Competition simulates the real-world process of raising venture capital. MBAs from business schools around the globe come to The University of Texas at Austin each May to present their business plans to panels of investors. From among myriad offerings is selected the best new-venture opportunity. With a 28-year history, the Competition is the oldest operating inter-business school competition in the world.

For more information visit:

<http://www.mcombs.utexas.edu/Centers/Venture-Labs-Investment-Competition>

## Best Practice

### Mission Focused Medicine

Mission-focused medicine is a counter intuitive recruiting method used by Dr. Benjamin Anderson to recruit doctors to rural areas to practice medicine and have an impact on a needy community. To convince a doctor to move to a rural community and practice medicine for less pay, you must provide an incentive. Realizing that most doctors who would be willing to move to a more remote rural area would be "mission focused" doctors, Shuman came up with the idea to offer his doctors up to 8 weeks off to fulfill their own mission work abroad.

For more information visit:

<http://harvestpublicmedia.org/blog/961/bringing-health-care-rural-kansas-one-doc-time/5>





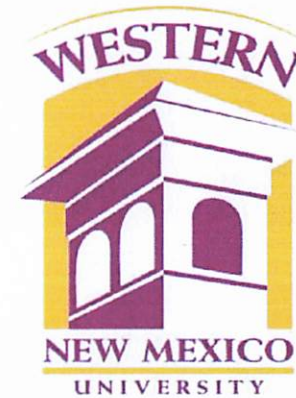
Photo: WNMU

## Goal 6: Fully capitalize on the unique opportunities provided by Western New Mexico University.

Western New Mexico University (WNMU) is one of the largest employers in Grant County and one of its most valuable assets. WNMU is one of the few universities within the U.S. that also serves in a community college capacity. Furthermore, WNMU represents the largest source of skilled, educated talent in Grant County, drawing thousands of students from throughout the region. However, the majority of this highly skilled workforce leaves Grant County upon completion of their training and education. Retention of Grant County's human capital must be a top economic development priority.

### 6.1 Connect WNMU's leadership and faculty to Grant County's business and government leaders.

- 6.1.1 Hold an annual "WNMU Appreciation Day" event to bring together WNMU faculty and staff, students, and alumni that live in Grant County.
- 6.1.2 Consider funding an economic impact study of WNMU to further understand and market its importance to the regional and local. Study could be unveiled during the annual WNMU Appreciation Day.
- 6.1.3 Consider funding an endowed chair to encourage and support renewable energy and/or mining research and development at WNMU.
- 6.1.4 Encourage expanding collaboration between Grant County employers with specific needs and department heads, faculty, and researchers from the appropriate WNMU programs. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - Connect small businesses with WNMU's College of Business Administration
  - Connect local school districts with WNMU's College of Education
  - Connect the Gila Regional Medical Center and its affiliates with WNMU's nursing school



*A University Worth Discovering*

***"WNMU and the K-12 school system need to be improved. They need to stop focusing on sports and start focusing on educating children and adults for skills that we need in our community."***

***-Business Survey Response***





Photo: WNMU

## ***Goal 6: Fully capitalize on the unique opportunities provided by Western New Mexico University.***

### **6.2 Involve WNMU more closely as a key regional economic development partner.**

- 6.2.1 Hold quarterly meetings between the respective planning departments from WNMU, the Town of Silver City, and Grant County to coordinate land use and infrastructure planning and address any potential conflicts between the physical expansion of WNMU and the impacts to the surrounding neighborhoods.
- 6.2.2 Consider a WNMU/Town of Silver City joint venture to construct an on-campus conference center. Consider as an example Northern Arizona University (see summary at right).
- 6.2.3 Consider a WNMU/Grant County joint venture to expand the university's physical education center to mirror a commercial gym.

### **6.3 Leverage WNMU's unique strengths for economic development purposes and provide support to WNMU programs related to Grant County's target industries.**

- 6.3.1 Building on WNMU's existing strengths in applied technology, partner with business stakeholders to establish a dynamic technical training center, with the goal of training and maintaining workers in Grant County.
- 6.3.2 Market WNMU's three Programs of Distinction (nursing, educator preparation, applied technology) to the region's employers and to prospects.
- 6.3.3 Leverage WNMU's Institute for Lifelong Learning to identify opportunities to attract education or research functions from the intellectual capital of current residents.
- 6.3.4 Leverage WNMU's low residency requirement to offer online degrees to U.S., and particularly, international students.

## ***Best Practice***

Northern Arizona University



A new hotel-conference center will be located on the campus of Northern Arizona University (NAU). The 160-room hotel and 42,000-square-foot conference center is a joint venture between NAU, the City of Flagstaff, the Arizona Board of Regents and Drury Hotels. NAU's hospitality program will use the facilities to train students.

Local subcontractors will be utilized by the contractor, whom was also able to work with and educate the local subcontractor community to meet the needs of the project. This has resulted in 30% of the construction costs returning to the local economy.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.ryancompanies.com/upload/Collaboration%20is%20the%20Word%20in%20Flagstaff%20VOL%207%20ISSUE%2021.pdf>





## Goal 7: Position Grant County to develop stronger international ties and increase focus on preparedness for international business opportunities.

International trade and investment are critical to the success of many sectors of the U.S. and state economies. According to the International Trade Administration (ITA), New Mexico merchandise exports increased 36 percent from 2010 to 2011, growing from \$1.5 billion to \$2.1 billion. The state economy is simply a collection of the many local economies who participate daily in the international market. Grant County needs to find creative ways to open its market beyond the U.S. borders to help stimulate its stagnant economy.

### 7.1 Become a “sister city” with a Mexican city that shares similarities with Silver City (see example at right).

7.1.1 Identify a city in Mexico (but not immediately on the Mexico-U.S. border) that can become Silver City's sister city, based on the following factors:

- Comparable size and similar economy
- Regional industry assets that complement or are part of Silver City's supply chain or industries
- Similar challenges/opportunities

7.1.2 Take an annual trip to the sister city, including Silver City's public sector and private sector leaders.

### 7.2 Become the only designated Regional Immigrant Investment Center in New Mexico through the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Pilot program. EB5 can fund numerous public/private projects simultaneously. And as a rural area that has lower capital requirements, Silver City qualifies for such a program. There is a minimum investment of \$500,000 for specialized regions, such as Grant County, as opposed to the \$1 million required for urban areas. Submit a proposal to the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) showing the following:

- How the regional center will promote economic growth to the region
- How jobs will be created directly/indirectly through capital investments
- The amount and source of capital committed to the center
- How the regional center will positively impact the regional or national economy

## Best Practice

Espita, Mexico  
Sister Cities International



Building a Sister City relationship with an international community is often a rewarding experience for both communities. The process for finding a community who shares your interests and goals is often involved and lengthy. Organizations such as Sister Cities International help global communities find relationships that are mutually beneficial for both parties. The Mexican community of Espita serves as an example of a community that shares a population and interests similar to that of Silver City. Whether it be this Mexican community or another, the benefits of having a Sister City relationship are worth the time and effort required to complete the process.

For more information on Sister Cities International and Espita, Mexico, visit: [http://www.sister-cities.org/seeking/SCS\\_Display.cfm?zCityID=701](http://www.sister-cities.org/seeking/SCS_Display.cfm?zCityID=701)

## Best Practice

Regional Immigrant Investment Center

The Immigrant Investor Pilot Program (“Pilot Program”) was created by Section 610 of Public Law 102-395 (Oct. 6, 1992),



and has been extended through Sept. 30, 2012. The Program has nearly the same requirements as an EB-5 investor program, except the pilot program centers around “Regional Centers.” Special accommodations are made to EB-5 immigrant investors who invest in designated regional centers. One such accommodation is easier job creation requirements. The designation and organization of a regional center is valuable to a city as the Center itself can be a source of jobs and potential growth within a city.

For more information on the Regional Investment Center, visit: <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/7vgnextoid=fb48c55d20829210VqnVCM100000082ca60aRCD&vgnnextchannel=fac83453d4a3210VqnVCM10000b92ca60aRCD>





Photo: Active

## ***Goal 7: Position Grant County to develop stronger international ties and increase focus on preparedness for international business opportunities.***

### **7.3 Expand opportunities for international trade in Grant County, both for local businesses seeking to import/export, as well as for foreign enterprises seeking to locate facilities within the U.S. market.**

7.3.1 Upon the completion of an industrial park, apply for a foreign trade zone designation to help attract international commerce to Grant County.

7.3.2 Conduct outreach to existing Grant County-based companies to determine what international trade is already taking place, and to identify untapped opportunities for importing or exporting, with support from the WNMU Small Business Development Center's Gateway to Exporting program.

7.3.3 Market Grant County as a good location for foreign-based companies, especially from Mexico or other Latin American countries, seeking to establish a presence in the U.S. (See as an example the Interceramic expansion to the right.)

7.3.4 Seek opportunities to host events in Grant County associated with the International Business Accelerator and the Gateway to Exporting program

### ***Best Practice***

#### **Santa Teresa, NM Interceramic**



Interceramic, a Chihuahua City-based manufacturer of ceramic tile, plans to establish a warehousing and distribution operation in Santa Teresa, New Mexico in the Santa Teresa Business Center. The company will lease an 80,000-square-foot facility in Santa Teresa and anticipates creating 30 jobs at its new operation. Interceramic currently has a total production capacity of 450 million square feet per year in nine facilities housed in four different manufacturing centers : three in Chihuahua and one in Garland, Texas.

A major selection factor for its newest operation was cited as the establishment of an overweight cargo zone north of the Santa Teresa Port of Entry. The establishment of this zone, which allows trucks with weights up to 96,000 pounds, was a joint effort between the New Mexico Economic Development Department, the New Mexico Legislature, the New Mexico Partnership and the Border Industrial Association.





Photo: Mary Alice Murphy

## **Goal 8: Develop a clearly identifiable, marketable, and easily communicated Brand for Grant County.**

A common theme noted by stakeholders throughout this plan was that residents and visitors alike are often left with a vague sense of what defines Grant County and what sets it apart. This includes residents as well as businesses and is attributed to the lack of a clearly defined and easily recognized brand for Grant County. All of the economic development organizations in Grant County must work together to enhance the marketing and branding efforts in the months and years ahead.

### **8.1 Develop an aggressive stand-alone marketing and branding strategy for Grant County.** See as an example Texas Hill Country Tourism as an example.

#### **8.1.1 Emphasize key assets:**

- High-quality healthcare facilities such as the Gila Regional Medical Center
- Natural scenery and outdoor recreation opportunities within the Gila National Forest
- Cultural and historical attractions including Ft. Bayard, Pinos Altos, etc.
- Strong business establishment growth
- Four-season temperate climate

#### **8.1.2 Highlight recent success stories (Sysygy Tileworks, Holiday Inn Express, and others).**

#### **8.1.3 Partner with WNMU to leverage its creative media curriculum and have students design social media campaigns or other similar campaigns for Grant County marketing efforts.**

### **8.2 Rebrand website and marketing materials.** Complete a full reevaluation of the Gila EDA website, logo and marketing materials with a focus on an instantly recognizable brand that communicates the appeal of Grant County as a place to live, work, and play - with additional content dedicated towards the target industries.

## *Best Practice*

### **Texas Hill Country Tourism: Fredericksburg**

Today, Fredericksburg ranks as one of the top rural cities for tourism in America, catering to both daytime visitors from major urban centers in Central Texas as well as overnight visitors coming in from farther away. As part of its tourism development strategy, Fredericksburg has developed a remarkable method for drawing in visitors for every aspect of its heritage and natural assets by showcasing both its German and Texas rancher roots and inspiring visitors to appreciate the peaches, lavender, wildflowers, wines, and natural landscapes for which the region has become well-known. The influx of tourists has allowed for a wide variety of small businesses to prosper: from cozy bed and breakfasts to small boutiques and wineries.



During the first half of the 20th century, there was nothing that differentiated Fredericksburg from the other ranching towns that dotted Texas. However, a visit by President Johnson brought more visitors than residents to the city, and helped spark the tourism that would form Fredericksburg's development into the 21st century. Today, the Fredericksburg Convention Bureau oversees the development of tourism for the city. Aggressive marketing campaigns showcase all regional assets, while the website of the Bureau itself allows visitors to plan every aspect of their trip, from accommodation to tours and shopping. The Visitor's Center provides visitors with travel counselors to answer their questions, and also offers free maps, informational DVDs and parking.





**Goal 8: Develop a clearly identifiable, marketable, and easily communicated Brand for Grant County.**

**8.3 Seek opportunities to join together Grant County's diverse assets into one cohesive and recognized brand.**

8.3.1 In marketing and communications activities, avoid referring to one particular asset, interest, industry, or activity, but rather focus on how each asset is strengthened by its connection to other assets located in Grant County.

8.3.2 Present the strength and value of Grant County as stemming from the diversity of its landscape, its people, its industries, and its communities that are all linked together.

8.3.3 Design the brand of the Gila EDA to reflect this broader image of the County.

**8.4 Sponsor an annual "Economic Development Education Mission."** Grant County leaders from the public and private sector travel to a peer county or region to learn about its economic development successes and challenges, as well as the marketing approaches used to convey its messages.

*"People are not going to be attracted to this area if we don't make it attractive."*

*-Resident Survey Response*

*"Being remote and surrounded by the largest forest in the lower 48 is huge. Love the culture, it's diversity, and the food."*

*-Resident Survey Response*

*"We need to advertise Grant County even more to keep people coming here. Especially for the Arts!"*

*-Business Survey Response*



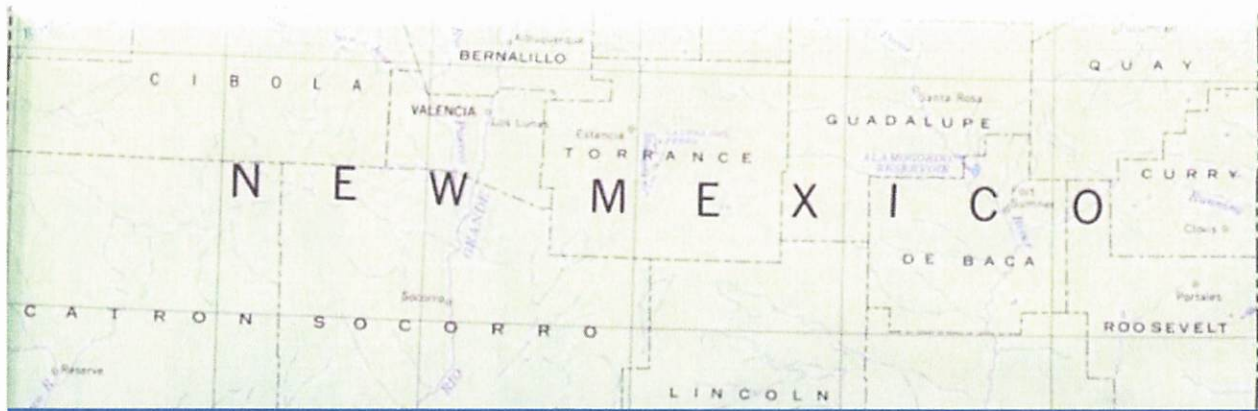


## Performance Metrics

Ongoing performance evaluation is a critical component to the success of Grant County in supporting its economic development efforts. The performance measurements proposed on the following pages will help stakeholders to effectively measure the implementation of the strategies within this plan. Economic developers and program managers will have an opportunity to demonstrate the positive results of their efforts and for the public to determine whether resources are well-spent and whether the community's assets are being properly applied.

Project partners must agree upon a concise set of the most appropriate performance measures and periodic reporting of results. Additionally, project partners should hold an annual "scorecard" meeting to review progress.





## Performance Metrics

### Business Climate

Businesses served through the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program

Ratings of overall business climate through BRE program

Change in ratings over time

### Workforce and Education

Average wage growth

Local employers' ratings of workforce

Median age of workforce

Change 25-44 age group over time

Changes in high school graduation rates and technical training certification

Utilization of workforce development programs

Ratings of workforce development programs

Percentage of college educated workers

Changes in ACT/SAT scores and dropout rates

### Marketing and Business Development

Number of qualified prospects

Conversion rates of prospects to new businesses

New jobs generated

Average salaries of new jobs

Tax revenues generated

Return on Investment

Number of media impressions

Number of followers on social media platforms





## Performance Metrics

### Entrepreneurship and small/minority business development

New business start-ups

Patent creation

Number of small and minority businesses started

Number of new independent businesses in urban and neighborhood centers

### Sites & Infrastructure

Amount of new commercial and industrial space constructed

Available developable acreage with direct highway access and existing utility service

Available developable acreage with direct highway access, but lacking utility service

Available developable acreage with existing utility service, but without direct highway access

Available developable acreage without existing utility service and without direct highway access

Available commercial and industrial properties

Office and industrial vacancy rates

### Strategy Implementation Plan Outcomes

Successful completion of initiatives contained within this plan



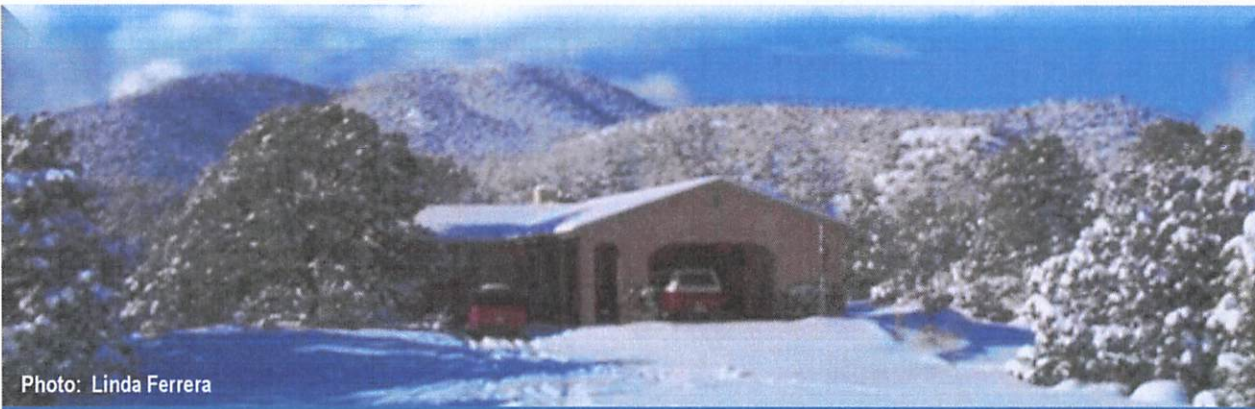


Photo: Linda Ferrera

## Appendix A

### IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The implementation matrix offers recommendations on how Grant County and the numerous organizations and stakeholders throughout the county can implement this action plan. It is organized by the eight goals outlined in this strategy and includes the most prominent action items, timeframe, and parties to be involved in implementation.

The implementation matrix can be viewed in full in Appendix A, on the following page of this report. Additionally, an expanded implementation matrix will be provided as an editable excel document separate from the body of this report.



## Appendix A: Implementation Matrix

	Implementation Start			Implementation Partners														
	Short Term (1 year)	Mid-Term (2-3 years)	Long Term (3 years +)	Gila EDA	Grant County	Town of Silver City	City of Bayard	Economic Development Coalition	Green Chamber of Commerce	Silver City/Grant County Chamber of Commerce	WNAU (University & SBC)	Real Estate and Development Community	Regional Businesses	Workforce Development Boards	Utility Providers	Arts & Culture District	Mainstreet	Other
<b>Goal 1: Clarify and formalize the roles and responsibilities of Economic Development partners in Grant County</b>																		
1.1 Ensure the Gila Economic Development Alliance (EDA) has a clear and well-communicated internal structure with well-defined individual roles, responsibilities, and authority for the staff members it is responsible for.	X			X				X										
1.2 Position the Gila EDA to act as a central coordinating body for economic development activities in the County, working with towns and municipalities to collaborate and coordinate economic development efforts to meet mutually-agreed upon goals and objectives.	X			X	X	X	X	X										
1.3 Agree upon operating guidelines describing the roles and responsibilities of economic development partners and advance them toward the economic development of Grant County.	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							
1.4 Promote economic development success stories.	X			X	X				X	X	X							
1.5 Implement a formalized Business Retention and Expansion Program (BREP) that provides regular outreach to existing Grant County businesses.		X		X	X			X										
1.6 Establish a Site Selection Task Force	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X						



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	Implementation Start			Implementation Partners														
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Bold indicates key driver(s) of action step.																		
<b>Goal 2: Prepare real estate options and infrastructure to support economic development goals and Target Industries.</b>																		
2.1 Complete a full assessment of the current state of Grant County real estate: sites optimal for target industries; infrastructure available for strategically important areas; smaller industrial sites for development; and, sites possessing unique assets or proximity to rail spurs.	X			X	X							X						
2.2 Establish a tax increment financing (TIF) zone in downtown Silver City and identify additional funding streams for downtown infrastructure improvements.	X			X	X							X						
2.3 Develop an industrial park to capitalize on opportunities associated with the region's renewable energy potential as well as the existing mining industry.		X				X		X									X	
2.4 Identify specific opportunities for additional businesses and employers to locate in downtown Silver City.		X		X	X			X	X	X		X			X			
2.5 Attract a small-to-mid scale convention hotel into Silver City.	X			X	X	X		X	X	X		X					X	
2.6 Continue to aggressively pursue additional air travel connections.		X		X	X	X		X	X	X								
2.7 Develop Ft. Bayard in a manner which maximizes its use.		X		X	X			X	X	X								
2.8 Develop a portion of Grant County Convention Center into a business incubator.			X	X	X			X				X						



## Appendix A: Implementation Matrix

Bold indicates key driver(s) of action step.	Implementation Start			Implementation Partners														
	Short Term (1 year)	Mid-Term (2-3 years)	Long Term (3 years +)	Gila EDA	Grant County	Town of Silver City	City of Bayard	Economic Development Coalition	Green Chamber of Commerce	Silver City/Grant County Chamber of Commerce	WNMU (University & SBDC)	K-12 School Systems	Regional Businesses	Workforce Development Boards	Utility Providers	Arts & Culture District	Mainstreet	Other
<b>Goal 3: Ensure that Grant County's existing workforce meets the needs of the employers and supports Target Industries as well as the broader Economic Development goals.</b>																		
3.1 Build upon the newly established system of regular communication between educators, major employers and economic developers to ensure the alignment of education/training with employer needs and revisit regularly to provide feedback on interest and success.	X			X	X						X	X	X	X				
3.2 Address current lack of machinists, welders, and technicians in the local workforce.		X		X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X				
3.3: Align Grant County's workforce development programs and educational institutions with the region's target industries.		X		X							X	X		X				
3.4: Work with K-12 schools and WNMU to address unmet workforce needs and develop a trained workforce that aligns with target industries and growth opportunities.			X	X							X	X						
3.5: Establish a summer internship program to connect high school and college students with local employers.	X			X	X				X	X	X	X		X				
3.6: Retain and attract more young people to Grant County.			X	X	X	X			X	X						X		



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<b>Goal 4: Leverage small business resources and assets to support entrepreneurship, retention and expansion of existing businesses, and the attraction of new businesses.</b>																		
4.1 Develop a local SCORE chapter that draws upon the knowledge and experience of retired executives and professionals in support of increased entrepreneurship.		X		X				X		X								
4.2 Develop and/or promote organizations meant to encourage the role of young entrepreneurs and executives within the business community.	X			X	X		X	X		X	X	X						
4.3 Develop a support strategy for spin-offs from area major employers.	X			X	X						X			X		X		
4.4 Develop a "Certified Entrepreneurial Community" program that recognizes communities in Grant County that meet a basic set of standards for the support and development of entrepreneurial ventures and for the creation of a strong environment for entrepreneurial activity. Consider as an example on a larger scale AdvantageWest, NC. (see description at right).	X			X	X						X			X		X		
4.5: Support and promote Grant County's vibrant network of small businesses and entrepreneurs to create a culture of innovation. Tap into the resource pool of retirees for inexpensive, yet experienced assistance.		X		X	X			X		X	X	X		X			X	
4.6: In partnership with WNMU, NMSU, and NM Tech, highlight the opportunities for entrepreneurship that are available to professionals from non-business backgrounds, such as engineering, distribution, creative design, dining and entertainment, professional services, and clean energy.		X		X	X			X	X	X	X			X			X	
4.7 Leverage existing opportunities to become more of a retirement community destination		X		X	X	X		X		X	X							



## Appendix A: Implementation Matrix

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<b>Goal 5: Strengthen Target Industry support by pursuing sector-specific strategies</b>																		
5.1: Implement a more aggressive and targeted incentive program that is widely publicized and is spelled out (quantified) and tied to target industries		X		X	X	X	X	X										
5.2 Develop a support platform to assist Grant County businesses in identifying local suppliers to help source their supplies and services from other businesses based in the County.	X			X	X				X	X			X					
5.3 Identify and aggressively seek opportunities to pursue EDA support for key economic development projects.		X		X	X													
5.4 Seek opportunities to obtain additional funding sources in support of target industries, and economic development as a whole, in Grant County	X			X	X	X	X	X			X							
5.5 Reach out to commercial real estate brokers throughout Grant County to promote existing opportunities in Grant County, particularly those involving target industries, and develop a means of regular communication to obtain feedback on areas of interest and concern.	X			X	X									X				
5.6 Seek innovative opportunities to grow niches in target industries.		X		X	X			X	X	X	X							
5.7 Focus resources on retaining and expanding retail options throughout Grant County.		X																



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<b>Goal 6: Fully capitalize on the unique opportunities provided by Western New Mexico University.</b>																		
6.1 Connect WNMU's leadership and faculty to Grant County's business and government leaders.	X			X	X	X					X							
6.2 Involve WNMU more closely as a key regional economic development partner.		X		X	X	X					X							
6.3 Leverage WNMU's unique strengths for economic development purposes and provide support to WNMU programs related to Grant County's target industries.	X			X	X	X					X							



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<b>Goal 7: Position Grant County to develop stronger international ties and increase focus on preparedness for international business opportunities.</b>																		
7.1 Become a "sister city" with a Mexican city that shares similarities to Silver City.		X		X	X	X												
7.2 Become the only designated Regional Immigrant Investment Center in New Mexico through the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Pilot Program		X		X	X	X		X	X	X								
7.3 Expand opportunities for international trade in Grant County, both for local businesses seeking to import/export, as well as for foreign enterprises seeking to locate facilities within the U.S. market.	X			X	X	X			X	X	X		X					



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<b>Bold indicates key driver(s) of action step.</b>																		
<b>Goal 8: Develop a clearly identifiable, marketable, and easily communicated Brand for Grant County.</b>																		
8.1 Develop an aggressive stand-alone marketing and branding strategy for Grant County.	X			X	X				X	X								
8.2 Rebrand website and marketing materials.	X			X	X													
8.3 Seek opportunities to join together Grant County's diverse assets into one cohesive and recognized brand.	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							
8.4 Sponsor an annual "Economic Development Education Mission" in which Grant County leaders (public and private sector) travel to a peer county or region to learn about their economic development successes and challenges and the marketing approach they use to convey their messages.	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							



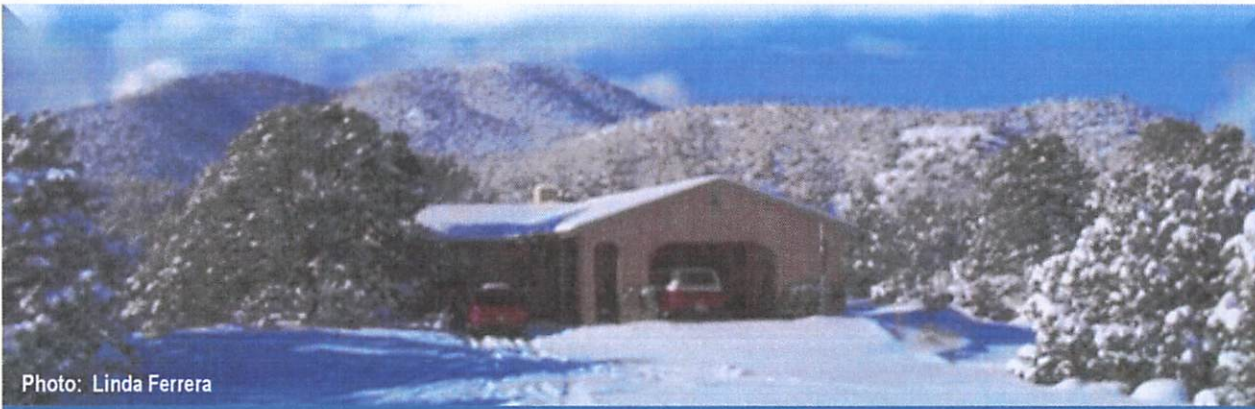


Photo: Linda Ferrera

## Appendix B

### REPORT METHODOLOGY AND NARRATIVE CONTENT

As described in the section of this report titled “Previous Work to Date,” the project team completed an in-depth analysis specific to Grant County which was further shaped by on-site research conducted while visiting the community that included site visits, interviews and focus groups, and was strengthened by input from key community stakeholders as well as a business and resident survey. The results of this analysis formed the basis for all conclusions presented in this report. The research completed within this phase of the project has been directed specifically to meet the economic development needs and objectives of Grant County.

Certain portions of this report draw upon previously completed research conducted by AngelouEconomics for internal use or for separate projects, and were selected for inclusion in this report for their specific relevance to the challenges and opportunities currently affecting Grant County. In certain cases, specifically those relating to research processes, definitions, national and global trends, industry-wide conditions and dynamics, and national economic data, narrative remarks may be included in other documents prepared by AngelouEconomics. Reasonable efforts have been made to ensure that all data and information that was completed by other organizations and government agencies have been properly sourced throughout this report. Further information relating to the methods, research or recommendations featured in this report can be made available upon request by the client.





# AngelouEconomics

AngelouEconomics partners with client communities and regions across the United States and abroad to candidly assess current economic development realities and identify opportunities. Our goal is to leverage the unique strengths of each region to provide new, strategic direction for economic development. As a result, AngelouEconomics' clients are able to diversify their economies, expand job opportunities and investment, foster entrepreneurial growth, better prepare their workforce, and attract 'new economy' companies.

## Project Team

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