

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR NEW MEXICO'S FUTURE**

### **SEVENTEENTH New Mexico FIRST TOWN HALL**

#### **TAOS, NEW MEXICO**

**JUNE 20 - 23, 1996**

#### **CONSENSUS REPORT**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Change is the hallmark of our era. As New Mexico approaches the end of the century, it faces challenges that would have seemed unimaginable just a few years ago. While the forces of change are not unique to New Mexico, its response to those forces can be. Challenged by the shift to a global economy, advances in technology, increased competition for limited public resources, and pressures on its social institutions and natural environment, New Mexico can either allow these forces to shape its destiny, or it can act affirmatively to create its own future.

The challenge of creating a collective vision for New Mexico's future was the subject of the Seventeenth New Mexico First Town Hall held in Taos, New Mexico, June 20-23, 1996. The Town Hall, sponsored by Intel Corporation, Public Service Company of New Mexico, Bank of America New Mexico, BDM Federal, Inc., and supported by a contract for services from the Town of Taos, brought together 148 New Mexicans from all parts of the state to discuss the topic "Strategic Planning for New Mexico's Future." Participants deliberated, debated, and came to consensus on recommendations for a planning process for New Mexico. This report reflects the consensus of the participants on the issues discussed at the Town Hall.

#### **WHY NEW MEXICO NEEDS STRATEGIC PLANNING**

New Mexico is a state of tremendous diversity. We live in cities, villages, and towns and on farms and ranches. Some of us are members of sovereign tribes. We speak different languages and have different cultural values and traditions. Our incomes and economic circumstances vary widely. How can we create a greater sense of community while recognizing and valuing our diversity? A strategic plan can be a vehicle for bringing diverse voices and values together to be heard, respected, and represented in developing common goals for our future and a greater sense of community based on common interests. The strategic planning process can utilize the unique perspectives of our diverse citizenry to create a strong and unique vision for our state. All New Mexicans should have an opportunity to contribute to defining a desired future for our state and creating the plan to achieve it.

New Mexico should adopt a strategic planning process to guide the course of its future. This process will create a shared vision of a rewarding and promising future for all New Mexicans and a framework for dealing with change and critical issues that face our state. By creating opportunities for dialogue, leadership, and involvement, the process of strategic planning will provide as many benefits as the plan itself.

New Mexicans want to reduce polarization, improve confidence in our political institutions, and increase the responsiveness of the political process. An effective strategic planning process can bring New Mexicans together from the private, public, and sovereign sectors to create a common vision for our state and promote a greater sense of community. It can promote public confidence in government by providing broad-based input and needed direction by holding all participants, both public officials and private citizens, accountable for achieving measurable goals.

While a variety of planning efforts exist at state and local levels in New Mexico, they are often not coordinated, and many fail in execution or are never completed. A lack of continuity in government planning due to political change and a lack of coordination between public and private sector planning are other reasons to adopt a strategic planning process in New Mexico. A “living process” for managing enduring issues in the face of political and economic change will overcome these problems and enhance the continuity of the planning processes in our state. If our strategic planning efforts are to succeed, they must be coordinated on a local, regional, tribal and state-wide basis and on a national and international basis where desirable. These efforts must also have the flexibility to respond to and address regional and local conditions and planning activities.

Increasing demands on limited resources require that New Mexico conserve its resources and manage them wisely to meet the needs of present and future generations. Strategic planning will acknowledge competing demands for our limited resources and create a framework for prioritizing our needs and allocating resources to meet those needs.

Rapidly changing local, national, and world events have a dramatic impact on New Mexico. Because these changes affect our lives in profound ways we must take an active approach to dealing with them. A strategic planning process will allow New Mexico to manage current issues and anticipate and plan for the future. It will give New Mexico a framework for addressing change and positioning itself for a share of the world's future success. To accomplish these ends, New Mexico must have a common vision and agreed-upon goals to avoid haphazard reactions to perceived opportunities and real crises. Change has strained New Mexico’s education and social systems, economy, and human, cultural and natural resources. Our state must have a common vision and ways to measure progress in these areas, both of which must be developed in a cooperative way.

## **THE BENEFITS TO NEW MEXICO OF STRATEGIC PLANNING**

A strategic planning process will develop and enhance leadership in our state. It will provide an opportunity for people to become involved in planning. It will encourage participation in the political process and promote communication among citizens, the business community, and their elected and political leaders. It will identify for New Mexico's leaders the issues that are most important to our state and a strategy for addressing those issues through an on-going, participative process. And the process will provide a framework for achieving a productive, positive future with leadership that transcends partisan politics.

An effective and inclusive strategic planning process will provide a flexible framework for anticipating and planning for change. It will provide many benefits to New Mexico, including but not limited to the following:

- enhanced quality of life for all New Mexicans
- a method for resolving competing interests
- increased citizen participation and confidence in government and other institutions
- a positive and a cooperative climate for business growth, economic development, and job creation
- establishment of methods for allocating human, natural, and financial resources based on agreed-upon priorities
- a way for invalidated conventional wisdom to be challenged and replaced by facts
- a mechanism for measuring performance and progress toward desired goals
- a means to hold decision-makers accountable for outcomes
- the creation of pride and enthusiasm among New Mexicans
- enhancement of our state's reputation
- continuity in planning and decision-making, immune from political tenures
- a method in which New Mexicans can set high expectations for themselves and their public and private institutions

## **THE TOWN HALL'S VISION STATEMENT FOR NEW MEXICO**

A vision statement for New Mexico must have several characteristics: It must be compelling, inspirational and understandable by all; it must be written by New Mexicans for New Mexicans; it must be succinct, descriptive, and future-oriented; and it must reflect the values and principles upon which New Mexicans concur.

A vision statement for New Mexico must address the need to integrate our future with our past and to balance the preservation of our society with its advancement. It must reflect both our appreciation for and our value of New Mexico's unique heritage and our diversity in its broadest sense. It must make a statement

regarding the quality of life to which we aspire. It must recognize the high value we place on education, protecting our environment, respect for diversity and the individual, personal safety, sustainability, access to opportunities, individual responsibility and economic vitality. Above all, New Mexico's vision statement must honor the dignity of all New Mexicans.

Each of the six panels at the Town Hall created a vision statement for New Mexico based upon their discussions. These separate panel vision statements, reproduced in the appendix to this report, were combined during the consensus process to achieve the following overall vision statement for New Mexico:

*New Mexico is a state that strives for excellence while preserving the best of its past; creates a future that celebrates and treasures all its people; fosters opportunities for prosperity in a vital, diversified economy, supported and sustained by quality education; manages resources wisely for the benefit of present and future generations; and encourages all citizens to assume personal responsibility for their well-being and for the common good. New Mexico will accomplish this vision in the context of a regional, national and global framework. Our spirit and belief in each other guides New Mexico's journey.*

#### **THE PROCESS THAT SHOULD BE USED FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING IN NEW MEXICO AND THE PARTICIPANTS**

All New Mexicans have a stake in the development and implementation of a viable strategic plan for New Mexico. Strategic planning must be an ongoing process, supported by public, private, and non-profit resources.

It was the consensus of the Town Hall that the strategic planning process for New Mexico must begin with the Town Hall consensus report. The consensus report must be widely disseminated in New Mexico and serve as the foundation for the development and implementation of a strategic plan for our state. Town Hall participants from across the state will carry the message of the Town Hall back to their communities and to all parts of the state to generate a marketing, education, and data gathering effort that supports the creation of a strategic planning process for New Mexico.

It was the consensus of the Town Hall that an organization be created to oversee the design and implementation of a strategic planning process for New Mexico on a statewide basis. This organization must be composed of representatives of federal, regional, state, tribal and local governments, New Mexico's private sector, special interest groups and philanthropic/nonprofit organizations. It must include members of the public who are representative of New Mexico's diversity, demographics and geographic regions. It must also include people who can secure the necessary funding to support the strategic planning process. Many panel participants believed that a state-level, private-public commission or board should be created to carry out strategic planning for the state. Most participants recommended that New Mexico First play a key role in the strategic planning process.

In order for the process to proceed, the commitment to the creation and mission of this organization and to implementation of a strategic plan is required from the governor, legislative leadership, local and tribal governments, the business community, non-profit groups, and all New Mexicans.

Once these entities are committed, the organization must hire a professional staff and begin the creation of the strategic planning process. An important mission of the staff will be to collect and organize all necessary, accurate information in order that the participants in the planning process at all levels are well informed and have access to necessary data.

The process for strategic planning in New Mexico will be developed by the strategic planning organization. It must be simple, proven, and easy to understand. It must be modeled on strategic planning processes in common use by the public and private sectors; there is no need to reinvent the wheel in designing the process. The process will, at a minimum, include the following essential elements:

- a method for broad-based, diverse, state-wide participation
- information gathering including an assessment of current conditions and trends in New Mexico
- an analysis of New Mexico's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
- a vision statement for New Mexico
- goals, objectives, and strategies for implementation
- plans, targets and performance measures
- periodic review, evaluation and revision of the process

The strategic planning organization will encourage and assist local strategic planning initiatives modeled on the statewide strategic planning process and promote integrated local, regional, tribal, and state strategic planning efforts.

Regional meetings must be held throughout the state to gather input and begin to formulate specific goals and focus areas. These regional meetings must be preceded by marketing and educational initiatives in local communities on the benefits of strategic planning to New Mexico. Concurrently with these meetings, organization staff must gather information on issues of concern to New Mexicans and on community, government, and organization-based visions, missions, goals, and objectives that have already been developed for use in New Mexico. This information gathering process must continue as the organization develops a strategic planning process for New Mexico.

Once a strategic plan is developed, the organization will oversee implementation of the strategic plan and will have responsibility for on-going evaluation and revision of the strategic plan. Implementation will include using the goals developed in setting public budgets. Strategic planning must be the benchmark against which public initiatives are compared and measured.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS AND TIME FRAME**

The Town Hall calls upon the governor and the members of the Senate and House of Representatives to make a commitment to establish a strategic planning process for the State of New Mexico's citizens in accordance with the recommendations of this Town Hall including the commitment of the public and private sectors to supply resources, in-kind services, and necessary funding. The Town Hall makes a commitment to take all reasonable actions to accomplish the establishment of the strategic planning process, including shared responsibility for finding and providing financial and other resources. The Town Hall recommends that the governor and legislature institute a collaborative process to establish the strategic planning process by law during the next legislative session. Through its implementation team, the Town Hall makes a commitment to participate in and support this process in all ways within its power. Initiation of the strategic planning process should begin with the Town Hall implementation team.

The time frame for implementing the strategic planning process should be as follows:

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|------------------------------|---|
| <b>July-December, 1996</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>obtain a public commitment of support from top elected officials for the strategic planning process.</b></li> <li>• <b>develop media and marketing plans to inform the wider community including, but not limited to, local communities, congressional delegates, the governor and governor's cabinet, bipartisan legislative leadership, tribal governments, New Mexico Municipal League, New Mexico Association of Counties, regional government institutions, civic and business organizations, local communities and educational institutions.</b></li> <li>• <b>develop business plan and budget for strategic planning organization</b></li> <li>• <b>identify and recruit members for strategic planning organization</b></li> <li>• <b>solicit and obtain private sector/philanthropic in-kind contributions and/or funding for the strategic planning process</b></li> <li>• <b>prepare draft legislation for public funding for the strategic planning process</b></li> <li>• <b>submit draft legislation to legislators</b></li> </ul> |
| <b>January-June, 1997</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>legislature introduces and passes legislation which governor signs into law</b></li> <li>• <b>create strategic planning organization</b></li> </ul>   |
| <b>July, 1997-June, 1999</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>complete design of strategic planning process</b></li> <li>• <b>complete information-gathering process</b></li> <li>• <b>complete regional meetings</b></li> </ul>  |

- **complete initial statewide strategic plan**
  - **obtain a public commitment of support for the strategic plan from top elected officials**
  - **repeat the strategic planning process as the environment changes and new issues emerge**
- July, 1999 and beyond**

## **CONCLUSION**

The participants at the Town Hall recognize that New Mexico's strategic plan for tomorrow must be results oriented. This plan must arise from enlightened citizens and leaders who work to create collaborative, coordinated efforts that bring together New Mexico's divergent public and private constituents. The Town Hall recommends that state, local, and tribal representatives be involved in this process in order to achieve New Mexico's strategic planning goals.

The challenges facing New Mexico today have the potential to shape its destiny. The participants at this Town Hall have begun the process of responding affirmatively to these challenges so New Mexico shapes its own destiny. The development of a strategic plan will enable New Mexico to continue its legacy as the "Land of Enchantment".

## **APPENDIX**

### **Panel Manzano:**

New Mexico is situated in one of the most beautiful spots on the earth. Its people and cultures date back more than 10,000 years. Prehistoric and present-day qualities of life blend together in a unique social system that accommodates its people in rural areas and modern urban cities. The vision of New Mexicans is to protect and preserve our cultural integrity, our citizens and our unique but delicate environment. We see a future where we embrace our history and strive for excellence, while creating equal educational and economic opportunities for our citizens and preparing them as leaders for the global community. We want our visitors to experience our warmth and our unique cultural and environmental riches in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

### **Panel Santa Fe:**

- New Mexico is a rich tapestry of cultures and opportunities where the individual is respected, families are valued, and all can grow and thrive.
- Our high-quality education and strong, diversified economy support a bountiful quality of life and the development of each New Mexican's full potential.
- Stewardship of our abundant scenic beauty and natural resources ensures their availability and enjoyment for future generations.
- Our village heritage continues in our caring communities that make New Mexico a great place to live work and play.

### **Panel Cibola:**

In New Mexico, we weave the best of our past with the potential for our future to create a community where all New Mexicans are self-reliant and can prosper while preserving and celebrating that which is unique and beautiful in our people and environment.

### **Panel Lincoln:**

As New Mexicans, we envision a state in which its citizens:

- take responsibility for the common good
- appreciate, respect, and value the state's diversity
- promote prosperity through a sustainable, strong, vibrant statewide economy
- live and work without fear for their personal safety
- preserve and protect the state's natural resources
- enjoy opportunities to succeed and attain self-sufficiency

**Panel Gila:**

The State of New Mexico will be composed of healthy communities with economic and human vitality that reflect our respect for our unique environment, geographic differences, and cultural diversity, and enhance the legacy of the "land of enchantment" for present and future generations.

**Panel Coronado:**

We the people of New Mexico envision a society, now and for future generations, which celebrates its rich cultural landscape. To ensure this vision, New Mexico will:

- foster development of its greatest resources, its people, through access to and availability of education and health services so that they can reach their highest potential
- provide and nurture a tolerant, just and compassionate society which encourages personal responsibility
- foster strong economic vitality and increasing prosperity through a diverse economic base in which we respect the wide variety of chosen livelihoods
- manage our natural resources to ensure their sustainability
- prosper under the leadership of an open and effective government  
New Mexico will accomplish this vision in the context of a regional, national and global framework.