

100 *New Mexico* CENTENNIAL

T O W N ♦ H A L L

LEARNING FROM OUR PAST. PLANNING OUR FUTURE.

FINAL REPORT

- March 22-23, 2012
- Albuquerque, NM

CONVENER

New Mexico First



NEW MEXICO FIRST
People. Ideas. Progress.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When asked to envision the future, New Mexicans call for a wide range of reforms. They want an education system that prepares children for careers of the future, comprehensive strategies for meeting our water and energy needs, and policies that grow our state's economic base. New Mexicans also want teachers who are prepared to advance current academic standards and substance abuse prevention that steers teens from drugs.

These recommendations and others resulted from the *New Mexico Centennial Town Hall*, held April 22-23, 2012 in Albuquerque. The town hall produced a platform of 14 consensus recommendations, all garnering support from at least three-fourths of the participants. Half of the recommendations achieved 90 percent support or higher.

Who Came?

With almost 200 registrants, the event included people from all regions of the state. Participants came from urban, rural, and tribal communities – and they included teachers, business people, parents, students, public officials, advocates, government officials, and others. About half of the participants attended the event for free; the other half paid a voluntary \$100 registration fee that covered meals and snack breaks during the two-day deliberation.

Town Hall Process

The event opened with guest speakers, including Governor Susana Martinez, Albuquerque Mayor Richard Berry, video presentations from U.S. Senators Jeff Bingaman and Tom Udall, and a panel of experts in education, healthcare, energy, and economic development. Participants then divided into small groups, during which they assessed New Mexico's greatest opportunities and weaknesses. They prioritized those issues into 14 discreet recommendations. In their small groups, each participant worked directly on two

recommendations, and then all participants reviewed and refined the work of the other groups.

New Mexico Progress Report

Prior to the town hall, all participants received the *New Mexico Progress Report*, which provided key indicators in the areas of education, economy, healthcare, and energy. It is available at <http://nmfirst.org/new-mexico-progress-report>.

Recommendation Summary

The list below offers a high-level summary. Additional details on each recommendation are provided in the complete report that follows.

EDUCATION:

- Create education partnerships that make students more competitive.
- Strengthen best practices in the teaching profession that impact student achievement.
- Restructure and align New Mexico's workforce development systems.
- Increase peer-based substance abuse programs.
- Strengthen early childhood education.
- Enable income growth by preparing New Mexican adults and children to read.
- Create a statewide charter school youth council.

ECONOMY:

- Create economic policies to retain and grow existing economic base industries.
- Develop a fair and equitable tax system that reflects changing industries.

NATURAL RESOURCES, HEALTH, AND DEMOCRACY:

- Update existing state and regional plans to develop a comprehensive **water strategy**.
- Develop a long-range, statewide **energy plan**.
- Achieve **healthcare equity** and access without regard to income, ethnicity, or health status.
- Foster an **engaged citizenry**.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Town Hall

New Mexico celebrates 100 years of statehood in 2012, and **New Mexico First** organized a special Centennial Town Hall to honor the one-time commemoration. The March 2012 event harvested the wisdom of our citizens, inviting them focus on the past and future of our unique state.

During this two-day town hall, participants explored the state's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, identifying the most urgent needs that need to be addressed. Some of these needs might be addressed by the government, others by the business sector, and others by families and communities.

About New Mexico First

New Mexico First engages people in important issues facing their state or community. Established in 1986, the public policy organization offers unique town halls and forums that bring people together to develop recommendations for policymakers and the public. New Mexico First also produces nonpartisan policy reports on critical issues facing the state. These reports – on topics like water, education, healthcare, the economy, and energy – are available at nmfirst.org.

Our state's two U.S. Senators – Jeff Bingaman and Tom Udall – serve as New Mexico First's honorary co-chairs. The organization was co-founded in 1986 by Senators Jeff Bingaman and Pete Domenici.

New Mexico Progress Report

The *New Mexico Progress Report* was designed to broaden the understanding of citizens and lawmakers about the issues facing New Mexico. It also helped participants prepare for **New Mexico First's** 2012 Centennial Town Hall. Rather than offering detail on one specific area (as New Mexico First reports typically offer), this document provided a "30,000 foot level" overview of several issues facing the state as whole. It is available online at <http://nmfirst.org/new-mexico-progress-report>.

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TOWN HALL PROCESS

Using **New Mexico First's** proven consensus-building process, the two-day event asked participants to share their best ideas for making progress as a state. On day one of the town hall, participants were divided into small groups to explore the state's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and to identify urgent needs that will have the greatest influence on the future of the state. On day two, participants developed a platform of recommendations for addressing the opportunities that will impact our future.

Step 1: Learn the Issues

Background Report

Review report before attending the town hall.



Context Setting and Shared Learning

Listen to guest speakers and ask questions.



Step 2: Explore Possibilities

Small Group Discussions

Consider promising opportunities or crucial issues that need to be addressed.



Step 3: Develop Common Ground

Draft Recommendations

Create recommendations that will impact the state's future progress.



Amend Recommendations

Refine recommendations for consideration by full group.



Agree on Final Recommendations

Reach consensus on final recommendations in the full group.



Step 4: Advance Change

A final report will be sent to all stakeholders, including community and business leaders, policymakers, media, and all town hall registrants. The Implementation Team will work to advance the recommendations agreed to by town hall participants.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were developed by participants in small groups at the town hall. The entire town hall considered all the recommendations and ultimately voted on whether to approve the final language. The recommendations are listed in order of approval.

TOPIC	RECOMMENDATION	PERCENT APPROVAL
REC 1: Water	ACTION Update existing state and regional plans to develop a comprehensive, long-range, statewide water strategy for New Mexico's surface and ground water. The update should address the urgent need for conservation, sustainability, and water quality. STRATEGIES 1. Host a water summit to analyze our state's current water laws affecting both surface and ground water. The summit should result in specific state (legislative and executive) and federal actions affecting New Mexico water plans. 2. Conduct a statewide assessment of watershed conditions to determine whether watersheds are being managed in a way that ensures sustainability.	98%
REC 2: K-12 Reform	ACTION: Create and enable partnerships in classrooms and communities based on successful international and local models that motivate students and make them more competitive from Pre-K through post-secondary and into their career. STRATEGIES: 1. Develop a curriculum with the input of students and teachers to include the following elements: integration, cultural and linguistic relevance, community partnerships, and experiential learning. 2. Create resourced positions that seek and maintain a network for centralizing and sharing current efforts and best practices for private sector and public education partnerships. 3. Ensure educator preparation and ongoing professional development that responds to the partnerships and models specified in the action statement. 4. Strengthen the integration of educational resources from outside the classroom (i.e., nonprofits, government agencies, business sponsors) into the educational system and include evaluation of results.	95%

TOPIC	RECOMMENDATION	PERCENT APPROVAL
REC 3: Education Policy	ACTION: In collaboration with the Public Education Department, foster a dialogue on best practices in the teaching profession that impact student achievement. The dialogue should include students, parents, teachers, local communities, colleges of education. STRATEGIES: 1. Make professional re-development a priority to improve teaching of best practices. 2. Foster public awareness of the Common Core State Standards. 3. Create incentives for teachers to learn and use appropriate methods for their community.	94%
REC 4: Higher Education & Adult Learning	ACTION: To meet the needs of New Mexico's citizens and businesses, restructure the state's workforce education and training systems to eliminate duplication of effort between existing government agencies. Achieve this goal through increased coordination and collaboration among the Departments of Public Education, Higher Education, Workforce Solutions, and Economic Development. STRATEGIES: 1. Identify other state models that have succeeded in similar restructuring processes (i.e., Texas, Oregon, Virginia, and North Carolina). 2. Use broadband and distance learning to access educational opportunities. 3. Use knowledge, skills, and ability-based short courses to qualify people for specific jobs identified by industries. 4. Require ongoing field training and education for higher education faculty and staff so they stay current with best practices in their industries.	94%

TOPIC	RECOMMENDATION	PERCENT APPROVAL
REC 5: Substance Abuse	ACTION: Increase the number of peer-to-peer substance abuse programs within schools and colleges. Enable peers to learn how to promote and become the voice of substance abuse prevention, communication, and referral; also enable peers to help establish policies inside schools regarding alcohol and drug infractions and mediate problems. STRATEGIES: 1. Fund these efforts by: increasing the alcohol tax in New Mexico; using money/goods found in drug busts; and redirecting existing prevention funds to peer-to-peer programs. 2. Encourage extra-curricular activities to promote healthy lifestyles. 3. Utilize existing 211 systems. 4. Train schools to train the peers in the program. 5. Include the peer-to-peer program in the health education curriculum. 6. Create incentives for schools to implement programs.	93%
REC 6: Economic Base Industries	ACTION: Create a statewide economic policy that is competitive with surrounding states for existing economic base industries with inherent strengths, emphasizing those that establish headquarters in New Mexico. (Economic base industries bring dollars into New Mexico from outside the state; they can include agriculture, tourism, energy, arts, technology, and manufacturing). STRATEGIES: 1. Set appropriate tax rates for economic base industries so that overall rates are lower than surrounding states; lower business rates overall, including top individual rates that affect small businesses. 2. Brand products as made or grown in New Mexico. 3. Increase tourism funding. 4. Review current regulations impacting economic base industries and remove burdensome regulations that make New Mexico uncompetitive with surrounding states, while ensuring critical protections are in place. 5. Emphasize the importance of developing our private sector businesses and celebrating economic success.	92%

TOPIC	RECOMMENDATION	PERCENT APPROVAL
REC 7: Energy Policy	ACTION: Develop a comprehensive long-range, bipartisan, statewide energy plan that includes tribal governments and meets the following standards: • Develops all conventional and renewable energy sources • Continues expansion of renewable energy facilities • Includes generation, transmission, and clean up • Provides economic development and revenue generation • Meets stringent pollution standards (state, tribal and federal) STRATEGIES: 1. Use the development of a plan to participate in the global energy economy. 2. Ask the legislature to fund a task force (through RFP) to facilitate and develop the plan in one year. 3. Identify key stakeholders such as tribes, business, industry, labs, tech, and universities. 4. Implement task force recommendations through legislative oversight.	91%
REC 8: Taxes	ACTION: Develop a fair and equitable tax system. Create an effective tax policy that will work for this century in a global economy (such as high-tech or energy industries). STRATEGIES: 1. Collect data to make informed decisions. 2. Evaluate incentives and exemptions and reduce general rate to remain revenue-neutral. 3. Tax increases, if necessary, should be broad-based, simple to administer, derived from stable revenue sources, fair and equitable, spread across multiple tax brackets without a disproportionate burden on particular, industries, individuals, or businesses, and subject to a sunset provision.	87%

TOPIC	RECOMMENDATION	PERCENT APPROVAL
REC 9: Early Childhood Education	ACTION: Support the alignment of and fund a comprehensive, high quality, early childhood education system, covering prenatal through age 5, connecting with K-3 grade programs, including parent education and engagement. STRATEGIES: 1. Educate policymakers and the public about the importance of early care and education. 2. Support and develop a specialized, appropriately paid workforce with a command of age-appropriate practices that effectively meet cultural and linguistic needs of families. Strategically recruit staff representatives from communities served, providing appropriate training and education. 3. Identify a stable funding source for a high quality early childhood education system at a significant level, building to at least \$150 million per year.	87%
REC 10: Charter School Youth Council	ACTION: Create a statewide charter school youth council that represents and reports the needs, visions, and accomplishments of charter school students to the Public Education Department, legislature, and the public. STRATEGIES: 1. Identify representatives from each charter school. 2. Identify a grant or corporate sponsor to support the council's efforts. 3. Utilize strengths, resources, talents, and technology at the various schools with the support of the NM Coalition of Charter Schools.	85%
REC 11: Income Inequality	ACTION: Enable income growth by preparing New Mexican adults and children to be able to read, so that they may learn and earn. STRATEGIES: 1. Identify practices in other states that have brought 3rd-4th grade reading levels up to national standards. Assess practices that can be adapted to New Mexico. 2. Educate policymakers about the correlation between income inequality, educational attainment, and social problems. 3. Engage the family and community in the educational process. 4. Identify students who need help and provide it. 5. Fund these efforts from a variety of sources (such as private, public, or nonprofit partnerships).	85%

TOPIC	RECOMMENDATION	PERCENT APPROVAL
REC 12: Healthcare	ACTION: Achieve healthcare equity and access without regard to income, race or ethnicity, geographic location, or health status. STRATEGIES: 1. Ensure that New Mexicans (including Native Americans) can enroll in healthcare plans that emphasize preventive care coverage (such as education about proper nutrition and lifestyle change). 2. Increase the number of licensed healthcare professionals in New Mexico. Such providers include physicians, physician assistants, certified nurse practitioners, chiropractors, dentists, alternative healthcare practitioners, and diverse cultural healers. 3. Enable all licensed practitioners to practice to their full scope of practice and receive Medicaid reimbursement.	81%
REC 13: Engaged Citizenry	ACTION: Create a statewide initiative that engages citizens to act as stakeholders and change agents in their community, state, tribe, nation, or world – in ways that are consistent with representative government. STRATEGIES: 1. Identify and connect existing organizations or community advocates that engage citizens in the civic process. Tap a variety of settings including town halls, parent-teacher organizations, early childhood programs, councils, and youth engagement efforts throughout New Mexico. 2. Use existing standards to incentivize engagement in civic activities by students, parents, teachers, and administrators to satisfy the requirements of state civics curriculum standards in a relevant and impactful manner. 3. Partner with public television, radio, and social media to raise the issues through marketing and engage people in the civic process.	79%
REC 14: Vision	During the town hall, one small group opted to work on a vision theme, settling on: New Mexico: One Vision, Two Million Voices The group suggested that the town hall endorse the phrase as an “umbrella” under which other ideas could fall in the future. The group also developed a creative illustration depicting statewide collaboration. Members of the group kept the flipcharts with the illustration, hoping to use them in other contexts.	75%

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The recommendations will not sit on a shelf. **New Mexico First** will organize an implementation team to advance the town hall's priorities. Implementation efforts often run for several months. The process will be co-chaired by Toney Anaya and Edward Lujan. They will lead the effort to advance the recommendations with state and local leaders.



Toney Anaya, former Governor and Attorney General of New Mexico, has been an attorney and businessman for over 40 years. As a consultant to the Government of Mexico, he participated in negotiations and passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement by the U.S. Congress. Mr. Anaya is an advisor to major U.S. corporations, universities, and health care facilities. He is an internationally recognized Hispanic leader who has demonstrated commitment and accomplishments in education, economic development, and international trade.



Edward Lujan is Chairman of the Board of Manuel Lujan Insurance, Inc. a family business and the second largest independent insurance agency in New Mexico. He currently serves as a board director of Valor Telecommunications, LLC, Wells Fargo Bank, and Robert O. Anderson Schools of Management Foundation. Mr. Lujan is also a member of the Governor's Business Advisory Council and chair of the New Mexico Economic Development Commission. He is former chair of the Republican Party of New Mexico.

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Ellen Shroyer
Jill Von Osten

TOWN HALL SPEAKERS

New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez
Albuquerque Mayor Richard Berry
U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman (video)
U.S. Senator Tom Udall (video)
Lowell Catlett, New Mexico State University
Dale Dekker, Dekker/Perich/Sabatini
Fred Mondragón, former NM Secretary of Economic Development
Valerie Romero-Leggott, University of New Mexico

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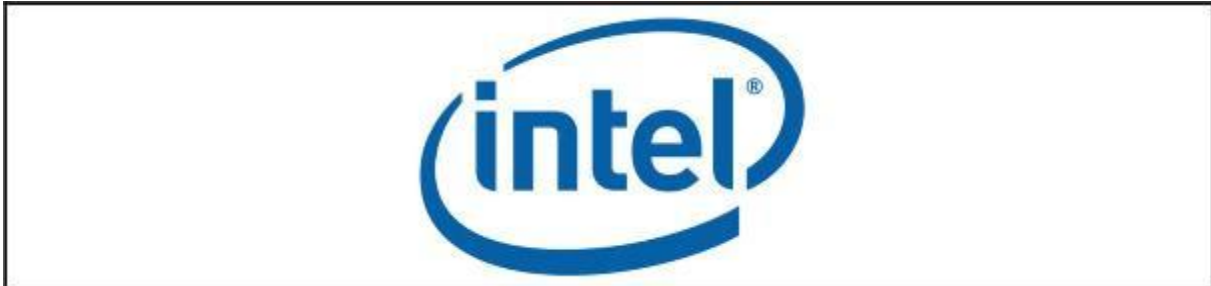
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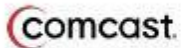
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