



Office of the Governor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Gov. Lujan Grisham announces first-ever tribal
LEDA deal for Taos Pueblo Economic
Development Center**

*\$2.5 million LEDA investment will create 233 jobs at Taos Pueblo
gateway development*

TAOS PUEBLO, N.M. - Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham announced today that the state is pledging assistance from its LEDA infrastructure fund to the Taos Pueblo Heritage Center, an innovative partnership that will create jobs and expand economic security in Taos County.

The commitment of nearly \$2.5 million from the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) to support new infrastructure improvements is the first such partnership with a Pueblo government under a new governor-led initiative to help communities make strategic investments in infrastructure.

The tribal-led development project is expected to create 233 jobs and help the Pueblo meet the needs of 130,000 annual visitors with less stress on residents and the historic village, which is the only Native American Community designated both a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a National Historic Landmark.

“I am incredibly proud to see the first state-tribal LEDA deal across the finish line,” said **Gov. Lujan Grisham**. “This project will provide jobs and economic opportunity while celebrating and preserving the cultural heritage of the Pueblo.”

Taos Pueblo reacquired the 14-acre future site of the Heritage Center in 2018, which is in walking distance from the downtown Plaza on Paseo Del Pueblo Norte and within the Taos Pueblo Land Grant and the Pueblo’s original homelands.

“Taos Pueblo is pleased to partner with the State of New Mexico and the Economic Development Department as the Pueblo expands and diversifies its economic footprint in the Taos Valley,” **Taos Pueblo Governor Clyde Romero Sr.** said. “The Heritage Center will serve as the ‘gateway’ to Taos Pueblo as it welcomes visitors from around the globe and serves as an economic hub for Taos Pueblo artisans. The Pueblo will be able to share with visitors its rich history as told from the perspective of the Red Willow People.”

The property includes a 14,469-square foot main house built in the 1930s and a 14,415-square foot museum that will be converted to an event center. A master plan envisions the property as a gateway to the historic community with a farmers' market, restaurants, arts and crafts plaza, and two hotels. The design includes outdoor patios and garden spaces that will showcase Taos Pueblo art and agriculture.

“The challenge has always been to create a space to share the rich Indigenous history of the area and to engage the community,” Economic Development Department **Secretary Alicia J. Keyes** said. “The Heritage Center Complex will offer visitors both an educational and informational experience and continue Taos Pueblo’s everlasting history as a signature place for trade and commerce.”

“With support from the state, the Pueblo is poised to grow its tourism industry in a way that reflects the Pueblo’s values,” Indian Affairs Department **Secretary Lynn Trujillo** said. “The Heritage Center will serve as an example of how the state and sovereign nations can work together to support local economies.”

“People from all over the world travel to New Mexico to experience Native and Indigenous culture in communities like Taos Pueblo,” Tourism Department **Secretary Jen Paul Schroer** said. “Not only will this Heritage Center Complex provide visitors with a new form of sustainable access to the culture and heritage of Taos Pueblo, but it will also encourage future economic activity and job growth for the region.”

The Pueblo has committed \$5.7 million to the project with other funds coming from federal ARPA, capital outlay, and expected tourism revenue. Other partners include the Town of Taos, Sun Capital Hotels, and Marriott Hotels.

“I applaud the joint effort between Taos and the New Mexico Economic Development Department to utilize unique local resources to improve our distinctive communities,” said New Mexico state **Sen. Shannon Pinto**, co-chair of the Interim Committee on Indian Affairs.

The LEDA dollars will pay for additional site grading, electrical, gas, telecommunications extensions, water and sewer lines, fire hydrants, road and access improvements, as well as paving, lighting, and parking areas.

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