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Town seeks \$500K for center's repairs

By J.R. Logan

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The town of Taos is seeking a half-million-dollar grant to help pay for repairs at the Taos Youth and Family Center.

The town council picked the rec center as its project in its 2015 application for a Community Development Block Grant, which is worth up to \$500,000. If awarded, the town has agreed to come up with a \$50,000 match.

Even with the grant, the town would still likely have millions in additional repairs at the rec center. A recent engineering report found the Youth and Family Center needs as much as \$2.5 million in repairs to its roof and exterior walls. The report noted several design and construction deficiencies, and found roofs to be leaking and stucco on walls to be crumbling.

Town staff has said it can juggle existing money to pay for about \$150,000 in stucco repairs on the ice rink. If the grant is approved, that money would likely go toward additional repairs like fixing stucco on the pool building and replacing roofs.

Youth and Family Center director Brian Greer told *The Taos News* he was optimistic about the grant application's chances, and he was encouraged that the building would get the attention it needs.

"Obviously, those of us who live and work here totally believe in what we're doing," Greer said. "We know it's a big part of our community, both for our kids and for economic development. Recreation is a quality-of-life issue."

Greer said, at this point, there were no indication that the prescribed repairs would at all affect services the center provides.

There are also discussions of a proposed property tax district that would be dedicated to funding recreation. Fixes and even expansions of the Youth and Family Center would likely be eligible for funding through such a tax.

The annual block grant program is through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and is administered in New Mexico by the Department of Finance and Administration.