

## **Town awarded \$500k for Youth and Family Center repairs**

### **Staff Report**

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The town of Taos has received a grant to do a half-million dollars' worth of repairs to the Taos Youth and Family Center.

The town announced this week it was awarded a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) by the Local Government Division of the State of New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. The grant is targeted toward repair and replacement of the east wall of the Youth and Family Center, which has cracked and crumbling stucco. The grant will be matched by \$50,000 in cash from the town.

Additionally, the town council has pledged another \$186,000 in the coming fiscal year toward other repairs. A recent report estimated that the recreation center was in need of \$2.5 million worth of renovations to the pool area, ice skating rink and adjacent skate park.

Mayor Dan Barrone was present for both the initial CDBG hearings earlier this month and for the award announcements made earlier in Albuquerque. "The town is committed to providing a world-class recreation facility for our children and families here in Taos, as well as addressing the years of neglect of our infrastructure. This is an important step," the mayor told state officials.

Youth and Family Center Director Brian Greer and the Grants and Revenue Enhancement Director Lynda Perry also appeared before the CDBG review committee in Albuquerque earlier this month to document the need for the funding, as well as the regional recreational and economic importance of the center. "The facility draws families, our youth, seniors and athletes from all over the region on a daily basis, and tournaments and competitions year-round for ice hockey, swimming and other sports that bring thousands of visitors to Taos from New Mexico and around the country," said Greer.

A thorough architectural and engineering analysis of the entire facility estimates and timetables for required improvements and even some replacement and upgrading of heating, cooling and ventilation systems had been carried out by the town in anticipation of submitting the CDBG application.

When asked what he attributed the town's success in obtaining the funding, Mayor Dan Barrone replied, "I think we have put together a topflight staff at the town, and both the high ranking this project received and that it was funded at the maximum amount allowed is indicative of both the importance of the project and the thorough job the staff did in identifying the problem,

documenting the solutions needed and targeting the required funding. The staff did their homework. This is a great example of what we can do when we put our personal agendas aside and work together as a council, staff and community.”

Architectural and design meetings, as well as the preparation of preliminary bid packages were already under way two weeks ago so that if the funds were awarded, the work could proceed as quickly as possible.

Barrone was emphatic that work will begin as soon as the grant agreement and approved construction schedule allows.



J.R. Logan

The east wall of the Youth and Family Center ice rink has suffered from cracked and crumbling stucco for years. The town was recently awarded a \$500,000 grant to do repairs to the facility.