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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Town of Bernalillo and Santa Ana Pueblo Launch Crossroads @ 550  
Business Marketing and Regional Identity Program to Help Businesses  
Recover & Thrive**

**BERNALILLO** — For the past five months, the Town of Bernalillo, Santa Ana Pueblo and Tamaya Ventures have been working with the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) on a long-term program to help businesses along the U.S. 550 corridor impacted by construction and the COVID-19 pandemic not only recover, but also grow and thrive.

That program, called Crossroads @ 550 is launching this week with a website ([www.crossroadsat550.com](http://www.crossroadsat550.com)), a Facebook page and a coupon book featuring discounts and offers from area business to entice residents and commuters to do business with them.

"This project has been particularly challenging for the business owners along U.S. 550. After personally meeting with many of them and gaining a sincere understanding for the economic hardships they were facing, I felt it was important to support their businesses by providing funding for a marketing program. This is just one of the ways the NMDOT is going above and beyond our commitment to business owners affected by construction," said Michael Sandoval, cabinet secretary of the NMDOT.

The long-term goal of the program is to create a regional identity for the area that highlights its historical and cultural roots and encourages people to visit, take advantage of unique recreational opportunities, taste a wide variety of food and enjoy the many shops in the area that offer friendly service and one-of-a-kind merchandise.

"We chose the name Crossroads @ 550 because this area serves as a crossroads of cultures and important traditions, and is also a connection from north to south and east to west. We connect the Town of Bernalillo, the Santa Ana Pueblo, Placitas and the City of Rio Rancho. We also serve as a gateway to the northern communities of New Mexico," said Jack Torres, Mayor of the Town of Bernalillo.

Lawrence Montoya, Governor of the Santa Ana Pueblo, said the program will also highlight the unique values and culture businesses along the corridor share. "We've chosen words such as cleanliness, kindness, welcoming, gratitude and safety because we want everyone to know that our businesses are committed to high standards and we offer a truly fun, memorable experience," he explained.

The program will be expanded as more businesses open up and are allowed to serve larger crowds, but for now organizers are asking everyone to support all the local businesses in any way they can. Support can include ordering and driving through to pick up food, having it delivered or dining in as regulations allow, shopping online or in person at local businesses while following state guidelines and maintaining social distancing, and buying gift cards when they are available.

"More than 80 cents of every \$1 you spend with a local business helps our communities provide vital services such as public safety and fire protection. So when you shop local, you are not only helping the business, you are also helping our Town and Pueblo serve you," Torres said.

Montoya added that the U.S. 550 corridor is predicted to experience significant growth once the U.S. 550 project is completed in spring 2021. "We want to be able to take full advantage of that opportunity when the time comes," he said.

The program will also include traffic safety guidelines for motorists during construction, including 10 tips on how to safely navigate U.S. 550 during construction as traffic and congestion increase.

Participation in the Crossroads @ 550 program is free to any interested business in Bernalillo, on the Pueblo of Santa Ana and in Placitas. For more information, contact Dana Bloomquist at 505-245-3136 or [danab@cwastrategic.com](mailto:danab@cwastrategic.com), or Patti Watson at 505-269-9691 or [pattiw@cwastrategic.com](mailto:pattiw@cwastrategic.com).

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