

Implementation Strategy

Following is an implementation strategy that outlines programs and actions the Town will undertake, supporting the three main economic development initiatives described in the Introduction to this document. The Work Program Summary and Implementation Matrix included at the end of this Action Plan identifies prioritization, parties responsible for implementation, potential funding sources, and linkages to General Plan policies. Projects shown with an implementation time frame of short-term are considered high priority, either because of need or because they offer the potential to show visible progress towards implementing the strategy and can likely be accomplished primarily with existing resources. Projects shown as medium-term or long-term are still considered important; however, they will require more extended periods of time to bring to completion due to complexity, cost, or other factors.

Participants in the economic development strategy update process felt that it was critical that the strategy define measurable outcomes that could be used to monitor the Town's success in implementing the economic development strategy. Included after the strategies and actions for each of the key initiatives are key indicators that the Town can measure, using readily available information, or information that the Town would collect as it implements various programs or projects. For each of the main strategy initiatives, one or more measurable objectives are defined, along with one or more indicators that the Town can monitor. The Town can use this information to develop an annual economic development status report, which would include current indicators as well as a report on the status of implementation of various pieces of the Action Plan detailed in the preceding section. Upon reviewing the status report, the Town Council can provide direction to Town staff on any necessary strategy updates as well as direction on work plans for the coming year.



Initiative 1: Build the Local Economy on Truckee's Strengths and Uniqueness

Action 1A: Retain, Expand, and Recruit Businesses That "Fit" Truckee

1. In addition to the hospitality sector, support a diversity of businesses and occupations based on local competitive advantages and Truckee's unique characteristics, with a focus on the following target sectors:

- Health Services - develop Truckee as North Lake Tahoe regional health services hub; specialties in orthopedic medicine, rural medicine, telemedicine.
 - Professional and Business Services - information services (e.g., businesses based on developing, maintaining, processing, storing, and distributing electronic information), marketing, design – leverage the local quality of life as an attraction for high value-added businesses that are not constrained in their choice of location.
 - Lifestyle Businesses - businesses that benefit from association with the Town’s image as a small historic mountain town, such as the outdoor gear industry, businesses focused on health, fitness, and wellness, and businesses or organizations with an emphasis on conservation and sustainability
 - Alternative Energy - high altitude innovations in alternative energy sources, such as solar equipment optimized for high altitude applications; energy conservation products targeted to use in mountain environments; alternative power products designed for “off-the-grid” applications.
 - Manufacturing - small-scale, high value-added manufacturing using local materials, such as custom wood furniture, other limited production furnishings using local mineral resources, or specialty food products/spirits featuring specialized local ingredients.
 - Environmental
 - Eco-tourism, recreational activities outfitters/guides/tour companies
 - Watershed management
 - Forest fire and fuel loads management
 - Retail - Place emphasis on encouraging existing retailers to identify product lines for expansion that can better target existing leakage of resident expenditures and under-served portions of tourist demand; undertake targeted recruitment of new retailers that fit with Truckee’s unique identity and offer goods and services that address unmet resident and/or tourist needs.
2. Promote and facilitate access to existing small business financial assistance programs operated by organizations such as Nevada County, Sierra Economic Development Corporation, and Small Business Development Center in partnership with the Town of Truckee. Seek additional capital if resources in existing programs are inadequate to meet local needs.

Action 1B: Utilize New Media and Traditional Outlets to Promote Truckee

1. Focused marketing efforts - capitalize on Truckee’s strengths and history, and define and market Truckee’s uniqueness to help local retailers and other businesses prosper throughout the year, including shoulder seasons, by promoting Truckee as a tourism/recreation destination.
 - Develop a marketing plan to be implemented using the best talent that

understands how to reach the targeted market, in order to effectively deliver marketing messages both inside and outside the local community.

- For external marketing, target core market of outdoor lifestyle enthusiasts in the SF Bay Area/Sacramento.
- For internal marketing, consider a Truckee Community Economic Challenge “re-localization” program (e.g. “Think Local First” buy local, invest local program).
- Utilize Internet-based social networking and other “new economy” tools, such as Facebook and Twitter, to deliver marketing messages in a cost effective and timely manner.

Action 1C: Position Truckee to Thrive in the New Economy

1. Continue to develop telecommunications infrastructure capacity and redundancy, and communicate its availability to existing and prospective businesses.
2. Develop local e-commerce activity (e.g., Truckee Auto Mall.com and other types of Internet sales).
3. Implement Internet-based marketing for Truckee as a destination as well as for individual businesses (see Action 2B).
4. Identify and nurture local niche businesses that “export” into the 21st century economy (see targeted sectors under Action 2A).
5. Promote local generation of renewable energy.
 - Solar
 - Wind
 - Biomass
 - Other
6. Support “green” construction and retrofit sector.
7. Support and expand local and regional sustainable food supply efforts, including support for local and regional food growers and distribution systems (e.g., Community Supported Agriculture program; local greenhouse farming to the extent it is feasible).

Action 1D: Build on existing Town assets to ensure ongoing competitiveness and viability

1. Promote infill development and reinvestment in areas already developed within the Town, with the Downtown/Riverfront/Railyard as a key focus. Physically link private investments together, using public infrastructure investments.
2. Expand alternative and public transportation options.
3. Capitalize on I-80 as a resource (transportation asset as well as opportunity to market to I-80 travelers via California Welcome Center signage and other methods).
4. Address the issue of the high cost of doing business in the region (agency fees, etc.).
5. Advocate for improved rail service to Sacramento and San Francisco for businesses.

6. Monitor the need for and, if warranted, include a downtown parking structure in the Town's long-range transportation plans. Utilize the February 2009 Downtown Parking Structure Feasibility Study as a resource.
7. Establish ongoing monitoring of existing zoning to ensure compatibility of land uses and the Economic Development Strategy.
8. Track and monitor key economic indicators identified later in this document.

Objectives and Indicators for Initiative 1:

To track performance under this initiative, the Town should monitor a range of local economic indicators that will help to gauge the overall performance of the local economy.

Objective: Expand the local economy.

Indicator: Monitor the overall number of jobs in the local economy, as indicated by the Employment Development Department.

Indicator: Monitor the overall level of local taxable sales, as well as sales by area and store category over time.

Indicator: Monitor the change in the number/type of businesses within the Town.

Objective: Reduce sales tax leakage.

Annually, track changes in retail sales within categories and monitor increases in sales in categories identified as having leakage; periodically conduct a leakage analysis update to confirm progress.

Objective: Encourage growth of local businesses.

Indicator: Monitor changes in the size of local businesses using measures of non-residential floor space, including new construction and building expansions that are undertaken to allow existing local businesses to expand.

Initiative 2: Cultivate Social and Educational Capital

Action 2A: Work with Sierra College to Link Education to Economic Development

1. Offer classes and training programs for local entrepreneurs.
 - a. Entrepreneurial training/micro-enterprise consultation and technical assistance.
 - b. Vocational/technical training for labor force development (culinary arts/hospitality, eco-tourism/recreation, green construction, etc.).
2. Capitalize on local social diversity.
 - a. Spanish language courses for entrepreneurs so that Spanish speakers can be effectively incorporated into the local workforce.

Action 2B: Tap Business Expertise and Networks of Local Entrepreneurs, Second Homeowners, and Retirees

1. Conduct outreach to second home homeowners/part-time residents to build networks to support economic development.
2. Conduct outreach to local entrepreneurs to build networks to support economic development.
3. Develop an entrepreneur mentoring program, drawing on local retirees, part-time residents, and successful entrepreneurs to share their expertise and contacts, beginning with a quarterly entrepreneurs' speaker series.
4. Create and foster venues for social networking amongst business people.
5. Establish a business and/or non-profit incubation center.

Action 2C: Expand the local housing supply so people who work in the community have the opportunity to live in the community

1. Implement the Truckee General Plan's affordable housing policies. In addition, promote the construction of live/work units that allow entrepreneurs to combine space for living and working.

Objectives and Indicators for Initiative 2:

To track performance under this initiative, the Town should monitor several key indicators that will measure how engaged the local population is in economic development, in terms of assisting and benefitting.

Objective: Increase the capacity of local residents to benefit from economic development by upgrading their skills so that they are competitive for new jobs that are created in the local economy.

Indicator: Educational attainment is a key indicator of workforce ability to excel in the new economy. The Town should monitor the educational characteristics of Town residents on an ongoing basis through review of data from the U.S. Census as well as data collected by local schools on student household characteristics as part of the California STAR testing process.

Indicator: The Town can monitor the number of students enrolled in the Truckee Campus of Sierra College on an overall basis, as well as in specific programs that tie in with local economic development efforts.

Indicator: Although the Town's unemployment rate may fluctuate with national, state, and regional economic trends, by monitoring the unemployment rate trends in Truckee along with trend data for the region and state, Truckee can understand how well the local economy is responding to its residents' need for employment opportunities.

Objective: Increase the involvement of second homeowners and retirees in local economic development efforts.

Indicator: Monitor the number of local second homeowners and retirees who are identified as being willing to assist in local economic development efforts and listed on a continually updated contact list.

Indicator: Track the number of local residents who attend a speaker series designed as a venue for business leaders (can include second homeowners and retirees) to share their business knowledge firsthand with local entrepreneurs and to encourage networking within the local business community.

Initiative 3: Utilize Tourism Infrastructure Year-round for Locals and Tourists Alike

Action 3A: Build and Promote Tourism Events Calendar

1. Expand and promote eco-tourism, cultural activities, and recreational activities in the spring and fall.
2. Develop/promote additional shoulder season events and activities to enhance business activity, including restaurants and lodging facilities. Incorporate cross-marketing with other North Lake Tahoe area resorts and communities, and include second homeowners in the targeted audience. As part of this effort, examine how to improve or to further streamline the process of staging events in Truckee.
3. Measure and track the impact of events and activities, considering such metrics as number of attendees and associated spending on food, retail/services, and lodging. Monitoring should also discern where participants are from, and how events influence local visitation and expenditure behavior.
4. Collaborate with local artist interest groups to leverage efforts to promote the region as an arts destination.

Action 3B: Continue to Develop Infrastructure to Support Tourism

1. Create a wayfinding program to help visitors find their way to and within the downtown and other key locations within Truckee.
2. Collaborate with ACCTT to identify suitable locations in Truckee for targeted arts facilities, including community performing arts venue and visual arts venue.
3. Improve tourism transportation to Tahoe/Truckee (buses, train) from major metro areas (see Action 2D, Action 1).
4. Improve transportation options in Town and to nearby communities/attractions for visitors (see Action 2D, Action 1).
5. Improve and maintain local pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

6. River access enhancement, explore potential of developing a Truckee River whitewater park.
7. Develop a Culinary Arts Center/Institute/Program.

Action 3C: Partner to Develop/Create New Public Facilities/Attractions that Will Support Tourism and Also Benefit Local Residents

1. Develop new public facilities/attractions that will support tourism and also benefit local residents and businesses.
 - a. Partner in (or encourage development of) culturally-, socially-, and historically-based facilities/attractions (e.g., community-, and regionally-oriented performing arts centers; museums or interpretive centers featuring Truckee's railroad, national highway, or western emigration history).
 - b. Partner in (or encourage development of) conference facilities or other business-oriented facilities.

Objectives and Indicators for Initiative 3:

To track performance under this initiative, the Town or Chamber should monitor the occupancy rates of its local lodging establishments, including seasonal fluctuations. This can be done using data tracked for the purposes of reporting transient occupancy tax receipts, as follows:

Objective: Increase number of visitors to Truckee on a year round basis.

Indicator: The overall annual number of occupied hotel room nights will be an indicator of the number of overnight visitors to Truckee.

Indicator: The annual average occupancy rate will be an indicator of the extent to which the Town's hotel rooms are being utilized on a year-round basis.

Indicator: Seasonal variation in occupancy rates. While economic cycles can influence overall number of occupied hotel room nights as well as annual average occupancy, monitoring the seasonal variation in occupancy rates will indicate the level of tourist activity in Town during shoulder seasons.

Exhibit A: Work Program Summary and Implementation Matrix

Action/Program	Priority	Primary Responsibility	Relative Cost	Relative Staff Time Investment	Potential Partnerships	Potential Local Funding	General Plan Links
1. BUILD THE LOCAL ECONOMY ON TRUCKEES STRENGTHS AND UNIQUENESS							
Action 1A: Retain, Expand, & Recruit Businesses							
Program 1A.1 Support Diversity of Businesses	Short-term	Town staff	\$	++	Chamber, industry representatives, SBC, TDMA, NCEC, SEDCorp	RDA, CDBG, General Fund	Goals ED-1 through ED-5, and ED-7
Program 1A.2 Access to Small Business Capital	Short-term	Town staff	\$	+	SBC, SEDCorp (SBA Microloan), NCEC, Nevada County (Community Development Business Loans)	CDBG, RDA, possible use of local agency fund reserves to capitalize local small business revolving loan fund	Goals ED-1 and ED-3
Action 1B: Promote Truckee							
Program 1B.1 Focused Marketing Efforts	Short-term	Town staff, SBC, Chamber	\$-\$\$\$	++	NLTCC	RDA, TOT revenue, participating businesses	Goals ED-1 and ED-7
Action 1C: Position for New Economy							
Program 1C.1 Telecommunications Infrastructure	Short-term	TDPUD	\$\$\$\$	+	Town staff, Chamber, SBC, SEDCorp (Gold Country Broadband Project)	Local subscribers, rural telecommunications grants	Goals ED-1 and ED-3
Program 1C.2 E-Commerce	Short-term	Chamber	\$	++	Town staff, TDMA, SBC	General Fund, participating businesses	Goal ED-3
Program 1C.3 Internet-based Marketing	Short-term	Chamber	\$-\$\$\$	++	Town staff, TDMA	Participating businesses	Goal ED-1
Program 1C.4 Niche Businesses	Short-term	Town staff, Chamber	\$	++	SBC, SEDCorp (SBA Microloan), NCEC, Nevada County (Community Development Business Loans)	CDBG, RDA	Goals ED-1 through ED-5, and ED-7
Program 1C.5 Renewable Energy	Long-term	Town staff, TDPUD	\$\$\$\$	+++	SEDCorp (Forest Fire Fuels to Energy Program), SBC (Increase Resource Productivity)	Consider bond funding program like Berkeley Financing Initiative for Renewable and Solar Technology.	Goals ED-1, ED-2, ED-7, and COS-15
Program 1C.6 Green Construction	Short-term	Town staff, local contractors	\$	+	CATT, Chamber, Sierra College	Possible preferences for green construction practices in local public capital improvement contracting.	Goals ED-1, ED-3, and COS-15
Program 1C.7 Greenhouse Farming	Medium-term	Town staff	\$\$\$	++	SEDCorp, SBC	Grants	Goals ED-1, ED-3, and COS-15
Action 1D: Build on Local Assets							
Program 1D.1 Infill and Reinvestment	Medium-term	Town staff	\$\$\$\$	++	Property owners, developers, TDMA	RDA, downtown PBID formation	Goals LU-1, LU-3, CC-6, CC-7, CC-15
Program 1D.2 Alternative and Public Transportation	Medium-term	Town staff	\$\$\$	++	Chamber, SBC, NLTCC, NLTRA	Transportation Development Act	Goals CIR-8 through CIR 11
Program 1D.3 Use I-80 as an Asset	Short-term	Chamber (CA Welcome Center I-80 signage), Town staff	\$	+	CA Travel and Tourism Commission other local districts; Nevada Co.	General Fund / TOT revenue	Goals ED-5, CC-17, and CIR-1
Program 1D.4 Address High Cost of Doing Business	Medium-term	Town staff	\$	++	Town staff, Chamber, NLTCC, SEDCorp (Railroads Program)		Goal ED-1
Program 1D.5 Improved Rail Service	Long-term	SBC	\$\$\$\$	++	Private property owners, TDMA, developers	RDA, parking revenue bonds, parking in-lieu fees/impact fees, private developers	Goals ED-1, ED-3, ED-5, ED-8, and CIR-11
Program 1D.6 Parking Structure	Long-term	Town staff/Redevelopment	\$\$\$\$	+	Chamber, SBC, industry representatives		Goals ED-8 and CC-6
Program 1D.7 Appropriate Zoning	Medium-term	Town staff	\$	+	Chamber	General Fund	Goal LU-2
Program 1D.8 Monitor Key Economic Indicators	Short-term	Town staff	\$	+			Goal ED-1

Note: Key to Potential Implementation Partners, Costs, and Staff Time Investment on Page 3.

Exhibit A: Work Program Summary and Implementation Matrix

Action/Program	Priority	Primary Responsibility	Relative Cost	Relative Staff Time Investment	Potential Partnerships	Potential Local Funding	General Plan Links
2. CULTIVATE SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL CAPITAL							
Action 2A: Link Education and Economic Development							
Program 2A.1 Classes and Training for Entrepreneurs	Medium-term	Sierra College	\$	+++	Town staff, SEDCorp (Microenterprise Training Program)	CDBG, General Fund, E.D.A. grants	Goals ED-1, ED-3 and ED-6
Program 2A.2 Capitalize on Social Diversity	Medium-term	Sierra College	\$	++	Town staff, SEDCorp	CDBG, General Fund	Goals ED-6 and CC-20
<i>Note: Key to Potential Implementation Partners, Costs, and Staff Time Investment on Page 3.</i>							
Action 2B: Foster Entrepreneurial Networks							
Program 2B.1 Part-time Resident Outreach	Short-term	Town staff	\$	+	Chamber, SBC	General Fund, CDBG	Goals ED-1 and ED-3
Program 2B.2 Entrepreneur Outreach	Short-term	Town staff	\$	+	Chamber, SBC	General Fund, CDBG	Goals ED-1, ED-3 and ED-6
Program 2B.3 Entrepreneur Mentoring	Medium-Term	Sierra College	\$	++	Town staff, Chamber, SBC, SEDCorp	General Fund, CDBG	Goals ED-1, ED-3 and ED-6
Program 2B.4 Social Networking Venues for Entrepreneurs	Short-term	Chamber of Commerce, SBC (Create a Climate that Nurtures Entrepreneurs)	\$	+	Town staff	General Fund	Goals ED-1, ED-3 and ED-6
Program 2B.5 Business Incubation Center	Long-term	Sierra College, Town staff	\$\$\$	+++	SEDCorp, NCERC	General Fund, RDA, federal/state grants	Goals ED-1, ED-3 and ED-6
Action 2C: Expand Housing Supply							
Program 2C.1 Affordable Housing	Long-term	Town staff	\$\$\$\$	++	Chamber, SBC, SEDCorp, NCERC	Private developers, RDA, federal/state grants	Goal ED-6
3. UTILIZE TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE YEAR ROUND FOR LOCALS AND TOURISTS ALIKE							
Action 3A: Tourism Events Calendar							
Program 3A.1 Eco-Tourism	Medium-Term	Chamber	\$	++	Town staff, SBC, NLTC	TOT revenue, participating businesses	Goals ED-5 and ED-7
Program 3A.2 Shoulder Season Events/Activities	Short-term	Chamber	\$\$\$	++	NLTC, NLTRA, TDMA, ACCTT, Town staff	TOT revenue, participating businesses	Goals ED-5, ED-6, and CC-21
Program 3A.3 Measure/Track Event/Activity Impacts	Medium-Term	Town staff	\$	+	Chamber, TDMA	RDA, General Fund	Goals ED-5, ED-6, and ED-7
Program 3A.4 Arts Destination Promotion	Short-term	ACCTT	\$	++	Town staff, Chamber, SBC, NLTC, NLTRA, SEDCorp (Arts Tourism Program)	Possible surcharge on local admission tickets	Goals ED-5, ED-6, and CC-21
Action 3B: Develop Infrastructure for Tourism							
Program 3B.1 Wayfinding	Short-term	Town staff	\$	+	TDMA, Chamber (CA Welcome Center freeway and local wayfinding signs)	RDA, Downtown PBID formation, General Fund	Goals ED-5, CC-14, and CC-17
Program 3B.2 Arts Facilities	See Program 3A.3	See Program 3A.3	See Program 3A.3	See Program 3A.3	See Program 3A.3	See Program 3A.3	See Program 3A.3
Program 3B.3 Tourism Transportation From Major Metro Areas	Medium-term	Town staff	\$\$\$	++	Chamber, NLTC, NLTRA, TDMA	Possible regional surcharge on lift tickets and other tourist admissions	Goals ED-5 and CJR-11
Program 3B.4 Transportation in Town and Nearby Areas/Attractions	See Program 2D.3	See Program 2D.3	See Program 2D.3	See Program 2D.3	See Program 2D.3	See Program 2D.3	See Program 2D.3
<i>Note: Key to Potential Implementation Partners, Costs, and Staff Time Investment on Page 3.</i>							

Exhibit A: Work Program Summary and Implementation Matrix

Action/Program	Time Frame	Primary Responsibility	Relative Cost	Relative Time Investment	Potential Partnerships	Potential Local Funding	General Plan Links
3. UTILIZE TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE YEAR ROUND FOR LOCALS AND TOURISTS A LIKE, Cont.							
Program 3B.5 Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure	Short-term	Town staff	\$\$\$	+	TDMA, Chamber, private sector	Impact fees, PBID	Goals ED-5 and CIR-10
Program 3B.6 River Enhancement	Medium-term	Town staff	\$\$\$\$	+	Chamber, TDMA	RDA, adjacent private development	Goals ED-7, CC-15 and COS-2
Program 3B.7 Culinary Arts School/Center	Long-term	Sierra College, Town staff	\$\$\$\$	+++	Local hospitality industry, Chamber	RDA, private philanthropy fundraising	Goals ED-1, ED-5, ED-6, and CC-21
Action 3C: New Public Facilities							
Program 3C.1 Cultural/Arts/Museum Center	Medium-term	ACCTT (Community Arts Center, Visual Arts Center), Chamber	\$\$\$\$	++	SEDCorp, Town, NLTCA, TDRPD, local hospitality industry, NLTCC	Impact fees, CDBG, private philanthropy fundraising, private financing.	Goals ED-1, ED-3, ED-5, ED-6, and CC-21

Note: Key to Potential Implementation Partners, Costs, and Staff Time Investment on Page 3.

Exhibit A: Work Program Summary and Implementation Matrix

Partners Key:

ACCTT = Arts & Culture Council Truckee-Tahoe
 CATT = Contractors Association of Truckee Tahoe
 Chamber = Truckee-Donner Chamber of Commerce
 NCERC = Nevada County Economic Resource Council
 NLTRC = North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce
 NLTRA = North Lake Tahoe Resort Association
 SBC = Sierra Business Council
 SEDCorp = Sierra Economic Development Corporation
 Sierra College = Sierra College Truckee Campus and Sierra College Small Business Development Center
 TDMA = Truckee Downtown Merchants Association
 TDPUD = Truckee Donner Public Utility District
 TDRPD = Truckee-Donner Recreation and Park District

Cost Key (Approximate)

\$ = \$0 to \$5,000
 \$\$ = \$5,000 to \$20,000
 \$\$\$ = \$20,000 to \$50,000
 \$\$\$\$ = \$50,000 to \$100,000
 \$\$\$\$\$ = Over \$100,000

Relative Town Staff Time Investment Key

+ = Anticipated to be handled within existing staff duties with minimal effort.
 ++ = Would require dedicated part-time staff.
 +++ = Would require dedicated full-time staff.

Appendix A: Individuals Assisting in the Preparation of the Economic Development Strategy

Steering Committee Members

Andy Otto – Commercial Real Estate Professional (Coldwell Banker Commercial, Truckee)
Joan Jones - Truckee Town Council
John Mohun – Historic Downtown Property/Business Owner (John S. Mohun Law Offices)
Kaitlin Backlund – Mountain Area Preservation Foundation
Kevin Marshall - Member at Large (Clear Capital)
Kurt Reinkens - Truckee Planning Commission
Lauren O'Brien - Arts and Culture Council Truckee-Tahoe
Lynn Saunders - Truckee Donner Chamber of Commerce
Maia Schneider - Nevada County Economic Resource Council
Patty Baird – Lodging and Hospitality Business Owner (Cedar House Sport Hotel)
Steve Carpenter - Contractor’s Association of Truckee Tahoe
Steve Frisch – Sierra Business Council

Town Staff

David Griffith, Redevelopment and Housing Coordinator
Alex Terrazas, Assistant Town Manager
Tony Lashbrook, Town Manager
John McLaughlin, Community Development Director
Sheri Diehl, Administrative Secretary

Consultants

Bay Area Economics - Matt Kowta, Keren Costanzo, Rebecca Schenck, Aaron Nousaine

The Town of Truckee also is grateful to the many members of the public and the Truckee business community who gave their time to participate in steering committee meetings, the Town Council workshop, and/or during interviews or through written correspondence during the course of the project.