"When I'm working on a problem, I never think about beauty. I think only how to solve the problem. But when I have finished, if the solution is not beautiful, I know it is wrong."

~ Richard (Bucky) Buckminster Fuller

Image Credit: City of Albuquerque

7.1 Background & Analysis

7.1.1 Introduction

Opportunities to create great places over time are more likely when land uses are carefully coordinated with transportation systems. Land uses are most successful when they match the character and capacity of streets, as well as the travel modes prioritized in each corridor. Corridors are most successful when they provide appropriate access and features needed by the land uses they serve. Not all land uses and not all locations warrant the same kinds of streets.

Image credit: City of Albuquerque

Recognizing that there should be a range of places in our region – from those that remain rural to those that embrace urban opportunities – means that our streets should also accommodate these different contexts.

This chapter builds on the range of intensities described in the **Land Use chapter** and the corridor types described in the Transportation chapter. Coordinated design can help transportation serve land uses and land uses work best with the corridors that serve them. As new communities grow and reinvestment continues, the County and City should guide development and transportation networks that make our community more interconnected, healthy, and walkable.

This chapter also draws on the importance of distinct community character described in the **Community Identity chapter** and the rich diversity of cultural and natural resources described in the **Heritage Conservation chapter** to encourage the design of individual projects to protect, enhance, and

leverage these physical, historical, cultural, and natural assets.

Coordinating land use and transportation is the key to implementing the community's vision of Bernalillo County and Albuquerque as a place with strong and distinct centers, surrounded by distinct neighborhoods and communities, all connected by a transportation network that provides mobility for autos, buses, pedestrians, and cyclists.

This chapter includes strategies by which Bernalillo County and Albuquerque can inspire and enhance great places within a range of development contexts. For the County, special design standards may be adopted in Sector Development Plans or new design overlay zones adopted in the County Zoning Ordinance. For the City, the standards would be implemented through the updated Zoning Code and technical standards in the Development Process Manual (DPM).

Applying the Guiding Principles

Each element of the Comp Plan uses guiding principles as the basis for its goals, policies, and actions. The six guiding principles and their definitions were developed from input received during the public involvement process, detailed in the Vision chapter.

Here, we apply the guiding principles to **urban design** goals, policies, and actions.

STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS

- Pedestrian-oriented design makes neighborhoods more desirable places to live.
- Appropriate design helps establish and enhance neighborhood character.
- Appropriate transitions protect neighborhoods and encourage vitality along Corridors and in Centers.

MOBILITY

- Good streetscape design coordinates land uses and transportation infrastructure, increasing mobility in a way that enhances character.
- Good pedestrian- and transit-oriented design improves safety and connectivity.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

- Pedestrian-friendly commercial areas increase foot traffic for local businesses.
- Quality design attracts investment and increases property values.

EQUITY

- Streetscape enhancements can attract investment to areas desiring revitalization.
- Universal design increases access and safety for people of all abilities.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Green infrastructure reduces carbon footprint, captures storm water run-off and enhances infiltration, and mitigates heat island effect.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

- Safer and more attractive pedestrian areas entice more physical activity.
- Design encouraging visibility and social interaction improves public safety and encourages social cohesion.

In the future…

Bernalillo County and Albuquerque will enhance our special places, improve walkability in existing Centers, foster new Urban Centers, and encourage job growth in Employment Centers.

Better urban design throughout the community will enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections between residences, jobs and services, parks, and open spaces. Attractive, walkable, tree-lined streets will connect Centers and be a source of civic pride.

In Centers and along Corridors with frequent transit service, parking will be located on-street, in smaller parking lots, and in shared lots or parking structures, allowing people to arrive by car, park once, and visit multiple businesses and services. Options for walkable districts will expand and improve, becoming destinations for surrounding neighbors.

In urban areas, taller buildings will be complemented by plazas that provide outdoor public gathering spaces. Transit will play an increasingly important role across the metropolitan region, and transit-oriented and transit-supportive development will increase density along transit routes.

Suburban areas will retain their more automobile-oriented character, and be enhanced with walkable connections within developments and connections to neighborhoods.

Development in rural areas will be focused in Village Centers, preserving the lower-density residential and agricultural character of the surrounding lands.

Image credit: City of Albuquerque

7.1.2 Context & Analysis

7.1.2.1 SPECTRUM OF WALKABILITY

In areas with the highest need for and expectation of walkability, pedestrian facilities, accommodations, and amenities (i.e. sidewalks, building entrances, plazas and gathering spaces, outdoor seating areas, green spaces, and shade) have the highest importance. These pedestrian-oriented features should take priority in street design and be encouraged the most strongly in development projects.

This Comp Plan designates Centers and Corridors to prioritize certain areas for higher levels of activity, intensity, and walkability and to provide guidance on development form and street design that will encourage and support such goals. Among the different Center and Corridor types, there is a spectrum of walkability.

Centers

Centers are intended to be more walkable and pedestrian friendly than other areas. In Downtown, walkability is most important, followed in order of importance by Urban Centers, Activity Centers, Village Centers,

and Employment Centers. While Employment Centers are expected to be the most auto-oriented of all the Centers, it is still important for pedestrians to be able to get around business/industrial parks and campuses.

Corridors

Corridors with high-capacity and/or high frequency transit should be more walkable than other streets. Walkability is most important along Premium Transit and Main Street Corridors. To a lesser extent, walkability is important along Major Transit and Multi-Modal Corridors. Commuter Corridors, which prioritize automobile travel, are expected to be the least walkable. Across all Corridors, areas within walking distance of transit stations should be walkable enough to serve pedestrians using the bus.

Development Context

While walkability throughout the region is a good goal over time, prioritizing Centers to be the most pedestrian-oriented leverages public and private investment in higher-quality development. Enhancing pedestrian mobility and safety encourages pedestrian activity where it is most appropriate and welcome.

Centers and Corridors may be rural, suburban, or urban – what the Comp Plan refers to as

To achieve our vision the City and County need to address key **challenges** and **strategies** summarized in this chapter:

CHALLENGES

- Compatibility of new development with existing neighborhoods.

- Dominance of auto-oriented urban design.

- Expanding the market for redevelopment.

- Excessive and/or disproportionate parking standards.

- Barriers to incorporating sustainable practices, such as green and low-impact development approaches.

STRATEGIES

- Implementing walkable urban design in Centers and Corridors.

- Exploring new parking approaches.

- Incentivizing low-impact development and green infrastructure.

- Improving connectivity standards for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

- Prioritizing pedestrian-friendly design in Centers, along Transit, and Multi-Modal Corridors.

- Providing opportunities for streets to serve as public places through the development of gathering spaces.

development contexts (see **Table 7-1**). To increase walkability within each development context, the City and County should focus on different aspects of the built environment and different levels of connectivity and access for various travel modes.

Policies to increase walkability in Albuquerque are intended to enhance the built environment, improve safety for pedestrians, and better coordinate land use and transportation for a spectrum of development types, from auto-oriented to pedestrian-oriented. The considerations summarized in **Table 7-2**, below, have been used to create more detailed matrices that guide development form and street design in each Center and Corridor (see **Table 7-3** and **Table 7-4** in the Goals, Policies & Actions section of this chapter).

Providing development standards for each development context encourages consistency in the quality of urban design throughout the city and county.

CENTER & CORRIDOR DESIGNATIONS		DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT		
		RURAL	SUBURBAN	URBAN
Centers	Village	X	X	
	Activity		X	X
	Employment		X	
	Urban			X
	Downtown			X
Corridors	Commuter	X	X	
	Multi-Modal		X	
	Major Transit		X	X
	Main Street	X		X
	Premium Transit			X

Table 7-1: Development Context for Centers and Corridors

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT	DEVELOPMENT PATTERN & WALKABILITY CONSIDERATIONS
Rural	• Development pattern tends to be more auto-oriented, although access to trails and transit is important. • Walkable within Village Centers, where land use is more intense than surrounding rural areas. • Can be more or less intense than suburban areas.
Suburban	• Development pattern tends to be more linear with strip commercial development along major streets. • Walkable within development projects. • High priority on connectivity for the primary ways people might access services and amenities – walking from neighborhoods nearby, biking via the bike network, transit stops via transit network, and parking areas via the auto network.
Urban	• Development pattern tends to be more of a grid, with slower traffic and more choices for cars to disperse. • Walkable within Centers, between, and among development projects. • Excellent connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.

Table 7-2: Development Patterns and Walkability

7.1.2.2 AUTO-ORIENTED DESIGN

Auto-oriented development provides convenient shopping and services at a larger regional scale. Large retail facilities combined with smaller pad sites often accommodate a mix of services for those arriving by car and by transit.

Since the 1940s the Albuquerque region, like many other regions in the county, has developed largely to serve the needs of private automobile travel. Prioritizing auto travel has come at the cost of investing in pedestrian and transit infrastructure.

A key goal of this Comp Plan is to provide a better balance of investment to ensure a highly connected network of streets that serve the automobile, as well as networks that work well for pedestrians, for transit users, and for cyclists. The Priority Street Element Matrix (see **Table 7-5**) shows the relative importance of auto and freight movement in auto-oriented Centers and Corridors.

At the same time, our region needs to do better to accommodate pedestrians safely everywhere. In auto-oriented areas, there may be fewer amenities aimed specifically at pedestrians. Parking areas may be larger; entrances may be more accessible from parking lots than from the street. But

connections for pedestrians throughout shopping centers, and pedestrian connections into and out of these shopping areas should be improved. Increased pedestrian amenities and connectivity within development sites, to transit stops, and to nearby neighborhoods can enhance safety and access to auto-oriented businesses.

7.1.2.3 PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED DESIGN

Walkable, accessible districts that depend on walk-in traffic, such as main streets, downtowns, and entertainment districts, rely on advertising goods and services to passing pedestrians. Downtown and Nob Hill are examples of walkable districts in which people may arrive by car, park, and visit multiple shops. Sometimes they walk, bike, or take transit from surrounding neighborhoods. Areas with good pedestrian connectivity and pedestrian-oriented development are also designed to serve cyclists well (see the **Transportation chapter** for discussion of modal priority networks).

Successful pedestrian-oriented districts typically have a high density of shops and restaurants that are often smaller than their auto-oriented counterparts. Businesses in these districts benefit from the high degree of pedestrian activity and vitality. The more
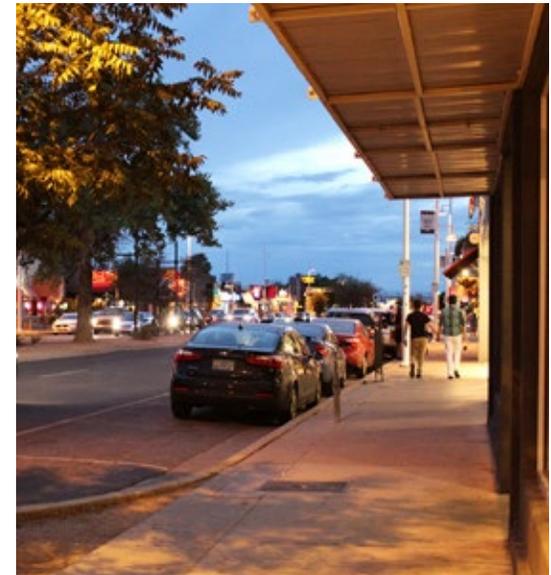
Image credit: City of Albuquerque

Wide sidewalks and barriers make pedestrians feel safer while walking near traffic.

attractive an area is to pedestrians, the better it fares, and the city and county both benefit from the investment in a high-quality, walkable environment.

Pedestrian Realm

One often underdeveloped element of the streetscape is the pedestrian realm – the area between the curb and the property line of the bordering parcel (see **Figure 7-1**). This area is intended for pedestrian travel and should provide a safe and welcoming environment. It is an important component of the overall street and includes elements that support not only pedestrians, but also access between adjacent land uses and the traveled way.

Typical elements within the pedestrian realm include the landscape/buffer zone, the clear sidewalk width, and the building frontage zone. Street furniture, café seating, utilities, and trees are often included in the landscape/buffer zone, but they are also seen in the building frontage zone. The ITE *Walkable Urban Thoroughfares Guide* and the MRCOG *Long Range Transportation System Guide* provide more detail about the function of these zones.

Along many existing corridors, emphasis should be given to providing a wider

landscape/buffer zone adjacent to the curb to provide more separation from traffic for pedestrians. This zone is critical to maintaining a clear sidewalk area by providing an allocated space for utilities, lighting, signs, parking meters, transit shelters, and drainage. It also provides space for elements that help define the character of the road: street trees, planting areas, pedestrian-scale lighting, and gathering spaces.

Creating a high-quality pedestrian realm also improves the region's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance; setting the sidewalk away from the curb can separate the sidewalk from driveway ramps and provide additional space for pedestrian curb ramps at intersections. Sidewalks should be designed to reduce conflicts between automobiles and pedestrians, with adequate lighting and safety features for universal design, such as textured curb ramps and audible crosswalk signals.

The landscape/buffer zone helps provide a barrier between moving vehicles and pedestrians, making walking more comfortable and inviting. Other measures to increase pedestrian safety and comfort include infrequent driveways/curb cuts, pedestrian-scale lighting, slower motor vehicle speeds, smaller turn radii or sidewalk


Private Realm | Pedestrian Realm | Travel Way

Private Realm | Pedestrian Realm | Travel Way
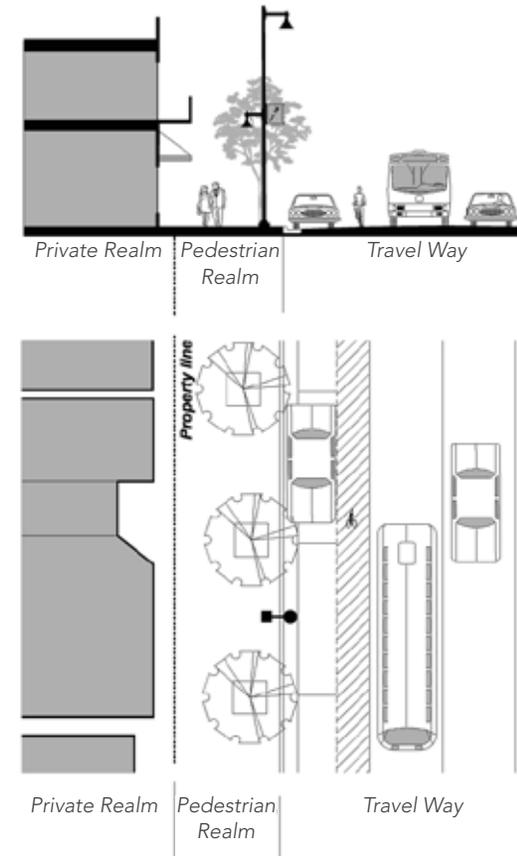
Figure 7-1: Example Street Cross-Section

Source: HDR Great Streets Plan

bulb-outs, and pedestrian refuges or other accommodations at mid-block crossings and unsignalized intersections.

The Priority Street Element Matrix (see **Table 7-5**) shows the relative importance of pedestrian and transit connectivity in auto-oriented versus pedestrian-oriented Centers and Corridors, as reflected by more higher priority within the pedestrian realm.

Sidewalks

Sidewalk design is a key factor in creating an active pedestrian experience. Narrow sidewalks next to high-speed streets feel unsafe to pedestrians. Parking in these areas should be located along streets, in parking structures, or in centrally located parking lots. In walkable districts, buildings should face and be sited close to the street, rather than located behind large front parking lots.

Scale

An important component of any vital street is its scale, as related to the pedestrian. Some commercial streets "feel" more comfortable to the pedestrian because the building location, heights, and the "street wall" create a sense of enclosure that feels more like an outdoor room than a linear strip development along a major arterial.

Many studies have been conducted to try to determine the appropriate proportions of building height to street width that creates this optimum sense of place, and generally suggest that building heights should be one-third to one-half of the width of the street (see Figure 7-2). Increased building heights and locating new buildings close to the street edge are two ways to improve the pedestrian experience in areas where street-level activity is desired.

Businesses and residents can activate the pedestrian realm through outdoor dining, parquitos, and art.
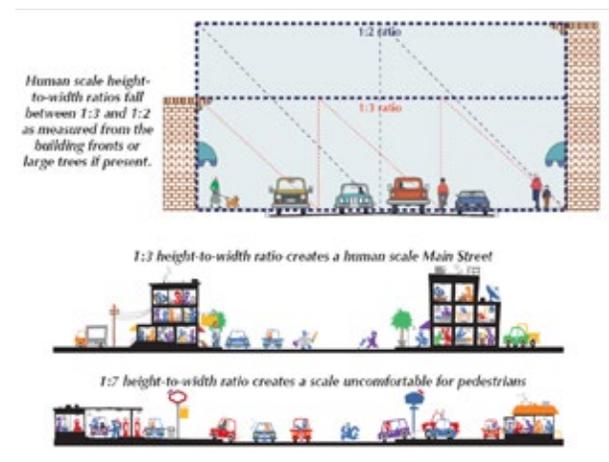

Figure 7-2: Height-to-Width Ratios for Streets

Source: The National Main Street Center

7.1.2.4 PARKING

Why Parking Standards Matter

Because auto-oriented development attracts consumers through convenient automobile access and parking availability, parking lots are designed to accommodate more than enough parking spaces for the peak hours of the highest shopping days of the year, such as the day after Thanksgiving. For the rest of the year, this means that half of the spaces are empty most of the time.

Large surface parking lots separate buildings and increase walking distances. People are much less likely to walk when it is inconvenient or feels unsafe.

Having substantial separations between buildings also works against the formation of a business district. Businesses seeking to relocate do not view separated or spread-out commercial areas as a destination district where people will arrive and visit multiple businesses. They see these areas instead as a collection of unrelated businesses. There is less of a draw for businesses and customers to come to an area, and the area itself will not be seen as a destination.

High parking requirements increase development costs by forcing developers to either find a larger site for a proposed building (increasing land costs) or dedicate more space to parking (lowering potential revenue). Parking requirements are especially onerous for potential redevelopment projects because land costs are often higher in areas best suited for walkable districts.

Supporting & Encouraging Pedestrian-friendly Businesses

Centers are intended to be more walkable than other areas and should have low or no minimum parking requirements. Lower requirements do not necessarily mean less parking will be built, but they provide developers the flexibility to balance the needs of automobile users with the financial constraints of development and the desire for walkable districts.

The amount of surface parking required for a retail store may seem like a minor issue at

Image credit: City of Albuquerque

Pedestrian-oriented development activates the pedestrian realm through wider sidewalks, patio dining, and street trees, and requires less parking because it allows visitors to park once and walk or to arrive via transit or bicycle.
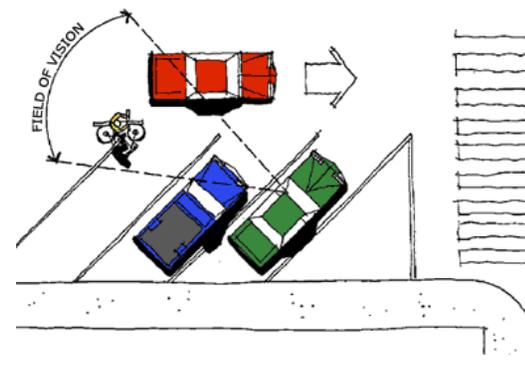

Figure 7-3: Reverse-Angle Parking

Source: Volcano Heights SDP

the neighborhood scale, but over time and across the city, the amount of land consumed by surface parking lots can be enormous. Reducing required off-street parking, and shifting to public or shared parking is an important strategy for enhancing walkability. In pedestrian-oriented areas, offering a "teaser row" of parking (such as the parking court in front of the Nob Hill Shopping Center) often helps drivers feel they are welcome while still limiting the amount of parking in front or on the side of a shopping center. Shared on-street parking, including reverse-angle parking (see **Figure 7-3**), is one way to address parking needs, while also providing a buffer between pedestrians and cars.

7.1.2.5 LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Trees and landscape design play a critical role in enhancing streets. From lowering the urban heat island effect, to improving air quality, to increasing real estate values and providing critical shade, which makes the experience of walking down a sidewalk more comfortable, the benefits of trees are innumerable.

The City and County should have specific standards for street trees within Centers to improve the pedestrian environment. Requirements should be consistent with the area's development context. In Downtown, Urban Centers, and Main Streets, street trees and vegetation along sidewalks and in public

plazas are most important. In this context, care must be taken to avoid conflict with overhead electrical lines, which often share the same space. In suburban contexts, trees and vegetation should be incorporated in landscaped buffers and on private property.

In order to have a highly successful pedestrian realm, trees must be given a high priority to compete with other necessary elements within the pedestrian travel way, such as fire hydrants, litter cans, utility lines, manholes, and directional devices. Street trees must be an urban requirement and not be minimized as a decorative afterthought.

Most street trees will need maintenance, including pruning, watering, and pest control,

Image credit: City of Albuquerque

Street trees and landscape elements provide shade and buffer pedestrians from nearby traffic, while contributing to a more pleasing urban environment for residents and visitors.

throughout their life. The need for frequent maintenance can be minimized by choosing native or climate-appropriate tree species.

Maintaining existing trees and carefully planning new plantings will have a tremendous positive influence on the community's future. Street tree planting is not currently coordinated, and ongoing maintenance is often not performed. Many municipalities prepare master plans for tree planting and maintenance, from one of the first for Washington, D.C. to New York City, Philadelphia, PA, Vancouver, B.C., Savannah, GA, and New Orleans, LA. Coordinating species for key streets can help to build distinct identities and sense of place.

While abutting property owners are currently responsible for providing and caring for street trees, many feel the local jurisdiction should shoulder the main burden for maintenance over time. Given the significance of the visual impact and functional benefits of street trees, the City should prioritize updates to standards for street tree planting.

7.1.2.6 SAFETY

Urban design can have a broad impact on safety and perceived security of the community. Design techniques can be implemented to improve visibility, control access, and support activity in an area, all of which helps to deter criminal activity and make people feel more safe and comfortable. These approaches are often referred to as Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). CPTED involves five principles, which are most successful when employed together, as they are mutually supportive:

- Natural Surveillance – adequate lighting and careful design of landscape elements or walls to minimize opportunities for concealment can help deter criminal activity and increase awareness of surroundings.

- Territoriality – clear delineation of public and private spaces can help people better understand how to use a space and where it is appropriate to be. The sense of ownership that comes with territoriality helps remove the sense that illegal acts can be committed without consequence.

- Access Control – installing doors or fences clearly marks public entrances while restricting access to private areas.

- Activity Support – activity that brings people to an area during most of the day elevates the community value of the area, while also deterring would-be offenders who depend on anonymity and solitude.

- Management and Maintenance – well-maintained properties encourage activity and create the perception that there is someone keeping an eye on things. Proper maintenance is also important for the success of the other four principles, which depend on upkeep of design and landscape elements.

Many of the techniques that promote walkable areas complement CPTED principles. Wide, protected sidewalks that make pedestrians feel safe from fast-moving traffic encourage pedestrian activity and create opportunities for natural surveillance. Buildings that are close to the sidewalk and well-lit alleys and parking lots reduce opportunities for concealment and make people feel more comfortable walking through the area.

CPTED principles should be employed in collaboration with other public safety efforts. See the **Infrastructure, Community Facilities & Services chapter** for additional discussion of public safety services.

7.2 Goals, Policies & Actions

for Urban Design

Goal 7.1 Streetscapes & Development Form

Design streetscapes and development form to create a range of environments and experiences for residents and visitors.

Goal 7.2 Pedestrian-Accessible Design

Increase walkability in all environments, promote pedestrian-oriented development in urban contexts, and increase pedestrian safety in auto-oriented contexts.

Goal 7.3 Sense of Place

Reinforce sense of place through context-sensitive design of development and streetscapes.

Goal 7.4 Context-Sensitive Parking

Design parking facilities to match the development context and complement the surrounding built environment.

Goal 7.5 Context-Sensitive Site Design

Design sites, buildings, and landscape elements to respond to the high desert environment.

Goal 7.6 Context-Sensitive Infrastructure

Match infrastructure design to intended densities and development patterns to minimize lifecycle costs and conserve natural resources.

Policies are organized to support each Goal. Many Policies have supporting Sub-polices, cross-references to other relevant policies, and implementing Actions to more clearly guide decision-making.

Goal 7.1 Streetscapes & Development Form

Design streetscapes and development form to create a range of environments and experiences for residents and visitors.

POLICY 7.1.1

Design Elements: Prioritize design elements for transit-supportive design along Premium Transit Corridors, walkability within Centers, and a balance of land use and transportation considerations along other Corridors. [ABC]

a) Where Centers and Corridors overlap, follow policies according to the following hierarchy:

   i. Premium Transit Corridors
   ii. Downtown / Urban Centers
   iii. Main Streets
   iv. Employment / Activity / Village Centers
   v. Major Transit / Multi-Modal / Commuter Corridors

b) Follow policies in **Land Use Goals 5.5 and 5.6** for County and City Development Areas for development along corridors not designated in the Comp Plan.

c) Follow MRMPO's *Long Range Transportation System Guide* for street design projects on corridors not designated in the Comp Plan: http://www.mrcog-nm.gov/transportation/metro-planning/long-range-mtp.

d) See **Transportation Goal 6.1** for street projects along designated Corridors.

POLICY 7.1.2

Development Form: Prioritize elements of development form for each Center and Corridor. [ABC]

a) Follow the Development Form Matrix in **Table 7-3** for development in Centers.

b) Follow the Development Form Matrix in **Table 7-4** for development within 660 feet of Premium Transit Corridors and elsewhere along Corridors outside of Centers.

ACTION

7.1.2.1   Update development standards to reflect development form priorities in Centers and at transit stations and major transit stops. [A]

POLICY 7.1.3

Priority Street Elements: Design cross sections according to priorities for street elements within each Corridor, including where the Corridor passes through Centers, especially where right-of-way or budgets may be constrained. [ABC]

a) Follow the priority elements for the Travel Way in **Table 7-5** based on the Corridor type and location.

b) Follow the priority elements for the Pedestrian Realm in **Table 7-5** based the Corridor type and location.

c) See **Transportation Goal 6.1** for policies about each Corridor.

d) See **Infrastructure, Community Facilities & Services Goal 12.1** for policies related to infrastructure in the right-of-way.

ACTIONS

7.1.3.1 Ensure appropriate development standards to reflect and implement the priority elements for development form in Centers and Corridors. [ABC]

7.1.3.2 Ensure appropriate technical standards to reflect and implement the priority elements for street design. [ABC]

7.1.3.3 Develop operating rules and methodology for prioritizing appropriate street elements when right of way is insufficient or topography or other constraints make it impossible or infeasible to accommodate all priorities. [ABC]

	CENTERS				
	DOWNTOWN	**URBAN**	**EMPLOYMENT**	**ACTIVITY**	**VILLAGE**
Block Lengths	Shortest	Short	Flexible	Short	Moderate
Connectivity/Access (ped/bike)	Highest	High	Standard	Medium	Medium
Pedestrian Circulation, Connections to Transit Stations/Stops and Across the Street	Maximize Pedestrian Connections	Maximize Pedestrian Connections	Some Pedestrian Connections	Frequent Pedestrian Connections	Maximize Pedestrian Connections
Building Access from Street	Major Entrance	Direct Entrance	Flexible	Visible Entrance	Flexible
Building Setback	Minimal	Minimal	Flexible	Flexible	Flexible
Parking Location and Access	Structure/Side/Rear	Side/Rear/Structure	Flexible	Side/Rear/ Teaser Row	Side/Rear
Incentives for Parking Reductions	No Parking Required/ Shared Parking	High Priority	Some Incentives for Ridesharing, Carpooling, Travel Demand Management	Low Priority/ Encourage Shared Structure	Moderate/Encourage Shared Parking
Priority for Multi-Modal Incentives	High	High	High for Travel Demand Management	Low	Moderate
Priority for Employment Incentives	Highest	High	High	Moderate	Moderate
Land Use Priority	Employment & Housing	Balanced	Employment	Commercial	Commercial

Table 7-3: Development Form Matrix - Centers

Note: The policies above are shown on a scale that is relative among the Center types. These policies are meant to guide the development of City and County regulations and technical standards, as well as design standards for properties with site plan controlled zoning.

	CORRIDORS					
	PREMIUM TRANSIT (STATION AREAS)	**MAIN STREET**	**MAJOR TRANSIT**	**MULTI-MODAL**	**COMMUTER**	**OTHER ARTERIAL**
Block Lengths	Short	Short	Short	Moderate	Flexible	Flexible
Connectivity/Access (ped/bike)	Highest	Medium-High	Medium-High	Medium	Standard	Standard
Pedestrian Circulation, Connections to Transit Stations/Stops and Across the Street	Maximize Pedestrian Connections	Maximize Pedestrian Connections	Maximize Pedestrian Connections	Frequent Pedestrian Connections	**Some** Pedestrian Connections	**Some** Pedestrian Connections
Building Access from Street	Major Entrance	Major Entrance	Direct Entrance	Visible Entrance	Flexible	Flexible
Building Setback	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Flexible	Large	Moderate
Parking Location and Access	Structure/Side/Rear	Side/Rear/Courtyard Style	Side/Rear/Teaser Row	Flexible	Front loading/Business Access Road	Front Loading/Flexible
Incentives for Parking Reductions	No parking Required (Unless Park and Ride Component)	Low Priority/Encourage Shared Structure	Various Incentives	Some Incentives	Some Incentives for Ridesharing/Carpooling	Some Incentives for Ridesharing/Carpooling
Priority for Multi-Modal Incentives	Highest	Low	High	High	Low	Low
Priority for Employment Incentives	High	Moderate	High	Moderate	Low	Low
Land Use Priority	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced	Commercial	Commercial	Commercial

Table 7-4: Development Form Matrix - Corridors

Note: The policies above are shown on a scale that is relative among the Corridor types. These policies are meant to guide the development of City and County regulations and technical standards, as well as design standards for properties with site plan controlled zoning.

ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER WHEN ALLOCATING RIGHT-OF-WAY	CORRIDOR & CENTER TYPES								
	PREMIUM TRANSIT		MAIN STREET	MAJOR TRANSIT					
	Station*	Other	"Linear Center"	Down-town	Urban Center	Activity Center	Employ-ment Center	Village Center	Other
Travel Way Realm									
Number and Width of Travel Lanes (single-occupancy vehicle capacity)	L	M	L	L	M	M	M	M	M
Dedicated Transit Lanes/Guideways	H	H	L/H†	M	M	M	M	L	M
Transit Signal Priority/Queue Jump	H	H	L/H†	H	H	M	M	M	H
Freight‡ (wider lanes, large turning radii)	L	M	L	L	L	M	H	M	M
Bicycle Facilities**	L	L	M	L	M	M	L	M	L
Medians (divide high-speed traffic, provide pedestrian refuge)	L	L	L	L	M	H	M	M	M
Single-Occupancy Vehicle Intersection Design (turning lanes)	L	M	L	L	L	M	H	M	M
Multi-Modal Intersection Design (reduce crossing distance, provide refuges)	H	M	H	H	H	H	M	H	M
Pedestrian Realm									
Wide Sidewalks (i.e., wider than minimum 6' clear width)	H	M	H	H	H	M	M	M	M
Transit Stop/Station Features	H	H	H	H	H	H	M	M	H
Landscape/Buffer Zone (furnishings, street trees, seating, utilities††)	H	M	H	H	H	M	L	H	M
On-Street Parking	M	L	H	H	M	M	L	M	L

STREET DESIGN ELEMENTS

H = High Priority Element‡‡ / M = Medium Priority Element‡‡ / L = Low Priority Element‡‡

Table 7-5: Priority Street Element Matrix (continued next page)

All notes corresponding to * in the table can be found on the next page.

ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER WHEN ALLOCATING RIGHT-OF-WAY	CORRIDOR & CENTER TYPES											
	MULTI-MODAL						COMMUTER					
	Down-town	Urban Center	Activity Center	Employ-ment Center	Village Center	Other	Down-town	Urban Center	Activity Center	Employ-ment Center	Village Center	Other
Travel Way Realm												
Number and Width of Travel Lanes (single-occupancy vehicle capacity)	M	M	M	H	L	H	M	M	M	H	M	H
Dedicated Transit Lanes/Guideways	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Transit Signal Priority/Queue Jump	M	L	L	L	L	M	L	L	L	L	L	L
Freight‡ (wider lanes, large turning radii)	L	L	L	H	M	M	M	M	M	H	M	M
Bicycle Facilities**	M	H	H	L	M	M	L/H**	L	L	L	M	H
Medians (divide high-speed traffic, provide pedestrian refuge)	M	H	H	M	M	M	M	M	H	M	H	H
Single-Occupancy Vehicle Intersection Design (turning lanes)	L	M	M	H	M	M	M	M	M	H	M	H
Multi-Modal Intersection Design (reduce crossing distance, provide refuges)	H	H	H	M	H	M	H	M	M	M	M	M
Pedestrian Realm												
Wide Sidewalks (i.e., wider than minimum 6' clear width)	H	H	M	M	H	M	M	M	M	L	M	L
Transit Stop/Station Features	M	M	M	L	H	L	H	M	M	L	M	L
Landscape/Buffer Zone (furnishings, street trees, seating, utilities††)	H	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	H	H
On-Street Parking	M	L	L	L	M	L	L	L	L	L	L	L

STREET DESIGN ELEMENTS

H = High Priority Element‡‡ / M = Medium Priority Element‡‡ / L = Low Priority Element‡‡

* Within 1/8 mile of station or Transit Center, as measured from the edge of the Transit Station or the closest property line for a Transit Center.
† These elements are a high priority where Main Street Corridors are also designated as Premium Transit Corridors.
‡ See MRCOG Priority Freight Network.
** For type, see the Long Range Transportation System Guide, City Bikeways & Trails Facility Plan, and County Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Action Plan. High priority where designated for multi-use trails and/or protected bike facilities, or provided on parallel facilities within close proximity to the corridor.
†† Utility easement may occur on private property, between building and sidewalk, behind the building in an alley, or in the landscape/buffer zone of the Pedestrian Realm.
‡‡ High, Medium, and Low priorities are relative among elements in the Travel Way and Pedestrian Realm for each Corridor and within each Center.

Goal 7.2 Pedestrian-Accessible Design

Increase walkability in all environments, promote pedestrian-oriented development in urban contexts, and increase pedestrian safety in auto-oriented contexts.

POLICY 7.2.1

Walkability: Ensure convenient and comfortable pedestrian travel. [ABC]

a) Improve the pedestrian environment through coordinated design of subdivisions, streets, development sites, and buildings.

b) Improve pedestrian safety and comfort by providing wider sidewalks, street trees and landscape buffers, lighting, on-street parking, street furniture, and waiting areas and median refuges at large or busy intersections.

c) Ensure the location and design of sidewalks reflects the existing or planned character and intensity of surrounding land uses.

d) Enhance existing streets and trails as linear paths connecting destinations throughout the region.

e) Promote trees and landscape elements in the public right-of-way, along trails, and within private development to ensure a high-quality, pleasant, and healthy built environment.

f) Discourage gated and/or walled communities and cul-de-sacs.

g) Design subdivisions to ensure that all residences are no more than ¼ mile from an opening or access point to the major street network so that pedestrians and bicyclists can reach other destinations and/or transit service.

h) Discourage platting that creates 'wall canyons' along public streets.

i) Design and place incidental structures such as signs, guywires, poles, fire hydrants, street furniture, and overhead utility wires to minimize visual intrusion and mobility impediment to pedestrians,

while still meeting the standards and requirements of the utility or infrastructure.

j) Emphasize pedestrian connections between buildings on a site and to adjacent uses.

k) See **Land Use Policy 5.2.1** for land use patterns that support walkability.

l) See **Transportation Policies 6.2.3 and 6.2.4** for pedestrian connections.

m) See **Transportation Policy 6.3.1** and **Infrastructure, Community Facilities & Services Policy 12.4.2** for ADA considerations.

ACTIONS

7.2.1.1   Develop sidewalk and street design standards that improve pedestrian comfort and safety while maintaining neighborhood character in historic and rural neighborhoods. [ABC]

7.2.1.2 Identify and prioritize trailhead improvements, trail amenities, and landscaping or trees along existing or proposed trails. [ABC]

7.2.1.3 Align subdivision regulations and site development standards to create high-quality pedestrian environments and development patterns. [ABC]

POLICY 7.2.2

Walkable Places: Promote high-quality pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods and districts as the essential building blocks of a sustainable region. [ABC]

a) Design streetscapes to incorporate street trees, landscape elements, and enhanced sidewalks to support vibrant pedestrian environments. [ABC]

b) Encourage building and site design that activates the pedestrian environment through building frontage, entrances, parking areas, and gathering spaces. [A]

c) Support pedestrian activity along streets, including sidewalk dining, parquitos/ parklets, and open streets events. [A]

d) See **Policy 7.1.3** above for priorities in the pedestrian realm in Centers and along Corridors to improve walkability.

Goal 7.3 Sense of Place

Reinforce sense of place through context-sensitive design of development and streetscapes.

POLICY 7.3.1

Natural and Cultural Features: Preserve, enhance, and leverage natural features and views of cultural landscapes. [ABC]

a) Minimize alteration of existing vegetation and topography in subdivision and site design.

b) Provide appropriate transitions to Open Space.

c) See **Policy 7.5.1** below for landscape design.

d) See **Land Use Policy 5.3.4** for conservation development.

e) See **Parks & Open Space Goal 10.3** for policies to protect natural features.

f) See **Heritage Conservation Goal 11.3** for policies about cultural landscapes and development adjacent to natural features.

g) See **Resilience & Sustainability Goal 13.4** for policies to protect natural resources.

POLICY 7.3.2

Community Character: Encourage design strategies that recognize and embrace the character differences that give communities their distinct identities and make them safe and attractive places. [ABC]

a) Design development to reflect the character of the surrounding area and protect and enhance views. [ABC]

b) Encourage development and site design that incorporates CPTED principles. [ABC]

c) Reinforce identity through distinctive streetscape elements such as interpretive and gateway signage, wayfinding elements, lighting, and banners. [ABC]

d) Develop streetscape standards for rural development contexts that preserve historic character, including gravel roads, drainage swales, and no curbs. [ABC]

e) Encourage high-quality development that capitalizes on predominant architectural styles, building materials, and landscape elements. [A]

f) See Goal 7.2 above for design approaches to create walkable communities.

g) See **Goal 7.6** below for context-sensitive infrastructure.

h) See **Community Identity Goal 4.3** for character-defining elements of each CPA.

i) See **Land Use Goal 5.2** for policies about Complete Communities.

j) See **Heritage Conservation Goal 11.3** for cultural landscapes and view protection.

k) See **Infrastructure, Community Facilities & Services Policy 12.3.4** for public safety.

ACTIONS

7.3.2.1 Develop design standards for lighting, utility enclosures compatible with safety codes, walls, and landscape design that create a high-quality built environment with lasting character that draws on regional styles and traditions. [A]

7.3.2.2 Create development guidelines to enhance positive aspects of community character, including distinctive architecture and landscape design. [A]

7.3.2.3 Establish regulatory protections for single-family residential neighborhoods and historic areas to ensure compatible new development. [A]

7.3.2.4 Develop incentives or development bonuses to encourage developers to design, develop, and maintain attractive streetscapes. [A]

POLICY 7.3.3

Placemaking: Encourage efforts to establish and strengthen district identity within Centers, business districts, and neighborhoods. [ABC]

a) Identify, celebrate, and leverage special places.

b) Distinguish district gateways and entrances with signage, lighting, monuments, etc.

c) Develop distinctive signage, banners, and logos to use on businesses, in parks, near gateways and entrances, and on plazas.

d) Prioritize capital projects to address key issues and leverage key assets.

e) Encourage site design that includes gathering spaces for festivals, markets, and events.

f) See **Community Identity Goal 4.1** for policies to preserve and enhance neighborhood identity.

g) See **Economic Development Goal 8.1** for additional policies on placemaking.

g) See **Heritage Conservation Goal 11.5** for policies on cultural events, public art, and programming civic spaces.

ACTION

7.3.3.1 Encourage Business Improvement Districts and member organizations to design, install, and maintain street furniture, bike racks or corrals, parquitos/parklets, and pedestrian amenities such as benches and trash receptacles. [ABC]

POLICY 7.3.4

Infill: Promote infill that enhances the built environment or blends in style and building materials with surrounding structures and the streetscape of the block in which it is located. [ABC]

a) For Activity and Village Centers, ensure that infill and redevelopment is compatible with the character of the surrounding context and similar in height, mass, and volume to adjacent development. [ABC]

b) Promote buildings and massing of commercial and office uses adjacent to single-family neighborhoods that is neighborhood-scale, well-designed, appropriately located, and consistent with

the existing development context and neighborhood character. [A]

c) See **Community Identity Goal 4.1** for policies to preserve and enhance neighborhood identity.

d) See **Land Use Goals 5.5 and 5.6** for Development Area policies.

e) See **Land Use Policies 5.1.2 and 5.3.1** for policies related to infill development.

POLICY 7.3.5

Development Quality: Encourage innovative and high quality design in all development. [ABC]

a) See Community Identity Goal 4.1 for character protections in neighborhoods.

b) See **Economic Development Policy 8.2.3** for supporting innovative and sustainable business.

c) See **Housing Policy 9.2.2** for innovative and high quality housing.

Goal 7.4 Context-Sensitive Parking

Design parking facilities to match the development context and complement the surrounding built environment.

POLICY 7.4.1

Parking Strategies: Provide parking options, optimize parking efficiencies, and plan for parking as essential infrastructure. [A]

a) Support 'park once and walk' opportunities.

b) Encourage shared parking.

c) Minimize overflow parking in residential areas, particularly in areas near Centers, institutions, and Open Space.

ACTIONS

7.4.1.1   Use residential permits or zone parking permits to prevent the intrusion of outside parking within neighborhoods. [A]

7.4.1.2   Support Parking Improvement Districts in pedestrian-oriented Centers and Corridors to encourage shared parking opportunities and high-quality streetscapes with pedestrian amenities. [A]

POLICY 7.4.2

Parking Requirements: Establish off-street parking requirements based on development context. [ABC]

a) Discourage oversized parking facilities.

b) In urban development contexts and within walking distance of high-capacity or high-frequency transit stops or stations, lower parking requirements as follows:

i. Lower parking requirements for development within 330' of a shared parking structure.

ii. Lower parking requirements for development adjacent to high-frequency transit or within 1/4-mile of a high-capacity transit station or transit center.

iii. Credit on-street parking toward parking requirements, except where residential parking permits are used.

iv. Allow parking requirements to be met through "in-lieu" fees earmarked for a future shared parking facility, such as a shared lot, structure, or reverse-angle parking improvements.

c) In Suburban and Rural development contexts, provide adequate parking to serve land uses on a daily basis and ensure design that accommodates pedestrians and activates edges.

ACTIONS

7.4.2.1 Develop a system of parking credits, "in-lieu of" programs, and parking improvement districts. [A]

7.4.2.2 Update parking design standards based on best practices. [A]

POLICY 7.4.3

Off-street Parking Design: Encourage well-designed, efficient, safe, and attractive parking facilities. [ABC]

a) Locate off-street parking to respond appropriately for each Center and Corridor per **Tables 7-3 and 7-4**. [ABC]

b) Incorporate trees, vegetation, and pervious surfaces in parking areas to mitigate environmental impacts, minimize heat and glare, and improve aesthetics. [ABC]

c) Ensure safe pedestrian pathways in parking areas that connect to building entrances, adjacent roadways, and adjacent sites. [ABC]

d) Break up large parking lots into smaller parking fields with planting areas. [ABC]

e) Discourage parking abutting the travel way to allow more active uses near the public right-of-way. [ABC]

f) Provide visual interest or screening on parking structure façades and additional visual enhancements such as landscape elements and/or public art at ground level. [A]

g) Encourage street-front parking structures to provide additional activity at street level, such as liner buildings or public spaces. [A]

POLICY 7.4.4

On-street Parking: Support on-street parking in urban and pedestrian-oriented development contexts to serve adjacent uses, reduce the need for off-street parking, slow auto traffic speeds, and buffer the pedestrian realm. [ABC]

a) Ensure that on-street parking preserves the clear sight triangle, traffic flow, and safe pedestrian crossings. [ABC]

b) Encourage reverse-angle parking as the preferred parking arrangement where permitted by available right-of-way, as it provides the best sightlines for drivers to see cyclists and other vehicles. [A]

Goal 7.5 Context-Sensitive Site Design

Design sites, buildings, and landscape elements to respond to the high desert environment.

POLICY 7.5.1

Landscape Design: Encourage landscape treatments that are consistent with the high desert climate to enhance our sense of place. [ABC]

a) Design landscape and site improvements to complement the individual site, the overall appearance of the corridor, and surrounding land uses.

b) Design landscapes and vegetation to be consistent with the microclimate of the site location as well as within the site.

c) Discourage planting of higher water use species outside of riparian microclimates, the Mid Rio Grande Conservancy District, or areas served by swales.

d) Incorporate xeric site design principles to establish an oasis area and transition areas, identify beneficial placement for plant species, and maximize shade in summer months.

e) See **Policy 7.3.1** above for protection of natural features that contribute to sense of place.

f) See **Community Identity Policy 4.1.3** for placemaking efforts to preserve and enhance neighborhoods.

g) See **Heritage Conservation Goal 11.3** for cultural landscapes.

h) See **Resilience & Sustainability Goal 13.2** for policies about water supply and quality.

i) See **Resilience & Sustainability Policy 13.5.2** for healthful development.

ACTIONS

7.5.1.1 Coordinate with implementing departments to establish appropriate plant lists, street tree palette, and maintenance programs for vegetation in the public right-of-way based on native and climate-appropriate species with adequate height, shade, hardiness, and water needs adjusted for different contexts (Centers, Corridors, other arterials, and neighborhoods). [ABC]

7.5.1.2 Develop requirements and technical standards that enhance the ability of street trees and vegetation to contribute to air purification, oxygen regeneration, ground water recharge, stormwater runoff retention, erosion and dust control, and mitigation of urban heat island effects while helping abate air pollution, dust, noise, heat, and glare. [ABC]

POLICY 7.5.2

Site Design: Incorporate local climate conditions into site design. [ABC]

a) Support the use of sustainable building materials. [ABC]

b) Design outdoor spaces to use landscape elements, shade, openings for winter sun, and non-glare materials advantageously to create inviting and comfortable places for people to gather in all seasons. [ABC]

c) Encourage climate-sensitive design of buildings, entrances, plazas, walkways, drainage, and sites to conserve and harvest rainwater, provide shade, and protect pedestrians from rain and wind. [A]

d) See **Resilience & Sustainability Policy 13.5.2** for healthful development.

Goal 7.6 Context-Sensitive Infrastructure

Match infrastructure design to intended densities and development patterns to minimize lifecycle costs and conserve natural resources.

POLICY 7.6.1

Stormwater Treatments: Match stormwater treatment techniques and practices to the density/ intensity of land use and development context. [ABC]

a) Support shared drainage management facilities and Low Impact Development (LID) techniques in urban development contexts.

b) Prioritize natural stormwater treatments and management facilities, such as bioswales, linear ponds, etc., in rural and suburban development contexts, particularly in the public right-of-way and parking areas to provide flood control and to improve stormwater quality.

c) See **Heritage Conservation Policies 11.1.3 and 11.3.2** for acequias and arroyos.

d) See **Infrastructure, Community Facilities & Services Policies 12.1.4 and 12.1.5** for drainage and ditches.

e) See **Resilience & Sustainability Goal 13.2** for policies about water quality and supply.

ACTIONS

7.6.1.1 Develop technical standards that follow best practices for stormwater design and management in each development context. [ABC]

7.6.1.2 Facilitate coordination with area agencies to develop standards for naturalistic design of drainage improvements, including use of earth tone colors, natural building materials, and vegetative slope coverings. [ABC]

7.6.1.3 Facilitate Coordination with area agencies to secure sufficient funds to implement and maintain naturalistic designs for arroyos and channels. [ABC]

POLICY 7.6.2

Transportation Infrastructure: Match infrastructure capacity, design, and maintenance to the development context, expected land use intensities of abutting development, and all travel modes. [ABC]

a) Design sites to coordinate auto access, circulation, and building placement to minimize harmful effects of traffic on single-family neighborhoods adjacent to major streets.

b) Employ street trees, barriers, buffering, and other landscape design methods to minimize the effect of traffic on adjacent uses.

c) See **Policy 7.3.1** above for streetscape design that contributes to sense of place.

d) See **Land Use Goal 5.1** for expected land uses in Centers and along Corridors.

e) See **Transportation Goal 6.2** for multi-modal systems.

f) See **Infrastructure, Community Facilities & Services Policy 12.1.4** related to stormwater runoff.

ACTION

7.6.2.1 Amend zoning ordinances to improve lot configuration requirements for sites adjacent to arterial streets to prevent conflicts between private driveways and arterial traffic. [ABC]

POLICY 7.6.3

Utility Infrastructure: Encourage design of visible infrastructure (surface and overhead) that respects the character of neighborhoods and communities and protects significant natural and cultural features. [ABC]

a) Work with ABCWUA to design facilities that blend into the natural landscape and include native or naturalized vegetation.

b) Minimize disturbance to environmentally sensitive areas, such as Major Public Open Space and cultural landscapes, and minimize visual impact of utilities with careful siting and design.

c) Select street tree species that are suitable in size to minimize interference with electric utilities in locations with overhead lines.

d) See **Community Identity Goal 4.3** for character-defining elements of each CPA.

e) See **Heritage Conservation Goal 11.3** for cultural landscapes and view protection.

f) See **Parks & Open Space Goal 10.3** for Open Space policies.

g) See **Infrastructure, Community Facilities & Services Goal 12.1** for policies about utility infrastructure.

ACTIONS

7.6.3.1 Prioritize projects to relocate overhead utilities underground in order to protect scenic views from the public-right-of-way on key corridors with view protection requirements. [ABC]

7.6.3.2 Examine the mechanisms available to fund underground installations consistent with the requirements of applicable rules of the electric utility on file with the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (NMPRC) or successor agency if underground transmission or distribution lines are desired for a particular project or area. [ABC]

7.6.3.3 Coordinate with New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) to encourage the incorporation of attractive and appropriate bridge structures and landscape design for interstate highways and State-controlled corridors. [ABC]