Chapter 4

COMMUNITY IDENTITY

4.1 Background & Analysis

4.1.1 Introduction

Albuquerque and Bernalillo County are home to distinct and vibrant neighborhoods supporting a wide range of urban and rural lifestyles that reflect the unique history, culture, and environment of the region.

This chapter provides information and history about how the geographic location of neighborhoods (the natural environment) as well as their physical development (the built environment) contribute to the charm, flavor, or character of place.

The character of any area is shaped by its historical development; its geographic, natural, and cultural features; special places that are built or created over time; and the identity, culture, interests, and passions of its residents. Together, these elements give people a sense of place and contribute to a sense of a community's identity.

This chapter includes policies related to the preservation, enhancement, and planning for all areas of the city and county, as well as additional policies related to the character of specific areas. This chapter works with other chapter elements in the Comp Plan to protect and enhance neighborhood character by guiding appropriate land use and encouraging the registration of historic properties or districts within neighborhoods. The Comp Plan is not the only tool for protecting neighborhood character. Beyond City and County policies, partnerships with other agencies or nonprofits can have a more direct and immediate impact

on protecting important elements of neighborhood character. All stakeholders, including residents, local businesses, and neighborhood associations, along with local government, have a role in defining the character of neighborhoods and guiding future development.

Ongoing planning efforts will be needed to further identify the distinct elements and special places that define and contribute to each area's character, as well as policies, capital projects, and partnerships needed to preserve and enhance distinct communities.

*In this chapter, we use the term "equity" to describe ensuring that different people or places have the opportunities, access, and services they most need. Many people think "equity" and "equality" are interchangeable terms. "Equality" aims to ensure that all people or places have the **same** opportunities, access, and services – a laudable goal. Distributing an equal amount to each would be fair if people and places had the same starting amounts. Discussions of "equity" acknowledge that people and places might need and want different things – and have different starting places. The **equity** approach involves assessing the different needs that people and places have and prioritizing resources and efforts to address them in the order of urgency that best matches those needs to move toward **equality** over time.*

Image credit: City of Albuquerque

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 **community identity** goals, policies, and actions.

STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS

- Neighborhoods provide quality of life and remain distinct, vibrant places to live.
- Development in established neighborhoods matches existing character and promotes revitalization where desired.
- Established neighborhoods are protected, preserved, and enhanced.

MOBILITY

- Complete, walkable neighborhoods with a range of housing and amenities make non-auto transportation options safer and more accessible.
- Planning efforts identify improvements needed in areas with limited mobility.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

- Neighborhoods with locally-serving businesses promote sustainable economic growth and reinvestment of local dollars.

EQUITY

- Community Planning Area assessments in the City and Sector Planning in the County identify existing conditions and use equity measures to prioritize revitalization.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Strong and vibrant neighborhoods foster social connections and encourage resource-sharing.
- Sustainable neighborhood design integrates green infrastructure.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

- Healthy neighborhoods protect residents from hazards, encourage physical activity, and foster positive social interactions.
- A range of amenities in neighborhoods reduces the need to drive, increasing active transportation opportunities.

In the future…

Neighborhoods will remain an important feature of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County. Over the next twenty years, they will continue to flourish as places that provide a high quality of life for all residents and contribute to the good of the greater Albuquerque and Bernalillo County community, with increasing opportunities for improvement.

Public investments will be made equitably in all neighborhoods across the city and county to address needs in areas with fewer resources and to ensure that planning and engagement happen in all communities. Neighborhood-level engagement, in both the city and county, will empower residents and result in recommendations that are practical to implement.

Image credit: City of Albuquerque

4.1.2 Context & Analysis

4.1.2.1 PROTECTING & ENHANCING NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

The desire to protect and enhance the character of one's neighborhood is universal. The most valued neighborhood assets we strive to protect and enhance make Albuquerque unique and valuable, including historically and culturally significant resources, such Old Town Plaza and landscape features, such as acequias. As redevelopment and infill occur, policies help ensure that development is consistent with the community's vision and compatible with the surrounding area.

Character and the Built Environment

This chapter includes goals and policies related to the distinct character of our neighborhoods and incorporates policies and actions for individual areas from the City's former Rank 3 Sector Development Plans.

Comp Plan policies and zoning standards in separate ordinances can address the following elements of the built environment that contribute to the character of an area:

- Mix of land uses
- Development scale and intensity of commercial and office uses
- Building size and massing
- Building placement (i.e., on a site and in relationship to public rights-of-way)
- Site layout
- Landscaping
- Platting patterns
- Block size and pattern
- Street width, alignment, and configuration
- Circulation patterns for all transportation modes
- Streetscape elements and amenities
- Parking for vehicles and bicycles
- Relationship to natural features and cultural landscapes
- Park and civic space location, size, and configuration

Other elements that contribute to an area's character – such as safety, architectural styles, and residents' demographics – are important, but are not planned and

coordinated best through the Comp Plan since it is primarily a land use document.

Neighborhood Associations

There are over 300 volunteer-led neighborhood associations within the city and county. Sometimes boundaries overlap where neighborhoods are covered by multiple associations, while some areas have no association. Some neighborhoods draw their boundaries to include residential areas only; others include residential areas and nearby businesses and commercial corridors. The City and County defer to how residents and local stakeholders draw these boundaries to organize themselves.

The Comp Plan as a policy document does not establish neighborhoods or their boundaries. The City and County have separate ordinances that establish how neighborhood associations are recognized for the purpose of notification of private or public development projects. For illustration purposes, a map of neighborhood associations recognized as of October 2016 is included in **Appendix F**.

To achieve our vision the City and County need to address key **challenges** and **strategies.**

CHALLENGES

- Respecting historic neighborhood and land use patterns.
- Protecting and enhancing neighborhood character.
- Ensuring inclusive decision-making.
- Ensuring equitable public investment.

STRATEGIES

- Creating complete communities and neighborhoods.
- Highlighting the variety of housing types that match the distinct character of different neighborhoods
- Demonstrating the feasibility of diverse housing types in various neighborhoods to the community and developers.

- Integrating the City's Rank 2 Area Plans, Corridor Plans, and Sector Development Plans into the Comp Plan.
- Directing higher density and intensity development in the City to Areas of Change.
- Ensuring that new development is compatible with established character in Areas of Consistency in the city.
- Identifying the character and needs of neighborhoods in the city through a Community Planning Area assessment process.
- Developing or amending Area and Sector Development Plans in the county as needed in the future to provide further guidance for development.

Image credit: City of Albuquerque

Local art and food add character and flavor to Albuquerque neighborhoods.

Historic Neighborhoods & Special Places

Due to its long, continuous history of settlement, the Albuquerque area is blessed with many distinctive communities dating to different historical eras, each with its own pattern of development.

Many historic neighborhoods have gone through the formal process to be designated as a historic district by the City or County or to register as a historic neighborhood at the state or federal level. Historical designations are a powerful tool to preserve distinct qualities is the designation; however, qualifying for these designations includes rigorous requirements, which many historic areas cannot meet. Restrictions on development and demolition associated with many designations are not always desired by property owners in the neighborhood.

Neighborhoods that want to control historical architectural styles need to work with the City or County to register as a historic district and develop an overlay zone that identifies what styles to protect and specific standards to apply.

Policies related to historic preservation for neighborhoods, districts, and buildings, as well as protecting agricultural heritage and cultural landscapes are included in the **Heritage Conservation chapter**.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT ERAS & PATTERNS

The character of any area is a confluence of factors that give people a sense of place. An area's character is shaped by its historical development; its geographic, natural, and cultural features; special places that are built or created over time; and the identity, culture, interests, and passions of its residents. This section provides background about the area's history, which helped shape distinct neighborhoods.

Pueblo, Hispanic, and Anglo American development patterns left a lasting impact on the subdivision and use of land in our region. An overview of the area's five main development eras and their identifiable development patterns provides a useful background for today's neighborhood character and form. These patterns influenced one another over time and continue to inform new development and contribute to the identity of distinct places and neighborhoods throughout the city and county. The Albuquerque-Area Archaeology: Sites and Stories report provides a more thorough coverage of major culture periods and important events.

1. Agrarian Villages: 1692-1710
2. Railroad Wards: 1880-1916
3. Early Automobile Suburbs: 1916-1945
4. Post War Neighborhoods: 1945-2000
5. Early 21st Century Neighborhoods: 2000-Present

AGRARIAN VILLAGES: 1692-1710

Established neighborhoods located near the Rio Grande show evidence of the long, linear platting dating to the early colonial period in the 17th century as farms and haciendas were established in the floodplain of the Rio Grande and along *El Camino Real* (the Royal Road). These neighborhoods still bear the names of founding families of these small farming villages: Los Duranes, Los Candelarias, and Los Griegos in the North Valley; Los Padillas in the South Valley. Neighborhoods in the South Valley were established as early as 1692 in Atrisco, followed by Armijo (1695), Barelas (1707), and Alameda (1710).

Historically, the valley was dominated by large agricultural plots. Small farming communities began to organize around communal irrigation ditches, or acequias, that aided in the irrigation of farmland. In order to provide equitable access to water sources, land was subdivided in long narrow strips called *lineas* or long lots, each with a fairly narrow frontage to the *acequia*. Roadways were laid out to run parallel to the general course of the *acequia* channels and modest, flat-roofed earthen buildings were erected along them – forming linear villages. Over time, the large rectangular agriculture plots were subdivided by owners into smaller residential lots for their heirs, which resulted in an organic variety of lot sizes and configurations. Despite the increase in residential construction, lots and fields were subdivided in a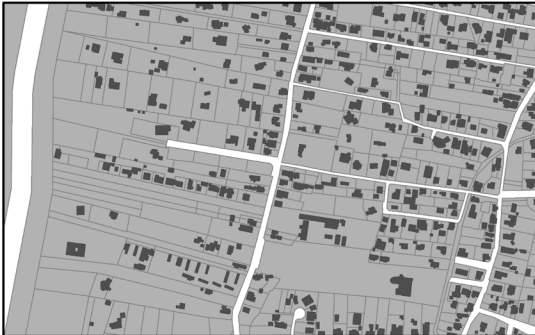 manner that preserved the visual imprint of this early agricultural landscape within these neighborhoods. Many of these agricultural villages eventually became the city's first suburbs. By the 1930s, developers began to plat small subdivisions, such as the Los Alamos Addition of 1938, within these villages' former field systems. Most, however, would continue to retain at least a few elements recalling their earlier cultural landscape, especially the streets and lanes lacking the rigid pattern characteristic of the railroad town and houses built in the New Mexico Vernacular style.

Agrarian villages were built on long, linear lots near the river and acequias.
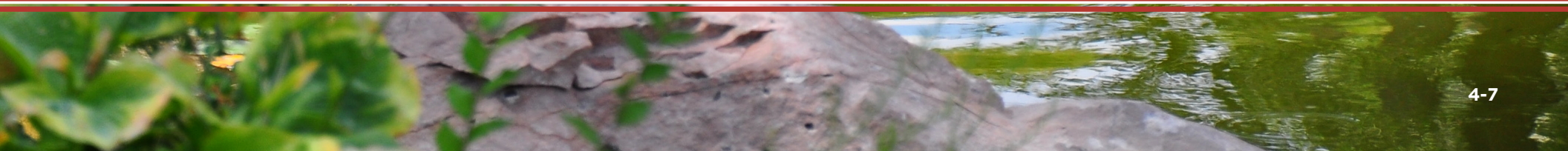
Street and Block Patterns

- Organic roadways running parallel to the acequia system
- Long, linear platting

Characteristic Elements

- Community irrigation ditches (*acequias*)
- Long lot fields (i.e., *vara* strips)
- Single-story, flat-roofed, linear floor plan houses constructed of earthen materials in a New Mexican vernacular style
- Pitched, corrugated metal roofs introduced in 1880s
- Organic parcel patterns

Figure 4-1: Growth Through Annexation Over Time in Albuquerque

RAILROAD WARDS: 1880-1920

The coming of the railroad transformed Albuquerque from a farming village into a commercial and industrial center. The arrival of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway in 1880 began a new era of development, including a "new town" around the rail depot sited two miles east of the Villa de Albuquerque (Old Town). Unlike the villa, which used local building traditions, palettes, and styles, the new town reflected the popular tastes and lifestyles of the Midwesterners who came along with the railroad.

The new town site was laid out on a gridiron pattern of streets and blocks. New housing tracts were platted in long, rectangular blocks paralleling the railroad tracks. Blocks were comprised of narrow, deep lots with back alley access. Houses of a similar scale and portion were sited with consistent setbacks, yet they exhibit an architectural variety that provides overall neighborhood unity without monotonous repetition. Local building traditions within housing styles and landscaping were abandoned in favor of new materials, techniques, and stylistic influences popular with the Midwestern tastes of their initial residents. Substantial homes and modest cottages of the Queen Anne, Neoclassical, Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, Mediterranean Revival, and Spanish-Pueblo Revival styles popular within the period are predominant within these wards. Locally, wood siding, brick, composite stone, and

the occasional adobe structures are evident in these neighborhoods.

An interesting juxtaposition of historical eras can still be seen where railroad development occurred near and in established agricultural villages, such as the Barelas neighborhood. Small tracts, sometimes little more than a single block, were carved out from former agricultural fields. Due to the confined nature of these tracts, lots were platted to be fairly narrow and deep. Houses had to be correspondingly narrow, and the result is referred to as a "shot gun" house. Where slightly larger homes were desired, two adjoining parcels were consolidated. Street and block patterns follow a traditional grid pattern, yet where the railroad era grid collides with the traditional agricultural alignments of the farming villages further west, street patterns mixed.

The neighborhoods that surrounded the new town (now referred to as Downtown) still exhibit the gridiron patterns of streets and blocks established by the railroad. These neighborhoods bear the names of the families who originally owned the development tracts upon which they are built, including Huning Highland Addition (1881) in the first ward.

Street and Block Patterns

- Straight connected streets
- Gridded, squared street block pattern with back-alley access

Characteristic Elements

- Regular grid of square blocks
- Narrow, deep lots with back-alley access
- Administrative division of New Town into four quadrants or "wards"
- Dwellings of a variety of scales from substantial homes, modest cottages/bungalows, and narrow shotgun houses
- Victorian (Queen Anne, Hipped Box) style
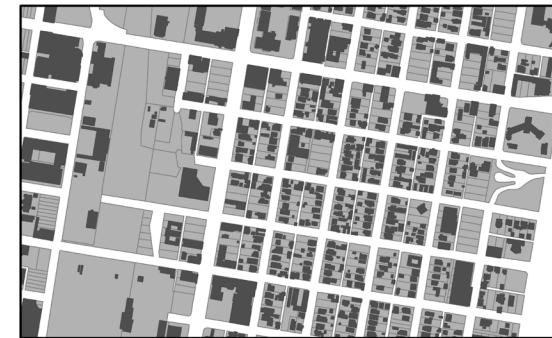
Near the railroad, streets were laid out in a grid pattern with narrow, deep lots with a variety of building styles and sizes.

EARLY AUTOMOBILE SUBURBS: 1920-1945

Up to the 1900s, residential growth in Albuquerque occurred primarily in the railroad era subdivisions that were established between the old and new towns. The emergence of the automobile as the primary mode of transportation after 1920 contributed to new patterns of growth as subdivisions extended onto the city's eastern plateau (the near northeast heights). The early influence of the automobile on the built environment can be seen in the 56 new suburban subdivisions that were platted primarily in the heights throughout the 1920s. Early automobile suburbs include: University Heights (1916), Granada Heights Addition (1925), College View Addition (1926), Monte Vista (1926), and the Mesa Grande Addition (1931).

Neighborhoods platted through the 1920s and 1930s reflect the evolution of subdivision development through that time period. Tracts of this period were platted in an oblong gridiron of streets and blocks, which are comprised of narrow, deep lots, often with alley access to the rear yard. A few exceptions, like the notable 1926 Monte Vista Addition, diverged from the typical grid by obliquely arranging their streets to accommodate nuisances in the tract's natural terrain. Residents bought single lots on which to develop homes, or contractors bought and developed a small number of lots to attract buyers. Builders who followed the initial pioneers maintained the established composition of the street but varied housing types and style. The streetscapes that result are harmonious and orderly without being overly monotonous. Early suburban subdivisions took advantage of the rear access by building separate garages to keep their automobiles.

Street and Block Patterns

- Straight connected streets with the introduction of obliquely arranged streets
- Oblong grid, rectangular street block pattern with back-alley access and/or radial grid patterns
- Curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs

Characteristic Elements of Early Auto Suburbs

- Platting that diverges from the typical grid but still follows a grid pattern with multiple access points and connected street network
- Narrow, deep lots with alley access to rear yards
- Detached garage accessed from the alley or a long driveway
- A mix of housing types and styles created by contractors for individual residents as well as by builders who acquired a small number of lots to attract buyers

Characteristic Elements of Late Auto Suburbs

- Platting that limited the number of streets connecting to arterials, using loops and cul-de-sacs

- Attached garages accessed by a driveway in front of the house
- Similar houses on one or more blocks as development occurred in large sections by single builders or contractors
- Restricted access into residential areas, either by limited arterials or physical barriers such as walls
- Low-density settlement patterns
- Separation and increased distance between residential uses and non-residential (commercial, industrial, etc.) land uses
- Homogeneous residential areas of single-story, single-family, detached homes
- Wide, shallow lots

Early auto suburbs diverged somewhat from gridded street patterns, with some curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. Fairly low density development, garages, and separation from non-residential uses served the growing population of households with cars.

POST-WAR & FREEWAY SUBURBS: 1945 – 2000

In the years after World War II, building an interstate highway system for national security purposes was a national priority. Federal funds flooded into local communities to develop highways. These post-war years saw the simultaneous expansion of the urban road network, rise of automobile dominance, and introduction of large, suburban residential subdivisions. These factors combined to create a dispersed, low-density, single-use development pattern known as sprawl.

The new pattern of tract housing broke with the grid platting pattern of the previous era. Contractors purchased large tracts of land to subdivide and develop. Suburban neighborhoods were platted with a limited number of streets connecting to the arterials. Garages, once detached and accessed from the alley, moved forward and became integrated into the house and accessed by a front driveway. Lots became wider and shallower to accommodate the new orientation of modern housing types and styles. Ranch style houses and modernist architecture became the norm.

Zoning adopted in the 1950s and again in the 1970s codified the separation of residential and non-residential areas. The automobile was expected to provide easy and convenient access from home to work and back. The idea of having services in walking distance from homes and neighborhoods was replaced with the idea of providing convenient shopping at malls and retail strips served by ample parking lots.

Street and Block Patterns

- **Loops and cul-de-sacs**
- **Curvilinear streets**

Characteristic Elements

- **Low-density settlement patterns**
- **Separation and increased distance between residential uses and non-residential (commercial, industrial, etc.) land uses**
- **Homogeneous residential areas of single-story single-family, detached homes**
- **Wide, shallow lots**

After WWII, neighborhoods were increasingly characterized by curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs with low-density, single-family homes on wide, shallow lots.

MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOODS: 2000 – PRESENT

The introduction of zoning separated and spread out land uses in the decades after World War II. In time, many western cities began to recognize an increase in consumer demand for more compact development styles that put many daily needs within walking distance of residences. Mixed-use neighborhoods – ranging from a single structure to entire districts that mix residential, commercial, cultural, and industrial uses in an integrated, pedestrian-friendly manner – can provide greater housing density and variety, reduce vehicle trips, increase property values, and foster vibrancy and interest in an area.

Since at least the 1990s, city planning in Albuquerque has sought to encourage such developments and there are multiple examples near UNM, **in Uptown,** and in Downtown. Single developments that mix residential and other uses can be found all over the city. Mesa del Sol and Volcano Mesa are examples of recent plans for major mixed-use districts.

Street and Block Patterns

- Modified grid block pattern
- Smaller block sizes with rear alleys

Characteristic Elements

- A blend of residential uses with convenient neighborhood-scale services
- Mixed-density development patterns
- Efforts to develop complete communities through development of jobs with new housing
- Retrofit and redevelopment of older, declining neighborhoods in developed urban areas

Image credit: City of Albuquerque

Newer neighborhoods like the Sawmill district offer more dense housing mixed with commercial uses.

4.1.2.2 GUIDING FUTURE GROWTH

The City and County face crucial decisions about where to focus future redevelopment and expansion. For both the City and the County, determining where to grow is a careful balance between the need to preserve our rural and agricultural lands and pressures on these areas to convert to housing and other uses as the community expands outward. In order for rural and agricultural areas to remain viable and sustainable, urban areas must receive more density and intensity over time, drawing the concentration of development away from the outlying areas.

For the County, areas of anticipated change are designated within Centers and Corridors on the Vision map that are detailed in County area and sector plans. Master plans adopted within the County's Reserve and/or Rural Development Areas designate mixed-use, higher density areas that are expected to develop and change over time.

For the City, Areas of Change and Areas of Consistency (described further in **Section 5.1.2.5 of the Land Use chapter**) are important policy tools to guide new development. At the neighborhood level, Areas of Consistency are primarily

made up of single-family neighborhoods where little change is anticipated, and any future development should be mindful of surrounding context to be compatible with the established character of existing development.

Areas of Change highlight places in Centers, Corridors, and Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas where new development and redevelopment are desired. They include vacant land and commercial or industrial areas that would benefit from infill or revitalization. Directing growth to Areas of Change is intended to reduce pressure on established neighborhoods and rural areas to absorb growth and infill at a scale and density that could negatively affect their character.

Furthering Community & Neighborhood Engagement

For both the City and the County, the inclusion of more voices in public decision-making results in healthier and more vibrant communities. Neighborhood-level engagement is successful when people feel connected to one another, and to their communities. To achieve this, all residents, regardless of their backgrounds, should have the opportunity to actively engage in civic affairs. Government leaders should be

There are many unique neighborhoods and locations in Albuquerque and the Comp Plan can help guide revitalization efforts where residents want to see it most.

responsive and accountable to community input and priorities, and strive to overcome barriers to participation – especially for underrepresented groups.

The 2016 Comp Plan update places a greater emphasis on tracking progress toward the community Vision and goals for all neighborhoods. The **Implementation chapter** sets out performance metrics for key goals. These metrics will be tracked within each Community Planning Area (CPA), described in **Section 4.1.3** and shown in **Figure 4-2**. Metrics can also be compared across CPAs to identify issues, opportunities for intervention, and examples of successful strategies.

Public investment can also be tracked across CPAs to help ensure the efficient and equitable distribution of resources across the Albuquerque area and improve accountability of local governments in addressing issues and implementing the Comp Plan Vision.

CPA boundaries are intended to be small enough to be able to engage area residents and stakeholders at a neighborhood level, while placing community issues and opportunities into a larger community context. Neighborhood-level conversations are critical, but neighborhoods are not islands; they are affected by, benefit from, and contribute to the larger community.

For the County, community engagement will take place through Area and Sector Development Plans.

For the City, community engagement will take place through a proactive, ongoing process to assess each Community Planning Area with stakeholders.

The County will continue to engage neighbors, businesses, and other stakeholders through planning efforts to create and update Area and Sector Development Plans. The City intends to engage stakeholders as part of the ongoing cycle of assessments for CPAs and through the annual City Leaders program to train neighborhood association leaders, developers, decision makers, new City staff, and other stakeholders about the City's framework to regulate land use and offer opportunities to learn more about how other City departments operate (see **Strategic Action 1.2 in the Implementation Chapter** and **Appendix E** for more about CPA assessments and City Leaders).

Area & Sector Development Plans

In the County, Area and Sector Development Plans will continue to provide an additional level of detailed planning and guidance for future development and CPA assessments (see **Figure 4-2**).

In the City, Sector Development Plans (SDPs) have been an important way to address planning issues within individual neighborhoods and corridors for the past 40 years. As of 2014, the City had adopted over 60 SDPs, many with a mix of policy and zoning, which leads to confusion and unrealistic expectations about their

applicability and enforceability (see **Appendices C and D** for more about SDPs in the city).

Another unintended consequence of this approach has been plans that are so tailored for specific places that they create isolated solutions that do not always consider citywide goals or nearby planning efforts.

These specialized tools are not always effective, and implementing numerous plans has proved impractical and infeasible for the City. Worse, many neighborhoods in the city have not had the benefit of additional planning efforts, and adding more standalone plans to cover these areas would only compound a currently unworkable system of proliferating, uncoordinated plans.

Policies from City SDPs adopted as of 2014 that appeared in multiple plans and/or represent best practices for planning have been incorporated into the Comp Plan. Regulations from these adopted SDPs are also being analyzed for inclusion in updated zoning standards through the Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO).

Other information and descriptions of neighborhoods and special places in those plans will move into future CPA assessments, described in **Section 4.1.3.2**.
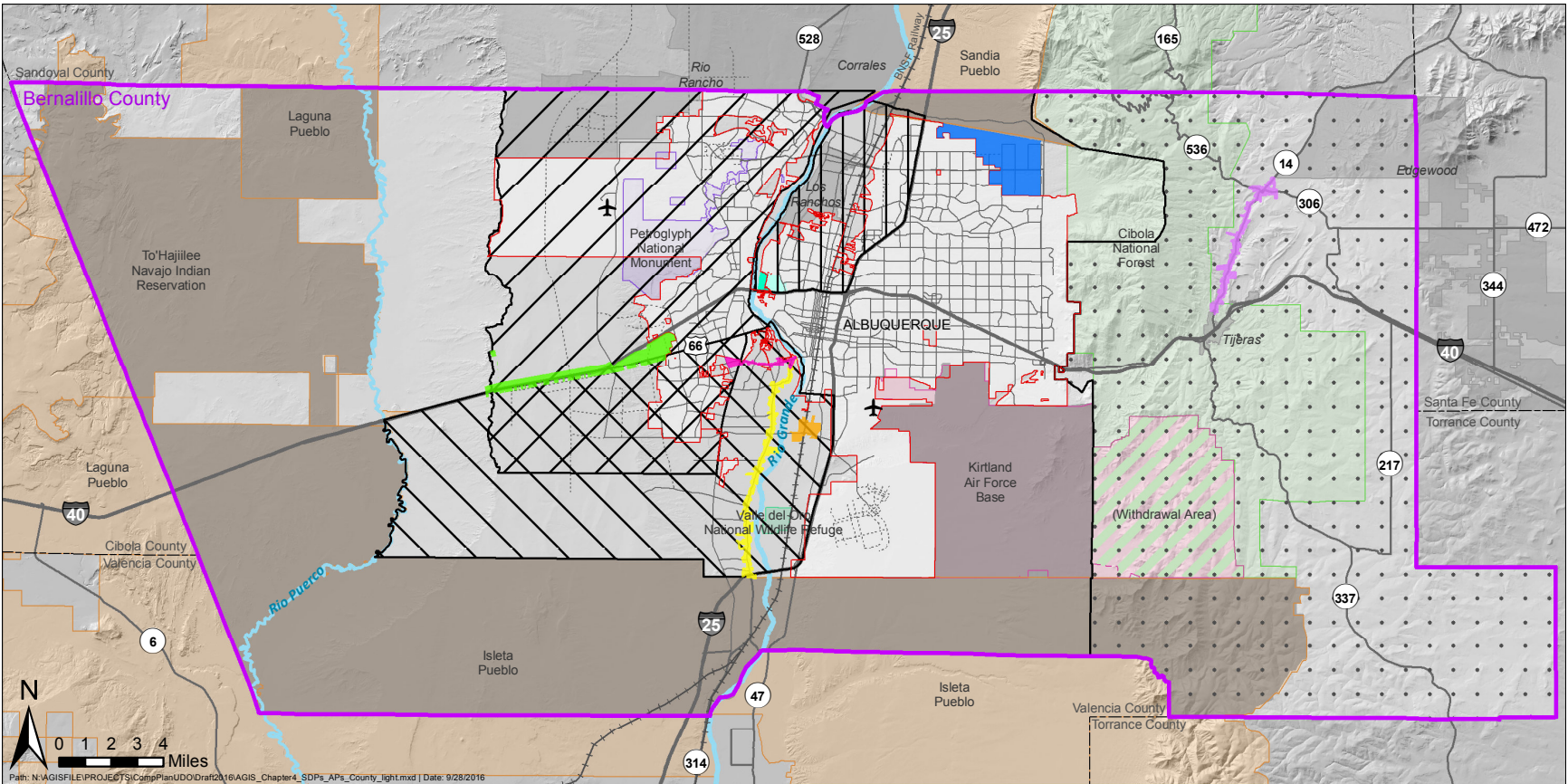
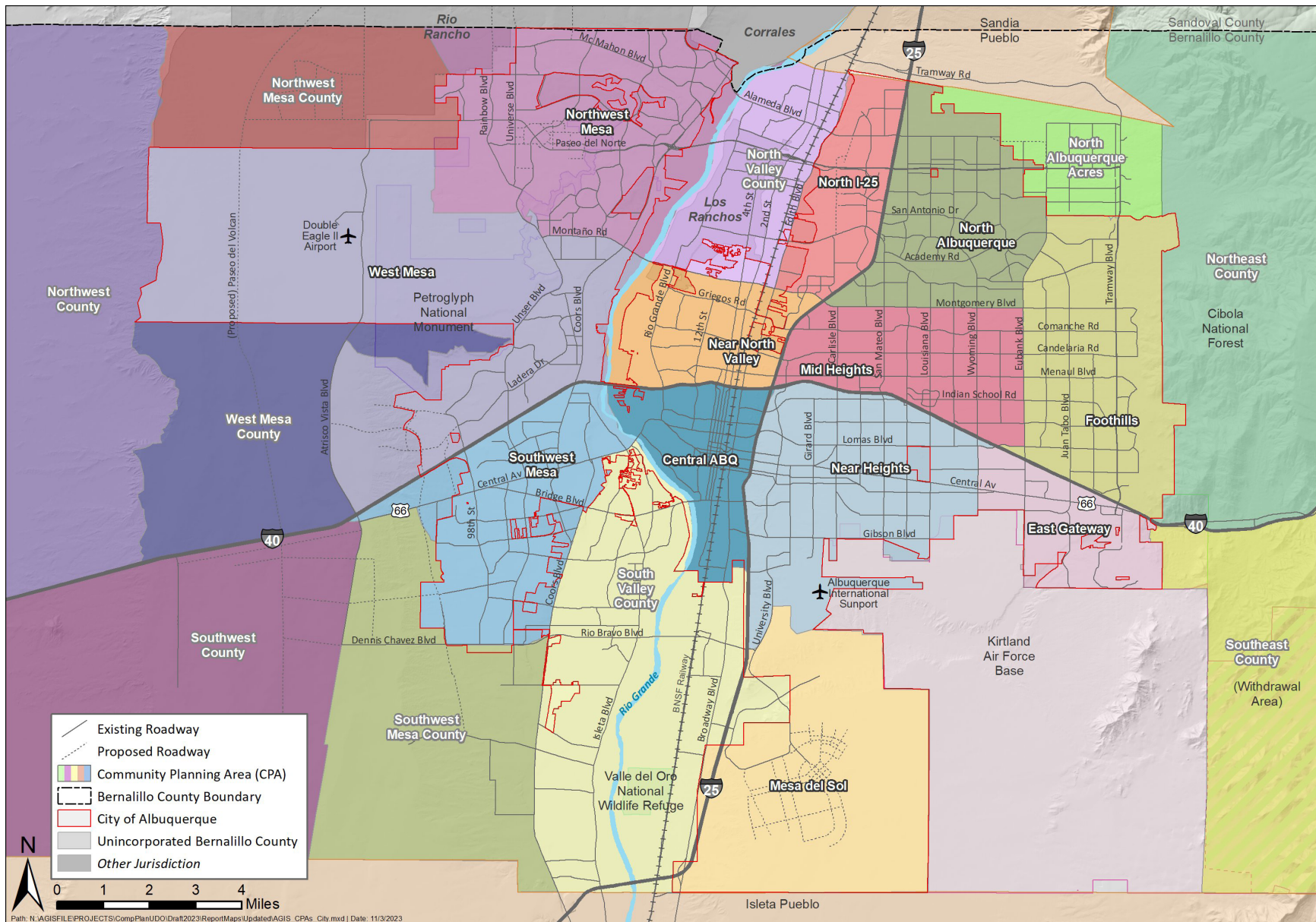**Figure 4-2: County Sector Development and Area Plans**

Figure 4-3: Community Planning Areas

4.1.3 Community Planning Areas

Community Planning Areas were first developed during a City planning effort in 1995. People were given maps of the metropolitan region and asked to identify their house, their neighborhood, and their community. The resulting map outlined 13 distinct Community Identity Areas which were adopted into the Comp Plan in 2003, the same time the Centers and Corridors framework was added. The boundaries, while not precisely drawn, called attention to attributes and attractions that should be respected and built upon. It was as clear then as it remains 20 years later that the Albuquerque area contains a rich diversity of communities, each exemplifying a unique set of characteristics, environments, and lifestyles that set them apart as special places.

Many of the original CPAs became the subjects of Rank 2 Area Plans, which focused on issues and opportunities in respective geographic areas. The County intends to keep these Area Plans as standalone documents, while the City has rolled policies from its Area and Sector Development Plans into the 2016 Comp Plan update.

Due to these differences in future implementation efforts, distinctive characteristics of CPAs are described in separate sections for the City and County.

In all cases, future development and planning should respect and strengthen existing communities, enhance their distinctive qualities, and provide more opportunities for residents to satisfy their daily needs.

Community Planning Area Updates

As of 2016, the CPA boundaries have been revised to better match U.S. Census Tracts, allowing the City and County to gather demographic, employment, and commuting data and to track growth and trends over time. Original boundaries were also adjusted to clarify (to the extent possible) jurisdictional roles and responsibilities for future long-range planning efforts and ongoing implementation and monitoring of the Comp Plan. Additional CPAs were added to capture all unincorporated Bernalillo County areas (see **Figure 4-3**).

4.1.3.1 UNINCORPORATED BERNALILLO COUNTY COMMUNITY PLANNING AREAS

Unincorporated Bernalillo County includes four major CPAs – two in the East Mountains (Northeast County and Southeast County), the North Valley, and the South Valley (see **Figure 4-3**). Each area has its own Rank 2 Area Plan with policies focusing on land use and zoning and has a recognizable character and identity developed over the last few centuries. Each area also has a unique history with landmarks, special places, and events, along with a relatively distinct lifestyle incorporating agriculture and village settlement patterns which distinguish these areas from more urban neighborhoods.

County CPAs also include a portion of North Albuquerque Acres, Sandia Heights, and properties on the West Side and the West Mesa that have recently developed as Albuquerque's footprint has expanded. A dominant theme in many of these areas is a desire to preserve the rural character, whose meaning and attributes vary within different areas of the county. Portions of these County CPAs lie within planning boundaries for Rank 2 Area Plans, the West Side Strategic Plan

and Southwest Area Plan, and will remain subject to policies in those plans.

There are nearly 100 recognized neighborhood associations in the county that reflect the members' concerns and identification with their residence in the county. These neighborhood associations are organized by residents to respond to community issues and to participate in the County's land use approval process. The associations and their membership change over time.

East Mountains

The East Mountains is a recognized area to the east of the Sandia Mountains, including the Cibola National Forest area and private lands. It encompasses approximately 321 square miles and includes open space, recreational, residential, and commercial uses, with a large proportion of the area still undeveloped. Historic communities, such as Tijeras, Carnuel, San Antonio, Chilili, and Cañoncito contribute to the uniqueness of the area and form the basis of the identity and livelihoods of the descendants of the original Hispanic settlers in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. These settlements included churches, plazas, and other buildings that still serve local residents. Some of the settlements were previously inhabited by Native Americans. Land Grants, including

Cañon de Carnuel and Chilili, also continue to be important historical and socio-political elements in the East Mountains, along with some agricultural activities.

The area has experienced growth as people have come in search of a more rural, mountain setting. In particular, growth has taken place along North Highway 14 in the communities of Cedar Crest and Sandia Park and along east Route 66 and other major County roads, such as Route 337 and Mountain Valley, Frost, and Zamora Roads.. Several large subdivisions and resort-style communities such as Tablazon, Nature Pointe, and Paa-ko have also developed.

Given the distinctive natural and historical features of the East Mountains, residents have recognized the importance of planning for land use and environmental protection. The *East Mountain Area Plan* was first adopted by Bernalillo County in 1975 and amended in 1992 and 2006 to recognize and maintain the East Mountains' unique physical, environmental, and cultural elements. The Plan includes measures and policies for preserving the rural character, scenic areas, and environmental features of the East Mountains, through zoning and subdivision regulations, and through sector plans. It also includes criteria that

recommend consideration of site-specific issues, such as slope, vegetation, drainage, and cultural resources, in the development review process.

As with the rest of Bernalillo County, water quantity and quality concern residents. Community water systems have reduced the number of new individual wells in the area and have sought a more consistent water supply. Concerns with fire have also increased, particularly in time of drought.

Following the East Mountain Area Plan recommendation, the North Highway 14 SDP was adopted in 2012 to guide development in designated locations along the corridor while preserving the area's Rural Character. The Plan designates village centers, including Sandia Park, Cedar Crest, Turquoise Triangle, and Triangle Village Center, where neighborhood-scale commercial development may occur following specific zoning and design standards.

There are more than 30 recognized neighborhood associations in the East Mountains as of 2016. The East Mountain Coalition of Neighborhood Associations assists with the coordination of the work of the East Mountain neighborhood associations.

North Valley

The North Valley area encompasses approximately one hundred square miles in the northwest quadrant of metropolitan Albuquerque. It includes properties within the City of Albuquerque, the Village of Los Ranchos and Unincorporated Bernalillo County. The area is bounded by Interstate 40 on the south, Interstate 25 on the east, the Rio Grande on the west, and the Bernalillo-Sandoval County line on the north. The area within the County is mainly north of Osuna Road, extending north to Sandia Pueblo. The North Valley is distinguished by its unique history and cultural traditions and natural and environmental features, including the Rio Grande, Bosque, and the elaborate agricultural system that was developed with irrigation and ditches (acequias).

Early communities in the North Valley developed around the acequia system, which still exists in many areas, but has been impacted by growth of the area. The early communities also revolved around traditional villages. Between *La Plaza Vieja* (Albuquerque's Old Town) to the south and the ancient Sandia Pueblo to the north were once the Spanish villages of Los Thomases, Los Candelarias, Los Griegos, Los Duranes, Ranchitos, Los Ranchos, and La Alameda (the site of a Tiwa Pueblo).

Development also took place along Alameda Boulevard near Fourth Street and Edith Boulevard. Commercial development located along Fourth and Second Streets when merchants and tradesmen came from the eastern states and settled the area between Old Town and the Santa Fe Railroad tracks. To this day the North Valley remains a rich mixture of Indian, Hispanic, and Anglo American cultures, with many historical areas and properties. Since the 1950s, a number of subdivisions have developed, with higher density and commercial and industrial uses allowed near the urban area, and lower density residential maintained under A-1 zoning in the northerly portions of the North Valley and nearby Rio Grande Boulevard.

The North Valley retains its semi-rural, light agricultural character. Some agricultural activity continues despite subdivision and development. In addition to gardens producing crops primarily for home use, there are numerous horse farms, pastures, and small-scale animal operations. In 1993, the North Valley Area Plan was adopted as a Rank 2 Area Plan by both the City and the County to guide future development and recognize the North Valley as a unique and fragile resource. The plan includes policies that guide the density, character, and land use in the plan area and encourage such

Image credit: Bernalillo County

Image credit: City of Albuquerque

Neighborhoods in the North Valley are often low density with agricultural and rural character.

principles as Cluster Housing and Village Center development. The North Valley Area Plan recognizes sub-areas including the following: the North Edith Boulevard Corridor, North I-25, Second and Fourth Streets, Alameda, and Mid-North Valley East. Each of these has particular characteristics and trends that are addressed in the plan with recommendations and policies.

There are several recognized Neighborhood Associations in the North Valley that have organized to protect neighborhood interests, including the residential, low density, rural or semi-rural lifestyles that are valued by many North Valley residents.

South Valley

The South Valley is characterized by both urban densities and rural lifestyles. The northern urban neighborhoods near Central Avenue in the Atrisco area merge into more semi-urban areas, while farther south, neighborhoods become the open rural ranchos of Pajarito and Los Padillas. The 39 square miles of the South Valley and adjacent mesa slopes, which comprise more than one-third of the existing metropolitan area, represent diversity in land use and rich culture and history.

The South Valley has clear cultural and ethnic traditions and a very high percentage of residents who, together, have had majority ownership rights to most of the land for generations, particularly in the form of land grants. Its rich history and cultural traditions find expression in place names and in past settlements, first by Pueblo Indians, then by the Spanish and Mexican people in the 1500s. Some important features within this history include the development of El Camino Real, the Royal Highway that today is called State Highway 85 and Isleta Boulevard. This route has been described as the oldest continuously used highway in North America.

The pattern of land use and settlement found today in the valley began with the land grant communities established during the 1690s and early 1700s, following the reconquest of New Mexico by the Spanish. The early plazas and ranchos of Atrisco, Pajarito, and Los Padillas were established before the town of Albuquerque existed, on land grants issued by the king of Spain to encourage settlement in "New Spain."

The land grants of the South Valley were bounded on the west by the Rio Puerco and on the east by the Rio Grande. The narrow valley flood plain along the Rio Grande was ideally suited for irrigation agriculture, which provided the key to survival in this arid region. Each family had access to enough arable land to maintain a largely self-sufficient lifestyle. Over the years, these lands were divided among family members into long strips running perpendicular to the acequias, a pattern still apparent today. The mesa grasslands, held jointly by all members of the community, were used primarily for grazing cattle and sheep.

Image credit: City of Albuquerque

On the West Side and West Mesa, residents want to preserve rural character, views, and the natural landscape.

Beginning in the late 17th century, the South Valley area began to evolve into seven village centers surrounded by supporting agricultural lands, marshes, and low sand hills. For over 200 years, families of the area cultivated the narrow strip of arable land between the frequently flooding Bosque and shifting sand bars of the Rio Grande, and semi-arid grazing lands that they shared on the western mesa. This pattern continued into the 20th century when urban growth expanded into the South Valley.

By 1950, large-scale agribusiness and economic centralization, spurred on by low transportation costs, undercut the economic viability of the South Valley's agricultural base. Since the 1960s, the growth of Albuquerque's population and the desire for low-cost land for residential development has brought increasing pressure on the open areas and agricultural lands in the South Valley. Urban growth continued spreading into the South Valley from the north and along its major thoroughfares in the form of residential subdivisions and commercial developments. Industrial uses have developed along the eastern and western edges of the South Valley. Within the flat flood plain of the river valley, however, agriculture was still a major land use.

The main corridors of the Valley, including Atrisco Road and Bridge, Isleta, Rio Bravo, and Coors Boulevards, have increasingly become mixed-use areas with both commercial and residential uses along them. Growth on the Southwest Mesa has increased, along with the prospects of expansion further to the west in the form of master planned communities. In recent years, agriculture has witnessed a resurgence among residents of the South Valley as the demand for local products has increased. Nevertheless, expansion of more urban types of development into the South Valley and its agricultural lands has continued.

As planning has developed as a mechanism for guiding development for both the City and the County, a number of plans have been adopted for the lands in the South Valley. In 1988, the Southwest Area Plan (SWAP) was adopted in accordance with the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comp Plan as a Rank 2 Area Plan, with a particular focus on land use and specifying how growth should occur in the Southwest Quadrant. The plan recognized existing Village Centers, including Atrisco, Five Points, Armijo, Los Padillas, and Pajarito, along with roads such as Isleta Boulevard and Central, as culturally and historically significant and as areas that could

be the subject of future planning activities, including possible mixed-use development.

The plan identified five residential areas in which particular residential densities would be allowed, ranging from low density in the south to higher density in the northern and western areas, in accordance with County zoning. The plan also emphasized the importance of enhancing agricultural uses, preserving the area's natural features such as the Bosque and the Ceja Escarpment, and protecting residential neighborhoods from expanding industrial uses. The SWAP was revised and adopted by the County in 2001 with most of the same principles as the 1988 SWAP.

Following the Comp Plan and SWAP, several sector plans have been adopted for areas in the Southwest Area with specific design and zoning requirements, including the Isleta Boulevard and Village Centers SDP and the Bridge Boulevard Corridor Redevelopment Plan. The plans follow the Centers and Corridors concept that allows higher density, mixed use development in designated areas while encouraging the continuation of residential uses in other areas.

In association with the identity, values, and concerns in the South Valley, a number

of neighborhood associations have been recognized in both the City and the County. For the County, the associations mainly represent established neighborhoods, particularly in the more urban areas, or areas around the traditional village centers. Two neighborhood association coalitions have also formed to cover the large areas that fall within the South Valley and more recently the Southwest Mesa and to help coordinate activities of the many associations.

Other Areas in the County Experiencing Recent Development

North Albuquerque Acres

The North Albuquerque community is located north of Bear Canyon Arroyo and extends to the Sandia Reservation boundary and from Sandia Heights to the city limits. It is located on land within the Elena Gallegos Land Grant, which extended from the Rio Grande to the Sandia Crest, and includes challenging topography in some areas due to slope and drainage issues.

North Albuquerque Acres was one portion within the Grant that was platted into one acre lots to be sold to individuals from throughout the United States, with the prospect of lot consolidation and possibly more intense residential and commercial

development. This large lot pattern, with mainly A-1 zoning, has been maintained and has shaped development in the area to the present in which new development reflects contemporary architectural styles but also retains rural elements.

Recognizing the goal to preserve the character of North Albuquerque Acres in the County, in 2001, Bernalillo County adopted the Paseo del Norte / North Albuquerque Acres SDP. This affirmed the predominantly A-1 zoning and residential character in the community while designating specific parcels along Paseo del Norte with low-intensity commercial or higher density residential uses. Subsequently, the Comp Plan Development Area designation was changed to Rural from Developing Urban and Semi-Urban. Many of the efforts to retain the rural, low density features of the area are the result of the work of the North Albuquerque Acres Community Association, which is registered with Bernalillo County.

Sandia Heights

The Sandia Peak Ski Area opened in 1937. Access to the ski area was a narrow, winding road up the east side of the mountain. Two local developers, Bob Nordhaus and Ben Abruzzo, envisioned a tramway up the mountain to connect to Sandia Peak from the

west side. Construction began in 1964, and what would later be billed as the "World's Longest Aerial Tramway" opened in May 1966. The two men purchased land at the base of the tram for the terminal and parking lot along with some additional land that was then developed and sold as residential lots. Between 1965 and 1975 Nordhaus and Abruzzo bought 1,500 acres of the Sandia foothills, land that has been developed slowly over the years.

Sandia Heights was the first subdivision in the Albuquerque area to include water conservation in its plans, and the natural landscape was an integral part of the subdivision design.

Sandia Heights residents enjoy access to and views of the foothills.

4.1.3.2 CITY COMMUNITY PLANNING AREAS

The following pages contain descriptions that were developed as part of a planning effort from 1995 that created the CPA concept and began to identify and define distinctive community identities for each area. The City intends to update this information over time through an ongoing long-range community planning effort for each area through the CPA assessment process, described below. Through this process, residents will work with City Planning staff to identify defining character elements and policy and/or regulatory protections for those elements.

City CPA Assessment Process

The City intends to engage stakeholders in each CPA on a 10-year cycle. City staff will work with stakeholders in two CPAs per year to assess development, demographic, and health trends; identify important character elements in neighborhoods and special places; recommend changes to Comp Plan policies or zoning regulations to address issues; review Rank 2 Facility Plans; and understand community priorities for capital projects and partnerships that can leverage opportunities for area revitalization and enhancement (see **Appendix E** for a more

detailed description of the CPA assessment process).

Over the course of six years, these CPA assessments will be documented for all of the City's CPAs. On the 7th and 8th year, City staff will compile and compare information gathered and update the Comp Plan. Policies developed through the assessment process for each CPA will be found in **Goal 4.3** of this chapter and can be updated, along with adjustments to Center or Corridor types or boundaries and policies related to other Comp Plan elements.

In the 9th year, City staff will perform a priority needs analysis to determine the order of CPA assessments for the next cycle. In the 10th year, City staff will convene stakeholders to review, improve, and prepare for the next cycle of CPA assessments, including gathering, analyzing, and sharing baseline data related to performance measures identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

One benefit of this ongoing planning cycle is that the City will be able to apply valuable lessons learned in one area to other areas of the city. Instead of reacting to immediate crises, the process is intended to be proactive – like a wellness check

before symptoms of illness appear. It is also intentionally designed to accommodate all areas of the city, learning from each and extending the benefits to all.

The proposed CPA assessment process is intended to improve inclusive public engagement and decision-making. City Planning staff will spend significant time in the community during each CPA effort, holding "office hours," attending standing meetings of key groups, conducting walking tours and community workshops, and gathering information.

When this process uncovers critical issues, Planning staff can work with Council Services, other City Departments and other agencies to identify funds for more detailed investigations and planning efforts to identify and recommend policy or regulatory changes or implementation efforts.

Done well, CPA assessments will be vital tools to implement and track the Comp Plan and identify changes needed to better serve and protect neighborhoods (see also the **Implementation chapter** and **Appendix E** for more about the CPA assessment process and a proposed assessment outline).

A consistent CPA assessment process provides four primary benefits:

1. Capacity-building: Staff and stakeholders can learn and share lessons across Community Planning Area assessments and over time.

2. Efficiency: A defined process encourages timely completion and lowers barriers to stakeholder participation.

3. Implementation: Properly considered stakeholder input, thorough technical analysis, and clearly articulated recommendations will lead to more consistent implementation.

4: Coordination: Assessments with a standardized organization and format, addressing similar issues at the same level of analysis, using a similar set of tools, and recommending policies, regulations, and actions that acknowledge a citywide context, will be effective tools to update the Comp Plan and zoning standards.

Central Albuquerque

Central Albuquerque is the location of the original Old Town settlement with surrounding agricultural lands, the New Town development during the railroad era (now known as Downtown), and the original residential subdivisions, many of which have been designated as historic neighborhoods.

Design/Character Considerations

- Concentration of urban development Downtown

- Street level retail/commercial activity Downtown

- Building fronts at sidewalk along Central Avenue

- Glass storefronts and major pedestrian entrances onto the street

- Public transit connections between downtown and Old Town, the Albuquerque Botanical Gardens and Zoo, the South Broadway Cultural Center, and other ABQ Centers

- Varying architectural styles and building scale, depending on the historical era of each neighborhood

- Historic adobe architecture in Old Town

- Victorian architecture of the railroad era neighborhoods

- Rural landscapes to the west of Rio Grande Boulevard
- Mature trees and grass predominant in landscaping
- Small residential lots
- Proximity to the Rio Grande
- Mix of land uses and proximity of residential and non-residential uses

East Gateway

One of Albuquerque's "front doors," this area is the first impression of Albuquerque for millions of travelers every year.

Design/Character Considerations

- Entry or gateway into Albuquerque through Tijeras Canyon, with dramatic views to the west
- Grid pattern of principal and minor arterial streets
- Topography of the Sandia and Manzano foothills
- Topography and open space of the Tijeras Arroyo
- Proximity of Open Space
- Use of native and naturalized plant species in public and private landscapes
- Views of the mountains to the east and of the city to the west

Foothills

Nestled at the base of the Sandia Mountains, this area is distinguished by its unique relationship to the mountains and impressive views of the valley.

Design/Character Considerations

- Topography of the Sandia foothills
- Proximity of Open Space and Open Space trail system
- Arroyos extending from the foothills of the Sandia Mountains, providing opportunities for recreation trails to link to Open Space
- Indigenous landscaping
- Views of the mountains to the east and of the city and Northwest Mesa to the west

Mesa del Sol

A master-planned community south of the Albuquerque International Sunport, with several planned business parks and new urban neighborhoods.

Design/Character Considerations

- [text pending after first CPA assessment]

Mid Heights

Made up of many 1950s suburbs, this area includes major arroyos that form linear parks with multi-use trails. Uptown Urban Center, a regional shopping mecca, is its focal point.

Design/Character Considerations

- Concentration of large-scale Urban Center development in Uptown

- Grid pattern of principal and minor arterial streets

- Suburban development pattern of the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s

- Commercial strips bordering major streets

- Views of the Sandia Mountains to the east, particularly along east/west streets

- Schools and parks as focal points for community events and social activities

Near Heights

Stretching east from I-40 to Wyoming, the Near Heights CPA encompasses the University area, Nob Hill, and the International District, as well as many distinct neighborhoods and districts south of the Sunport and Kirtland Air Force Base and north to I-40. Near Heights includes most of the city's largest institutions and employers, including UNM, CNM, Presbyterian and UNM hospitals, the Veterans Affairs complex, and the International Sunport. It is also a gateway for Kirtland Air Force Base, which hosts both military and civilian facilities, including Sandia National Laboratories. The area's main corridor, Central Avenue, connects the many unique neighborhoods in the Near Heights, which contain many types of housing options, urban landscapes and diverse communities. Over time, some neighborhoods in the Near Heights have benefited from development and investment, while others, specifically the neighborhoods located in the International District, have experienced a lack of investment and adverse impacts from traditional, auto-oriented suburban development.

Design/Character Considerations

- Buildings fronting the sidewalk along Central and key cross streets

- Varying architectural styles and building scale, depending on the era in which the neighborhood was developed

- Use of neon by businesses along Central

- Rolling topography caused by water flow through the Tijeras Arroyo

- Excellent public transit access and transit-supportive development patterns along Central

- Rectangular block grid of approximately 700 feet by 350 feet

- Architecture shaped by various development eras, ranging from early automobile suburbs (1920s) to contemporary development (present day)

- A high prevalence of Mid-Century Modern architecture

- Quiet and eclectic neighborhoods, bordered by higher intensity land uses along the heavier trafficked avenues and boulevards

- Small neighborhood-scale retail spaces, typically found in traditional strip malls

- Massing of large-scale development around CNM and UNM, the Albuquerque International Sunport, Kirtland Air Force Base, and Veterans Affairs complex

- Mature trees and grass in landscaping, particularly in the neighborhoods north

and south of the University and west of Carlisle Blvd.

Near North Valley

A semi-rural area that relates strongly to the Rio Grande. An intricate ditch irrigation system, extensive vegetation and evidence of its historic Hispanic traditions set it apart.

Design/Character Considerations

- Rural landscapes

- Mature trees, agricultural fields, acequia system

- Long, narrow lots that reflect traditional agricultural uses.

- Culture and traditions – traditional adobe architecture

- Narrow streets without curb and gutter or sidewalks

- Proximity to the Rio Grande and the Bosque

- Views of the mountains

- Multiple small-scale Centers within walking distance of adjacent neighborhoods

- Mixed land uses, including industrial and commercial uses, along major streets

North Albuquerque

Characterized by breathtaking vistas and high desert setting, it has developed primarily as low-density, large lot subdivisions, with retail and institutional uses along corridors.

Design/Character Considerations

- Topography of the Sandia foothills
- Proximity of Open Space
- Indigenous landscaping
- Views of the mountains to the east and of the city and Northwest Mesa to the west
- Rural densities on platted one-acre lots in North Albuquerque Acres north of San Antonio and east of Eubank
- Pattern of urban development reflecting post-War subdivision and site design standards
- Walled neighborhoods

North I-25

Between the railroad tracks to the west and I-25 to the east, this area is characterized by business and industrial parks and semi-rural neighborhoods. The Balloon Fiesta Park and Museum host millions of visitors per year.

Design/Character Considerations

- [text pending after first CPA assessment]

Northwest Mesa

A predominantly residential community, adjacent to the volcanoes and volcanic Northwest Mesa Escarpment and overlooking the river and mountains. Coors Corridor provides many commercial opportunities. Corrales and Rio Rancho border this area to the north.

Design/Character Considerations

- Suburban subdivisions with wide streets and landscape buffers and large building setbacks
- Walls lining minor arterial and collector streets to separate residential development
- Proximity to the Rio Grande and Petroglyph National Monument, and volcanic Northwest Mesa Escarpment
- Views of the volcanoes and escarpment to the west and the Rio Grande and mountains to the east
- Shopping centers set back from the street with parking in front

Southwest Mesa

Stretching between I-40 to the north, Dennis Chavez Boulevard to the south, and between the city limit to the west and Coors Boulevard to the east, the Southwest Mesa CPA encompasses many multigenerational neighborhoods throughout the South Valley and the mesa top. It also includes a stretch of Historic Route 66, where some of Albuquerque's most active lowrider clubs cruise on a weekly basis. Traditional auto-oriented development, including several historic motor court hotels, lines the Central Ave (Route 66) corridor. For thousands of years prior to the establishment of the City of Albuquerque, agricultural communities made their home in the Southwest Mesa. Those cultures, people, and traditions still flourish in the South Valley and near the Rio Grande today. Further west on the Mesa, developers subdivided and built single family-homes over large land areas starting in the 1950s. A similar pattern of development continues today and makes up a majority of the land use in the Southwest Mesa, resulting in significant travel times for commuting and accessing general amenities found in parts of the city with a more varied mix of land uses.

Design/Character Considerations

- Arid mesa, grassland environment characterized by sand flats, dunes, and escarpments dotted with scrub juniper and sage

- Views of the Bosque, the Sandia Mountains, Downtown, and city lights at night to the east

- Arroyos as linear open spaces that provide opportunities for recreation and sustaining the traditional irrigation practices of the area trail connections to the east

- "Gateway" to Albuquerque from the west, where I-40 and Route 66 separate from each other the start of the longest stretch of urban Route 66 begin and motor court hotels, auto-oriented businesses and many traditionally loved restaurants start lining the corridor

- Single-family homes that cover a majority of the land area and were developed with curvilinear streets, loops and cul-de-sacs, creating a transportation network with few connections

- Commercial activity concentrated along Coors Blvd, Unser Blvd and Central Ave, spanning from small, traditional retail to big box stores

- Commercial zone districts in the area north of Central and south of I-40, including the Atrisco Business Park

West Mesa

Bounded by I-40 on the south, the Rio Grande to the east, and Montaño Road to the north, this area developed primarily as residential subdivisions, with commercial activity along Coors Boulevard. With spectacular views to the volcanoes and the Sandia Mountains, it is characterized by its proximity to the Northwest Mesa Escarpment, Petroglyph National Monument, and the Bosque.

Design/Character Considerations

- [text pending after first CPA assessment]

4.1.3.4 TRIBAL JURISDICTIONS

Bernalillo County includes tribal lands belonging to Isleta Pueblo, Sandia Pueblo, Laguna Pueblo, and the To'Hajiilee Chapter of the Navajo Nation. As sovereign nations, these tribes are not subject to the policies in this Comp Plan. Planning is coordinated through the Mid Region Council of Governments.

4.1.3.5 KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE

Kirtland Air Force Base is federal land that also houses Sandia National Laboratories. The base is not subject to the policies in this Comp Plan. Joint land use planning is done through Memoranda of Understanding and the Mid Region Council of Governments.

4.2 Goals, Policies & Actions

for Community Identity

Goal 4.1 Character

Enhance, protect, and preserve distinct communities.

Goal 4.2 Process

Engage communities to identify and plan for their distinct character and needs.

Goal 4.3 City Community Planning Areas

Protect and enhance the natural and cultural characteristics and features that contribute to distinct identity and prioritize projects and programs to meet the needs of communities, neighborhoods, and sub-areas.

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.

[ABC] indicates a policy or action for both the City and County

[BC] indicates a policy or action for Bernalillo County

[A] indicates a policy or action for the City of Albuquerque

Goal 4.1 Character

Enhance, protect, and preserve distinct communities.

POLICY 4.1.1

Distinct Communities: Encourage quality development that is consistent with the distinct character of communities. [ABC]

a) See **Goal 4.3** below for descriptions of character-defining elements for each City CPA.

b) See **Land Use Policy 5.2.1** for desired land uses.

c) See **Urban Design Policies 7.3.2 and 7.3.3** for policies on community character and placemaking.

d) See **Housing Goal 9.1** for policies related to housing options and affordability.

POLICY 4.1.2

Identity and Design: Protect the identity and cohesiveness of neighborhoods by ensuring the appropriate scale and location of development, mix of uses, and character of building design. [ABC]

a) Maintain and preserve the unique qualities of historic areas. [ABC]

b) See County Area and Sector Development Plans for guidance in the County. [BC]

c) See **Goal 4.2** below for the process to identify community character.

d) See **Goal 4.3** below for City CPA character considerations for development.

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

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

g) See the **Heritage Conservation chapter** for historic and cultural protections.

h) See **Heritage Conservation Policy 11.2.1** for minimizing the negative impacts of gentrification on communities.

ACTIONS

4.1.2.1 Continue use of Area and Sector Development Plans as a planning tool within unincorporated Bernalillo County. [BC]

4.1.2.2 Define existing and desired character of areas within each CPA and recommend policy and regulatory changes, capital projects, or partnerships to protect or enhance character as part of the ongoing cycle of assessments. [A]

POLICY 4.1.3

Placemaking: Protect and enhance special places in the built environment that contribute to distinct identity and sense of place. [ABC]

a) See **Urban Design Policies 7.3.2 and 7.3.3** for policies on community character and placemaking.

b) See **Heritage Conservation chapter** for historic and cultural considerations.

ACTIONS

4.1.3.1 Provide opportunities for residents, businesses, and other stakeholders to come together to identify special places, catalytic actions, and creative solutions to area issues and prioritize capital projects and beautification opportunities. [ABC]

4.1.3.2 Partner with non-profits, neighborhood associations, merchants associations, businesses, and other stakeholders to plan and program special events. [ABC]

4.1.3.3 Support neighborhood cleanup initiatives and ensure that weed, litter, and building safety codes are enforced to maintain property appearance, occupant safety, and property values. [ABC]

4.1.3.4 Work with communities and key stakeholders to establish recommended plant lists for landscaping in each CPA. [A]

POLICY 4.1.4

Neighborhoods: Enhance, protect, and preserve neighborhoods and traditional communities as key to our long-term health and vitality. [ABC]

a) Respect existing neighborhood values and social, cultural, recreational resources.

b) Leverage community resources to identify issues, opportunities, and special places and promote strong community identity.

c) Support improvements that protect stable, thriving residential neighborhoods and enhance their attractiveness.

d) Encourage transformative change in neighborhoods expressing the desire for revitalization.

e) See **Land Use Policy 5.2.1** for guidance about where certain land uses are appropriate.

f) See **Land Use Policies 5.6.3 and 5.6.4** for policies about Areas of Consistency and how to transition between Areas of Change and Consistency.

g) See **Land Use Goal 5.7** for policies to promote public-private partnerships for catalytic development in Centers and Corridors.

h) See **Housing Policy 9.7.2** for Metropolitan Redevelopment.

i) See **Heritage Conservation Policy 11.2.1** for minimizing the negative impacts of gentrification on communities.

j) See **Implementation Strategic Action 3.3** for catalytic projects.

ACTIONS

4.1.4.1 Provide programs and partner with non-profits to help residents in distressed neighborhoods improve and stabilize their neighborhood. [ABC]

4.1.4.2 Work with residents to identify sub-standard houses or nuisances that should trigger assistance. [ABC]

4.1.4.3 Identify infrastructure needs, such as sidewalk, curb, and gutter improvements, and coordinate implementation with relevant departments and stakeholders. [ABC]

POLICY 4.1.5

Natural Resources: Encourage high-quality development and redevelopment that responds appropriately to the natural setting and ecosystem functions. [ABC]

a) Respect natural environmental conditions and carrying capacities and cultural landscapes when locating new development and regulating its intensity and design.

b) See **Urban Design Goal 7.5** for context-sensitive site design.

c) See **Heritage Conservation Goal 11.1** for policies to protect rural and agricultural heritage.

d) See **Heritage Conservation Goal 11.3** for policies to protect cultural landscapes.

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

Goal 4.2 Process

Engage communities to identify and plan for their distinct character and needs.

POLICY 4.2.1

Community Planning Areas: Use Community Planning Areas to track conditions and progress toward implementation of the community vision over time and organize planning efforts to identify distinct community character. [ABC]

a) Guide development through Comp Plan Development Area policies in **Land Use Goals 5.5 and 5.6**. [ABC]

b) Use County Area or Sector Development Plans to further guide development. [BC]

c) Use policies in **Community Identity Goal 4.3** to further guide development in City CPAs. [A]

d) See **Land Use Policy 5.3.7** to address objectionable land uses.

e) See **Resilience & Sustainability Policy 13.5.4** to address potential adverse impacts of development.

ACTIONS

4.2.1.1 Adjust CPA boundaries to the extent possible to be congruent with New Mexico Department of Health Small Area boundaries to best coordinate health data and reporting. [ABC]

4.2.1.2 Provide a demographic analysis of race/ethnicity and income for each Community Planning Area as part of the five-year Comp Plan update. [A]

4.2.1.3 Reflect the CPA process and geographies in a revised Planning Ordinance as part of the City's Integrated Development Ordinance. [A]

POLICY 4.2.2

Community Engagement: Facilitate meaningful engagement opportunities and respectful interactions in order to identify and address the needs of all residents. [ABC]

a) Engage communities to help identify, build, and strengthen distinct identity and sense of community. [A]

b) Increase awareness about and understanding of cultural differences, shared identity, and differing needs across communities. [A]

c) Build capacity for more culturally significant interactions between City and County staff and the public. [A]

d) Work with community leaders to identify and remove barriers to meaningful community engagement. [A]

e) Create robust and meaningful public involvement processes to help build long-term consensus about growth and development in the Albuquerque area. [A]

f) See **Land Use Policy 5.7.5** for additional policies on public engagement.

g) See **Transportation Goal 6.5** for policies about equity in transportation systems.

h) See **Infrastructure, Community Facilities & Services Policy 12.4.1** for collaborative strategies to prioritize public investment.

i) See **Infrastructure, Community Facilities & Services Policy 12.4.2** for policies about ADA accessibility in public facilities.

j) See **Infrastructure, Community Facilities & Services Policies 12.5.5 and 12.5.6** for policies about staff capacity and public input in public resource allocation.

ACTIONS

4.2.2.1 Engage neighborhoods and area stakeholders in the county through planning efforts to create Area Plans and/or Sector Development Plans to identify appropriate protections for character, guide future development, and plan needed capital projects. [BC]

4.2.2.2 Engage neighborhoods and area stakeholders in the city through a CPA assessment process to identify contributing elements to distinctive character and identity and recommend needed changes

to Comp Plan policies or City zoning standards. [A]

4.2.2.3 Educate residents, businesses, and community-based organizations about the land use and zoning framework, as well as the planning and development process, through a City Leaders training program. [A]

4.2.2.4 Coordinate between the Planning Department and Council Services staff throughout the CPA assessment process to plan and host City Leaders and to track implementation efforts by various departments over time. [A]

4.2.2.5 Develop and implement best practices, training components, and recommendations for administrative procedures for more meaningful and accessible community engagement. [A]

Goal 4.3 City Community Planning Areas

Protect and enhance the natural and cultural characteristics and features that contribute to distinct identity and prioritize projects and programs to meet the needs of communities, neighborhoods, and sub-areas. [A]

POLICY 4.3.1

CPA Assessments: Identify the character-defining elements, priorities for capital investment, and potential programs and partnerships for each CPA through the ongoing, long-range planning assessment process. [A]

a) See **Policy 4.2.1** above for policies and actions related to the CPA assessment process.

b) See **Policies 4.3.2 through 4.3.13** below for policies specific to each CPA.

c) See **Heritage Conservation chapter** for historic and cultural considerations.

ACTIONS

4.3.1.1 Update the Comp Plan to include policies that protect and enhance the character of each CPA and of the neighborhoods within each CPA. [A]

4.3.1.2 Evaluate adopted SDPs to update and incorporate narratives, implementation actions, and recommendations into each CPA assessment report. [A]

4.3.1.3 Develop a list of priority capital projects with the community and key stakeholders as part of each CPA assessment report. [A]

4.3.1.4 Develop a list of priority programs and events with the community and key stakeholders as part of each CPA assessment report. [A]

4.3.1.5 Increase public awareness of City Leaders and CPA Assessment meetings. [A]

POLICY 4.3.2

Central Albuquerque CPA

[TO BE COMPLETED THROUGH THE CPA ASSESSMENT PROCESS.]

POLICY 4.3.3

East Gateway CPA

[TO BE COMPLETED THROUGH THE CPA ASSESSMENT PROCESS.]

POLICY 4.3.4

Foothills CPA

[TO BE COMPLETED THROUGH THE CPA ASSESSMENT PROCESS.]

POLICY 4.3.5

Mesa del Sol CPA

[TO BE COMPLETED THROUGH THE CPA ASSESSMENT PROCESS.]

POLICY 4.3.6

Mid Heights CPA

[TO BE COMPLETED THROUGH THE CPA ASSESSMENT PROCESS.]

POLICY 4.3.7

Near Heights CPA

POLICY 4.3.7.1 [A]

Prioritize projects that increase the urban tree canopy, street trees, and green space, particularly in areas more than a 10-minute walk to a park.

a) Create new parks and open space in areas more than a 10-minute walk to a park.

b) Encourage investment in street trees, landscaped medians, and landscape strips along streets, especially in areas more than a 10-minute walk to a park where new parks are not feasible.

c) Encourage edible landscaping, pesticide-free practices, and pollinator and migratory bird habitat in parks, public gathering places, and community facilities to promote access to free food for people and wildlife.

d) Support community gardens.

POLICY 4.3.7.2 [A]

Support projects that increase housing supply, broaden housing options, and add affordable housing.

a) Encourage housing options that support all family types, lifestyles, household sizes, and household incomes.

b) Encourage development projects and housing programs for people throughout all life stages.

i. Support housing projects that add rental opportunities.

ii. Support housing projects that add homeownership opportunities.

iii. Support higher-density housing projects near parks, schools, and community facilities.

iv. Encourage investment in housing assistance for major repairs for seniors and low-income households.

v. Prioritize anti-displacement strategies, particularly in the International District.

vi. Encourage accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as an appropriate strategy to add housing options, maintain naturally affordable housing, support multi-generational lifestyles, and balance opportunities for ownership and renting in Near Heights.

POLICY 4.3.7.3 [A]

Prioritize projects that reinforce a sense of place tied to history and culture.

a) Prioritize transportation projects that increase safety and the comfort of pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users in

neighborhoods and along transportation routes.

b) Invest in additional lighting along streets, alleys, and underpasses.

c) Encourage projects that improve the usability and safety of alleyways.

d) Encourage projects that impove sidewalks and street crossings to meet ADA standards.

e) Encourage projects that improve walkability and provide better opportunities for walking as a recreational activity throughout the Near Heights.

f) Support projects to improve pedestrian and bicylce safety, especially at intersections with Commuter Corridors.

g) Support projects that improve the design and operation of streets to slow traffic and increase safety, particularly on corridors with high crash rates or high numbers of conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists.

POLICY 4.3.7.4 [A]

Support projects that reinforce a sense of place tied to history and culture.

a) Encourage public art created by local artists and celebrating local people and cultures.

b) Support development that embraces the multiculturalism of the International District.

c) Encourage signage in multiple languages that reflect the culture of local residents.

d) Balance the needs of UNM heritage and stability of established neighborhoods near UNM.

e) Support development projects and local businesses that create, promote, and maintain local identity and sense of place.

f) Encourage culturally relevant plant pallets with informational signage to reinforce a sense of place, storytelling, and heritage preservation.

g) Support development along the corridor that honors the Mid-Century aesthetic, supports small businesses that serve families in the surrounding area, and attract tourists and others from the broader community.

h) Encourage recognition of historic assets though educational materials and

supporting efforts such as historic plaques and signage in historic districts.

i) Promote active streetscapes and Crime Prevention Through Environmental (CPTED) design standards that encourage "eyes on the street."

POLICY 4.3.7.5 [A]

Prioritize support for local small businesses.

a) Preserve the historic character of the Nob Hill commercial district, support the design of commercial/residential transition areas to provide easy access from neighborhoods, and protect the integrity of historic districts.

b) Focus resources on projects and programs that support entrepreneurship in diverse communities.

POLICY 4.3.7.6 [A]

Support projects and investment that bolster transit as a viable and efficient transportation option.

a) Increase investment in connections between routes, increased bus frequency, and additional north/south routes.

b) Support free transit fares on transit to increase ridership, support underserved communities, and promote sustainability.

c) Support higher-density housing development within Premium Transit corridors and near transit stops and stations.

d) Encourage transit-oriented development.

e) Improve signage and other sources of information about transit, including translation into multiple languages and updates as routes and schedules change.

POLICY 4.3.7.7 [A]

Support projects that increase access to bathrooms and sanitation throughout the area.

a) Invest in publicly-available bathrooms, showers, and handwashing stations.

b) Encourage safety and cleanliness in parks by expanding needle pick up and adding bathrooms and/or sanitation stations.

POLICY 4.3.8

Near North Valley CPA

[TO BE COMPLETED THROUGH THE CPA ASSESSMENT PROCESS.]

POLICY 4.3.9

North Albuquerque CPA

[TO BE COMPLETED THROUGH THE CPA ASSESSMENT PROCESS.]

POLICY 4.3.10

North I-25 CPA

[TO BE COMPLETED THROUGH THE CPA ASSESSMENT PROCESS.]

POLICY 4.3.11

Northwest Mesa CPA

[TO BE COMPLETED THROUGH THE CPA ASSESSMENT PROCESS.]

POLICY 4.3.12

Southwest Mesa CPA

POLICY 4.3.12.1 [A]

Encourage safety in parks through park activation, events, and activities.

a) Encourage safety and cleanliness in parks by expanding needle pick-up, adding bathrooms, and/or sanitation stations.

b) Support programming, community events, and other desired activities.

POLICY 4.3.12.2 [A]

Improve multi-modal transportation and infrastructure in the Southwest Mesa.

a) Support projects that improve the design and operation of streets to slow traffic and increase safety, particularly on corridors with high crash rates or high numbers of conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists.

b) Prioritize transportation projects according to the HFIN, emphasizing investment first in high-fatality areas and underserved communities.

c) Encourage projects that improve sidewalks and street crossings to meet ADA standards.

d) Prioritize road maintenance, repair, and reconstruction according to the Pavement Condition Index.

e) The City, County, and State should continue to meet regularly and coordinate on projects that touch multiple jurisdictions.

f) Support transit service throughout the Southwest Mesa through budget allocation, development, and design.

POLICY 4.3.12.3 [A]

Provide services for people experiencing homelessness and avenues to permanent housing solutions.

a) Invest in publicly-available bathrooms, showers, and sanitation stations.

b) Support projects and programs that create rental or homeownership opportunities for low-income individuals or families.

c) Invest in facilities and programs that provide shelter and/or resources for people experiencing homelessness.

POLICY 4.3.12.4 [A]

Support and increase dense and mixed-use housing options in the Southwest Mesa.

a) Support housing projects and programs that add affordable homeownership opportunities.

b) Support housing projects and programs that add affordable rental opportunities.

c) Encourage housing options, programs, and development projects that support multigenerational living arrangements.

d) Support higher-density housing projects along major thoroughfares.

e) Invest in housing assistance for major repairs for seniors and low-income households.

f) Encourage housing options and development projects that prioritize accessible and age-friendly design.

g) Retain the historic character and design features of motels along Central that convert to housing

POLICY 4.3.12.5 [A]

Support development that promotes the unique identity of the Southwest Mesa.

a) Support creative and cultural development and public art that reflects cultural and community priorities in Southwest Mesa.

b) Encourage signage, outreach, and education related to the cultures and languages of the people and history of the Southwest Mesa.

c) Support projects that create or expand space and opportunities for youth and young adults to learn, connect, and grow.

POLICY 4.3.12.6 [A]

Maintain the historic character of motor tourism along Route 66, especially neon signs.

POLICY 4.3.12.7 [A]

Encourage development that incorporates neighborhood-scale services.

a) Oppose projects that are exclusively single-family residential in any zone district other than R-1.

b) Encourage zone changes to MX-L on corner lots.

c) Support development that brings commercial amenities closer to Residential zone districts.

POLICY 4.3.12.8 [A]

Encourage zone changes that allow intense mixed-use, commercial, or light industrial land uses on vacant land.

POLICY 4.3.12.9 [A]

Support business development, retail, and services, particularly childcare and family-friendly activities.

POLICY 4.3.13

West Mesa CPA

[TO BE COMPLETED THROUGH THE CPA ASSESSMENT PROCESS.]