



One Valley. One Vision  
2040  
Sandoz Army County, New Mexico  
Regional Water





# One Valley, One Vision 2040

Doña Ana County, New Mexico

## Regional Plan

Anthony - Hatch - Las Cruces - Mesilla - Sunland Park



# Why Regional Planning?

Planning on the regional level...

Creates an environment to attract business to the area and sustain quality of life,



facilitates sharing of technical assistance between the local governments and special districts,



helps identify opportunities for exploring and resolving intergovernmental issues,



generates better intergovernmental cooperation, guidance, direction, and coordination on planning from local governments and special districts,



builds awareness of local interests and perspectives to other levels of government,



establishes greater efficiency in analysis and public involvement,



elicits a more effective regional response to growth, economy, environment, and transportation,



fosters public and private partnerships that offer stability in decision making,



generates greater certainty of where new growth and annexation will occur,



achieves greater coordination in availability and delivery of services and infrastructure,



establishes broad guidelines by which the development of land will be based via area plans, sector plans, master plans or other planning tools, and



introduces the basis by which transportation will be provided and integrated throughout the planning area.

# Acknowledgements

## Participation of Residents of Doña Ana County

### Former Governor Richardson's Task Force on Our Communities

#### New Mexico State University

Neta Fernandez, Director of Office of Grants and Contracts  
Dr. Robert J. Czerniak, Professor of Geography & Associate Vice President for Research

#### Las Cruces City Council

Ken Miyagishima, District 6 (through 2007) and Mayor (beginning 2008)  
William 'Bill' Mattiace, Mayor (through 2007)  
Sharon Thomas, Mayor Pro-Tem, District 6 (beginning 2008)  
Jose V. Fietze, District 1 (through Dec 2007), Miguel Silva, District 1 (beginning 2008)  
Gregory Z. Smith (beginning 2011), Dolores Conner, District 2 (through 2010)  
Dolores Archuleta, District 3 (through 2007), Olga Pedroza, District 3 (beginning 2008)  
Steve C. Trowbridge, District 4 (through 2007), Nathan Small, District 4 (beginning 2008)  
Gil Jones, District 5 (through 2007), Gill Sorg, District 5 (beginning 2008)

#### Doña Ana County Board of County Commissioners

Scott A. Krahling, Chair, District 4 (beginning 2009)  
Oscar V. Butler, Chair, District 1 (through 2010)  
Karen G. Perez, Vice-Chair, District 3  
D. Kent Evans, Vice Chair, District 4 (through 2008)  
Billy G. Garrett, District 1 (beginning 2011)  
Dolores Saldaña-Caviness, District 2  
William McCamley, District 5 (through 2008), Leticia Duarte-Benavidez, District 5 (beginning 2009)

#### Planning and Zoning and ETZ Commissioners

##### Doña Ana County

Brent Westmoreland, Chair and Mel Acosta, Vice-Chair  
Leon "Junior" Billstone, Robert H. Hearn, Natalie Mercado, Dick Salopek, Sandra Tatum  
Diane Samuel (through 2010), Valencia Gavin (through April 2008)  
Arturo C. Terrazas, Sr. (through April 2009)

##### Extra-Territorial Zone (ETZ)

John Villescás, Chair and Kenneth Allin, Vice Chair  
Wade Warthen (Chair through 2010), Janet Acosta, Leon "Junior" Billstone (through 2010),  
Robert H. Hearn (beginning 2011), Lisa Beck Key (through 2010), Terry McMillan (through 2010),  
Stephen R. Pacheco (beginning 2011), and Cliff Terry

##### Las Cruces

Charles B. Scholz, Chair and Shawn Evans, Vice Chair  
Charles Beard, Donald Bustos, Godfrey Crane, Clayton Iserman (through 2010),  
William Stowe (Beginning 2011), Ray Shipley

## Vision 2040 Advisory Committee (2010-2011)

### Steering Committee

William 'Bill' Mattiace, Chair, Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce  
Charles B. Scholz, Vice Chair, Las Cruces Planning & Zoning Commission  
David Barnhart, Las Cruces Association of Realtors; Kevin Bixby, Southwest Environmental Center (through July 2010); Renee Frank, Las Cruces Green Chamber of Commerce; Rose García, Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation (through Sept 2010); Jennifer Montoya, Bureau of Land Management; Judd Singer, Building Sector, Steve Newby, Downtown Las Cruces Partnership

### Members

Larry Altamirano, Las Cruces Public Schools; Valerie Beversdorf, Elephant Butte Irrigation District; Renee Blotske, White Sands Missile Range; Bonnie Burn, League of Women Voters; Greg Daviet, Doña Ana County Farm & Livestock Bureau; Richard Hass, American Institute of Architects; John Hadley, Building Industry Association; Tom Hassell, Las Cruces Housing Authority; Robert H. Hearn, Doña Ana County Planning & Zoning Commission; Kiel Hoffman and Davin Lopez, Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance; Dr. Douglas Hoffman, Quality Growth Alliance; Gary Lenzo, Financial Sector; Cathy Mathews, American Society of Landscape Architects; Tom Mobley, Rancher, Michael Rickenbaker, New Mexico State University; David Roewe, Building Industry Association (through Sept 2010); John Villescas, ETZ Commission; Karl Wood, New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute

### Staff

#### Las Cruces

Robert Garza, P.E., City Manager and Brian Denmark, Assistant City Manager  
David Weir, AICP, Community Development Director  
Vincent Banegas, AICP, Community Development Administrator; Paul Michaud, AICP, Senior Planner  
Tom Schuster, AICP, Sustainability Officer (through Feb 2010); Carol McCall, Planner  
Srijana Basnyat, Planner

#### Doña Ana County

Brian Haines, County Manager and Sue Padilla, Assistant County Manager  
Chuck McMahon, Deputy Assistant County Manager & Community Development Director  
Roger Hedrick, FAICP, Deputy Community Development Director  
Janine Divyak, AICP, Chief Planner; Paul Howard, AICP, Senior Planner (through March 2010)  
Jonathan Kesler, Planner; Luis Marmolejo, Planner; Susan Gelvin, Planner  
Dennis Smith, GIS Analyst; Frank Dodd, GIS Analyst; Angela Roberson, Planner/Designer  
Daniel Hortert, AICP, Senior Planner

#### Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization

Tom Murphy, AICP, Senior Planner; Andrew Hume, Planner; Caeri Thomas, Planner (through June 2010)

#### Consultant Service Providers

peter j. smith & company, inc. (August 2007 to April 2010), David Addis, Editor  
Debbie Oberhausen, Graphics, Doña Ana County Spatial Committee, GIS Mapping

#### Cover Photograph

Phil King

#### Funding

Funding of the project by the City of Las Cruces, Doña Ana County, and grant from the State of New Mexico, Department of Finance and Administration

# Table of Contents

1.	<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>1</b>
2.	<b>REGIONAL VISION STATEMENT</b> .....	<b>15</b>
3.	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>17</b>
	3.1 PURPOSE .....	17
	3.2 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT .....	18
	3.3 STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS (SWOT) .....	21
	3.4 POPULATION .....	27
	3.5 ORGANIZATION & PLAN RELATIONSHIPS .....	32
4.	<b>CONCEPTS</b> .....	<b>35</b>
	4.1 SUSTAINABILITY .....	35
	4.2 SMART GROWTH .....	35
	4.3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES .....	36
5.	<b>REGIONAL SNAPSHOT</b> .....	<b>37</b>
	5.1 LAND USE .....	37
	5.2 WATER .....	43
	5.3 AIR QUALITY .....	52
	5.4 ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES .....	54
	5.5 HAZARDS .....	64
	5.6 TRANSPORTATION .....	70
	5.7 COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES .....	76
	5.8 UTILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE .....	82
	5.9 HOUSING .....	88
	5.10 ECONOMY .....	95
	5.11 COMMUNITY CHARACTER, DESIGN & HISTORIC PRESERVATION .....	105
	5.12 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION .....	110
6.	<b>REGIONAL GOALS &amp; STRATEGIES</b> .....	<b>117</b>
	6.1 <b>LAND USE</b> .....	117
	6.2 WATER .....	120
	6.3 AIR QUALITY .....	121
	6.4 ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES .....	122
	6.5 HAZARDS .....	123
	6.6 <b>TRANSPORTATION</b> .....	125
	6.7 COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES .....	127
	6.8 UTILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE .....	129
	6.9 HOUSING .....	131
	6.10 ECONOMY .....	132
	6.11 COMMUNITY CHARACTER, DESIGN & HISTORIC PRESERVATION .....	134
	6.12 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION .....	136
7.	<b>TYPES OF COMMUNITIES</b> .....	<b>139</b>
	7.1 MUNICIPALITIES .....	139
	7.2 COLONIAS .....	141
	7.3 EXTRA-TERRITORIAL ZONE .....	144
	7.4 COUNTY .....	145
8.	<b>REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGIES</b> .....	<b>147</b>
	8.1 HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT .....	147
	8.2 JOBS .....	157
	8.3 REGIONAL PLAN - 2040 .....	159
9.	<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b> .....	<b>163</b>
	9.1 MONITORING .....	163
	9.2 AMENDMENTS .....	164
	9.3 APPLICATION .....	164
	9.4 REGIONAL ACTIONS .....	165
10.	<b>ACRONYMS &amp; GLOSSARY</b> .....	<b>175</b>
11.	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....	<b>179</b>

## LIST OF MAPS

MAP 1:	LOCATION MAP .....	ii, 2
MAP 2:	EXISTING DEVELOPMENT – 2011 .....	39
MAP 3:	LAND OWNERSHIP - 2011 .....	41
MAP 4:	HIGH-QUALITY AGRICULTURAL LAND - 2011 .....	60
MAP 5:	1% ANNUAL CHANCE OF FLOOD - 2011 .....	67
MAP 6:	MEAN PROPERTY VALUES MAP – 2011 .....	90
MAP 7:	JOBS SUPPLY – 2011 .....	100

MAP 8:	TREND GROWTH STRATEGY – 2040 .....	153
MAP 9:	SATELLITE GROWTH STRATEGY – 2040.....	154
MAP 10:	COMPACT GROWTH STRATEGY – 2040 .....	155
MAP 11:	CONSENSUS GROWTH STRATEGY – 2040 .....	12, 156
MAP 12:	CONSENSUS JOBS STRATEGY – 2040 .....	13, 161
MAP 13:	REGIONAL PLAN – 2040.....	14, 162

#### LIST OF FIGURES

1-1:	OUR VISION .....	1
1-2:	PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH .....	4
1-3:	AGE GROUP PROJECTIONS .....	4
1-4:	RURAL ILLUSTRATION OF SMALL COMMUNITY CENTRAL SQUARE.....	9
1-5:	URBAN ILLUSTRATION OF DOWNTOWN LAS CRUCES, NM 2040 .....	11
3-1:	HISTORIC POPULATION GROWTH .....	27
3-2:	PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH .....	30
3-3:	RACE .....	31
3-4:	ETHNICITY .....	31
3-5:	AGE GROUP PROJECTIONS .....	31
3-6:	PLAN DIAGRAM .....	33
4-1:	TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE.....	35
5-1:	NUMBER AND SIZE OF FARMS .....	59
5-2:	VIOLENT CRIME .....	79
5-3:	PROPERTY CRIME .....	80
5-4:	GROSS RENT AS % OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME.....	92
5-5:	HOMEOWNER COST AS % OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME (MORTGAGE) .....	92
5-6:	HOMEOWNER COST AS % OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME (WITHOUT MORTGAGE) .....	93
5-7:	MANUFACTURED AND MOBILE HOMES .....	94
5-8:	EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR .....	102
5-9:	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE.....	103
8-1:	URBAN ILLUSTRATION OF DOWNTOWN LAS CRUCES, NM 2040 .....	152
8-2:	RURAL ILLUSTRATION OF SMALL COMMUNITY CENTRAL SQUARE.....	152

#### LIST OF TABLES

1-1:	GUIDING PRINCIPLES .....	5
1-2:	REGIONAL GOALS .....	6
1-3:	CONSENSUS GROWTH STRATEGY ASSUMPTIONS - 2040.....	10
1-4:	CONSENSUS JOBS STRATEGY ASSUMPTIONS - 2040.....	10
3-1:	NEIGHBORING AREA POPULATION CHANGE 1980 TO 2010 .....	28
3-2:	SELECT AREAS POPULATION CHANGE 1980 TO 2010 .....	29
3-3:	RELOCATION SOURCES .....	30
5-1:	LAND OWNERSHIP.....	38
5-2:	ANNEXATIONS .....	42
5-3:	CONSERVATION PLANS AND POLICIES.....	46
5-4:	PRIMARY WATER QUALITY ISSUES.....	50
5-5:	ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE PLANS.....	56
5-6:	SIGNIFICANT NATURAL OPEN SPACES .....	61
5-7:	MAJOR REGIONAL ARCHEOLOGICAL-HISTORIC SITES AND PLANS .....	63
5-8:	POTENTIAL HAZARDS.....	66
5-9:	ECONOMIC IMPACT OF PUBLIC AIRPORTS .....	75
5-10:	SCHOOL DISTRICT FACILITIES.....	77
5-11:	SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES.....	84
5-12:	RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS AND POLICIES.....	87
5-13:	INDIVIDUALS IN POVERTY .....	91
5-14:	ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS IN AGRICULTURE AND RANCHING PRACTICES ....	98
5-15:	LARGEST EMPLOYERS.....	101
5-16:	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME ESTIMATES.....	104
5-17:	BENEFITS OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION.....	110
5-18:	AGENCIES FOR INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION .....	112
5-19:	EXISTING INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUPS.....	114
8-1:	REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGIES COMPARISON .....	151
8-2:	REGIONAL JOBS GROWTH STRATEGY .....	160
9-1:	REGIONAL ACTION PLAN, 2012-2016 .....	166



# Preface

Doña Ana County, situated among scenic mountains and desert landscapes of south-central New Mexico, is near the Rio Grande. It is an area of over 3,800 square miles abutting El Paso, Texas and Juárez, Mexico as shown on Map 1, "Location Map."

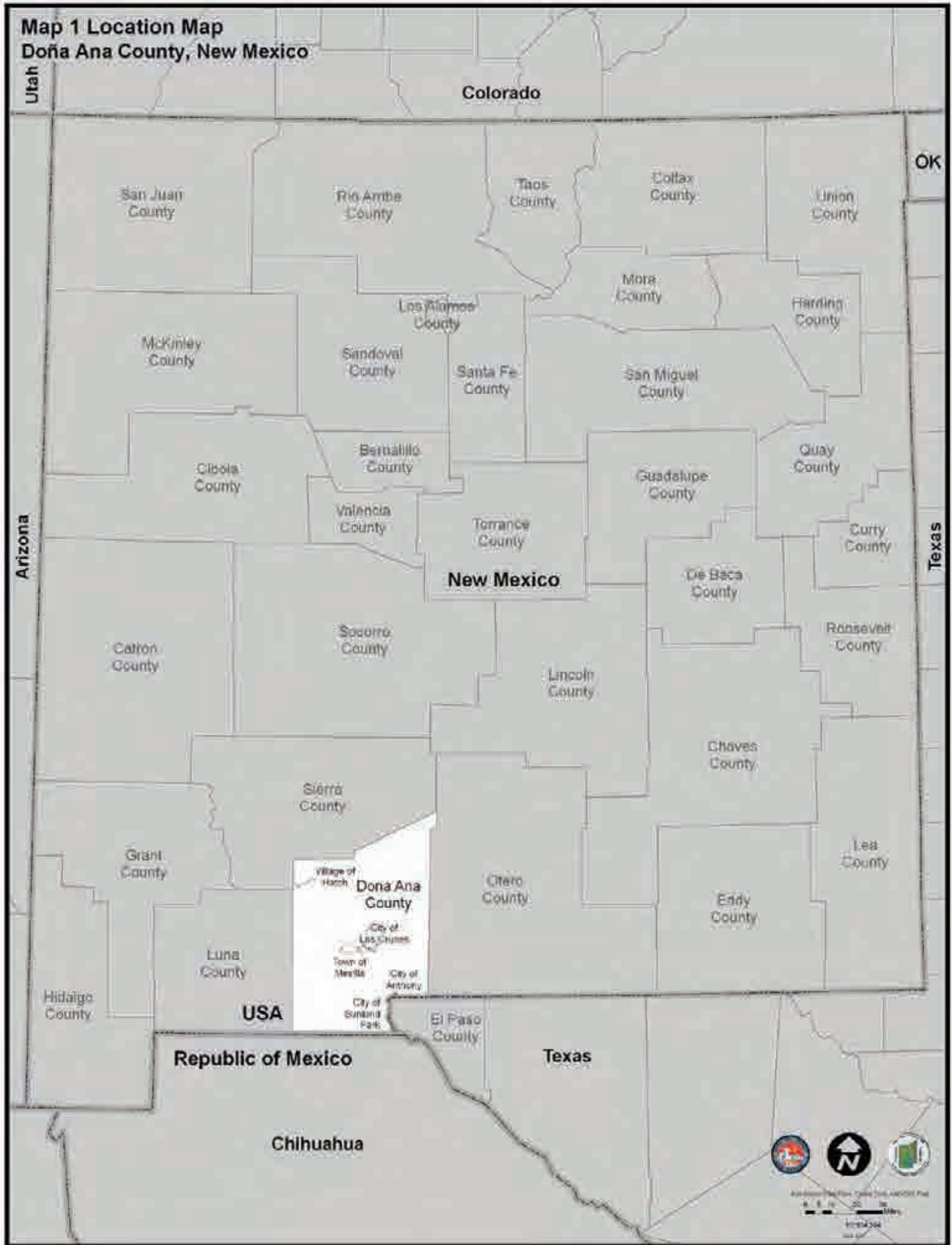
The area's temperate climate and rich environment foster an agrarian lifestyle, which continues to provide the backbone of the local economy. Simultaneously, the region is evolving through the development of other institutions such as education, aerospace, healthcare, and government, which contribute to the availability of urban amenities and further strengthen the economy. These combined factors have led to a diverse population that is continuing to grow in all areas of the county.

Doña Ana County includes five incorporated municipalities: Anthony, Hatch, Las Cruces, Mesilla, and Sunland Park and is home to approximately 60 other unincorporated communities. Over the next thirty years, the estimate is 325,000 people will make Doña Ana County their home. Conscious of the impacts of such growth on public services, infrastructure capacity, environmental quality and private development, communities and government agencies in Doña Ana County began a regional planning effort in the fall of 2007 to address these issues.



Chile Peppers

# Map 1 Location Map Doña Ana County, New Mexico



Scale: 0 10 20 30 Miles  
1:100,000

# Chapter 1, Executive Summary

## 1.1 Introduction

“Nearly 210,000 people now live in our part of the Rio Grande valley—along the river, on desert mesas, and in mountain foothills. We live in communities of many sizes, celebrate a multi-cultural heritage, and work in a highly diversified economy.

Doña Ana County has become a vibrant, diverse place that is well positioned to face whatever challenges come our way.

We can shape our own destiny. Doña Ana County can be a prosperous, beautiful place for everyone if we face the future together—united by a common vision, dedicated to work hard, and committed to making good decisions based on the best available information.”

— *Billy Garrett, Doña Ana County Commissioner*

Doña Ana County possesses many resources that help create the vibrant and diverse atmosphere recognized and embraced by its residents expressed in Figure 1-1, “Our Vision.” From the focus groups held in 2008 about the “best thing about my community is,” residents frequently mentioned the benefits of living in a mild climate with lots of sunshine. They value the many open vistas and accessibility to a variety of outdoor recreation

opportunities. Many people value the tranquil lifestyle and warm-friendly people. Residents indicated they liked the variety of things to do living near the Rio Grande, in the Chihuahuan desert, and near the many mountains accessible to the communities in

## Our Vision

Figure 1-1

We want to make Doña Ana County and all its communities a truly great place to live, work, and play for residents of all ages, backgrounds, cultures, and economic levels.

Our vision encompasses planned and managed growth in areas such as jobs, economy, tourism, and infrastructure, and encourages new opportunities that improve our quality of life.

We envision strong economic growth in the region. We are prepared to take advantage of arising opportunities to provide new and better jobs and to increase the economic vitality of the area for all of our residents.

As we plan our future, we recognize the value of our mountains, desert environment, rivers, agriculture, and private-property rights and the importance of planning to live within the limitations of our unique land and natural resources.

We envision a development plan that embraces the rich historical and cultural heritage of Doña Ana County, as well as its ties with Mexico and Texas. We embrace the value of an integrated multimodal transportation network that connects people with each other as well as with economic, housing, recreational, medical, and educational opportunities.

Map 1 - Location Map



“Our work (on the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan) has resulted in a well thought-out projection of what our area can become economically and physically while still maintaining the natural beauty and the special culture that has drawn so many people to our land.”

— William “Bill” Mattiace and Charlie Scholz, Vision 2040 Advisory Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman

Doña Ana County. This variety is throughout the county in the range of housing options and prices in rural, agricultural, suburban, and urban settings. Many people enjoy the thriving cultural experiences and historical sites throughout the region, including the number of performing and visual arts for a region of its size.

The foundation of this regional plan reflects comments and guidance provided by the residents of the county, given through surveys, stakeholder meetings, public forums, public meetings, and public comment periods. To achieve a basis of consensus, development of the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan used an intensive inventory and public engagement process described in Section 3.2, “Public Engagement”. Developing this plan allowed for residents from the entire county an opportunity to contribute their voice and vision for how the county will grow and advance between now and the year 2040.

The One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan has a planning area that spans the political boundary of Doña Ana County, New Mexico. Map 1, “Location Map,” illustrates the region in context to surrounding

counties. The plan addresses all incorporated municipalities and unincorporated portions of the county.

The region has five incorporated municipalities: Anthony, Hatch, Las Cruces, Mesilla, and Sunland Park. Each municipality offers its own character and contributes to the region’s quality of life. Las Cruces is the most urban, providing a full array of amenities and services typically found in larger communities. It has a variety of residential developments, commercial businesses, industrial areas, an international airport, golf courses, visual arts, educational facilities, and health care facilities. Sunland Park is a suburban community with many urban amenities. It has a thriving entertainment district centered around outdoor amusement, casino, and equestrian uses. Anthony is a growing community along I-10 with many residential and business opportunities. Mesilla has a greenbelt of agricultural lands centered on its nationally recognized historic plaza offering cultural events, specialty retail, galleries, dining, and drinking establishments. Hatch centers on its agriculture, particularly the chile, and its small town main street, known as the “Chile Capital of the World.”

# Chapter 1, Executive Summary

“If you do not think about or plan for the future, it may not be the future you would like to see.”

— Valerie Beversdorf, Vision 2040 Advisory Steering Committee

The unincorporated portion of Doña Ana County has the majority of the undeveloped desert and mountains in the region residents value for their beauty, recreation, and ranching activities. The unincorporated area has many of the region’s agricultural and dairy farms, most near the Rio Grande. It is home for many of the residents living in the 37 designated colonias. Many of these colonias are historic developments like Rincon founded in 1883 as a hub for the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway. The unincorporated portion of Doña Ana County also contains White Sands Missile Range, a major employer in the area, and the Santa Teresa Port of Entry, a growing hub for transportation and industrial activity with the nearby Doña Ana County airport and intermodal Union Pacific rail yard. In addition, it encompasses the five-mile planning jurisdiction around Las Cruces known as the Extra-Territorial Zone (ETZ), which is a development transition area and the location of New Mexico State University (NMSU).

There is no state statute or other requirement to adopt the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan. However, participating elected governing bodies within the

region cooperated as a way to improve intergovernmental cooperation, work toward a more effective regional response to issues beyond their respective political boundaries, and provide a policy framework for the long-term growth of the region.

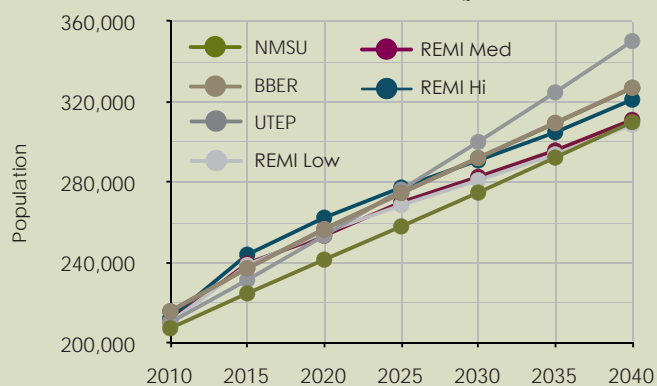
The One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan serves as an advisory document intended to act as a guiding framework for mindful decision making when planning and implementing future development within the region. It covers the broad aspects of how the residents of Doña Ana County would like to see the county develop. It does not provide detailed direction on any of its plan elements; the local comprehensive plans serve this function. Rather, it describes overarching principles and goals. The intent of this document is to serve as a platform for use in developing more detailed comprehensive, master, and site plans. It may also serve as guidance on policy, programming, and capital improvement decisions to local elected and administration officials.

## **1.2 Document Framework**

Chapter 1, “Executive Summary,” provides an overview of the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan. The Executive Summary is part of the regional plan document, but designed to be separate. As such, there is some duplication of the maps, figures, and tables found in other chapters of the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan.

Figure 1-2

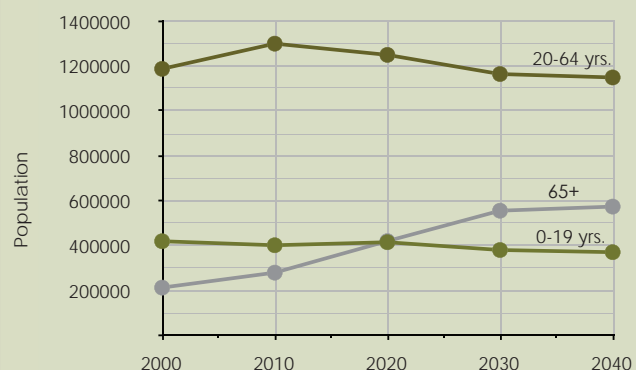
### Projected Population Growth Doña Ana County



Source: New Mexico State University Arrowhead Center (NMSU), New Mexico Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER), University of Texas El Paso Border Regional Modeling Project (UTEP), and City of El Paso Regional Economic Model (REMI).

Figure 1-3

### Age Group Projections State of New Mexico



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Interim State Population Projections: 2040 projection based on growth rate of previous years and stable population total

Chapter 2, “Regional Vision Statement,” and Figure 1-1, “Our Vision,” in the Executive Summary states the vision expressed by the residents of Doña Ana County. This vision is the foundation of the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan.

Chapter 3, “Introduction,” explains the purpose of this plan, summarizes the public engagement process, lists the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT), and provides demographic data, focusing on the historic and future population growth for Doña Ana County. For planning purposes, the plan uses a population of 325,000 to represent a likely midrange forecast for the year 2040 with an increase of approximately 115,000 residents from the 2010 population estimate of 210,000 people. This population forecast derives from examining population projection calculations from four different institutions as illustrated in Figure 1-2, “Projected Population Growth.” A noted trend of the population for the county is the projected increase in the number of persons over 65 years of age as illustrated in Figure 1-3, “Age Group Projections.”

Chapter 4, “Concepts,” describes the concepts of sustainability and smart growth. Both of these concepts have increased in importance in recent years as communities attempt to manage their resources in the best way possible. These concepts encourage an approach geared toward resilience, adaptability, stewardship, and acknowledgement of the interconnected relationships of the economy, society, and environment. For this plan, these concepts helped shape the ten guiding principles shown in Table 1-1, “Guiding Principles.”

Chapter 5, “Regional Snapshot,” identifies twelve resource topics: Land Use; Water; Air Quality; Environmental Resources; Hazards; Transportation; Community Facilities & Services; Utilities & Infrastructure; Housing; Economy; Community Character, Design & Historical Preservation; and Intergovernmental Cooperation. The “Regional Snapshot” chapter expounds on each topic, providing information on existing conditions, issues, and accomplishments.

Chapter 6, “Regional Goals & Strategies,” builds off the issues identified for each of the

# Chapter 1, Executive Summary

Table 1-1

## Guiding Principles

- Create safe, clean, and affordable places to live that offer economic and other opportunities.
- Keep intact values for individual liberty, democracy, and private-property rights.
- Recognize natural market forces exist that are best left alone; however, opportunities to use, respond to, or guide these forces should be pursued to better manage the region's resources.
- Welcome growth in a way that is mindful of its impact to important historic, cultural and natural resources.
- Use renewable and finite resources wisely in a way that minimizes or reuses waste.
- Address the inter-relationship of the resource topics identified in this plan.
- Encourage communities to move toward sustainable practices over time.
- Use an open process that affords everyone opportunities to participate in public decisions.
- Foster a sense of community that best matches the region, municipalities and neighborhoods.
- Try to anticipate changes or events that may threaten the usual way of doing things so the region is more resilient.

twelve resource topics. The goals represent common approaches to resources of regional significance within Doña Ana County. The strategies for each goal identify possible ways to achieve the goal and may

not apply in all circumstances or parts of the county. Table 1-2, "Regional Goals," lists the goals identified through the public engagement process for this plan.

Chapter 7, "Types of Communities," describes some broad characteristics of four categories of communities within Doña Ana County: Municipality, Colonia, Extra-Territorial Zone, and County. These types of communities represent distinct areas with their own administrative or planning functions to develop future comprehensive or master plans, have appointed or elected bodies that address the physical developmental pattern for a defined area, or are a recognized community type by New Mexico State Statute.

Chapter 8, "Regional Growth Strategies," describes the housing and development methodologies used to develop the concept plan of Map 11, "Consensus Growth Strategy - 2040." The "Consensus Growth Strategy - 2040" includes a key assumption to encourage approximately two-thirds of new population distribution to occur within existing municipalities and the remaining one-third of new population distribution to occur within the unincorporated portions of Doña Ana County. The 2010 population distribution had 54 percent of people residing within existing municipalities and 46 percent of people residing in unincorporated portions of the county. Table 1-3, "Consensus Growth Strategy Assumptions - 2040," provides the key assumptions envisioned with Map 11, "Consensus Growth Strategy - 2040."

# Regional Goals

Table 1-2

## Land Use

- Land use should serve as the element of the regional plan upon which all other elements of One Valley, One Vision 2040 are based.
- Provide a general form or pattern for the location, distribution, and characteristics of future land use within Doña Ana County to the year 2040.
- Prepare a future land use plan that is fiscally resilient.
- Create and integrate Smart Growth principles in planning.
- Guide development in a manner that will both protect the rights of private landowners and the interests of the public.
- Encourage development where adequate facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.
- Encourage the development of communities with a mixture of land uses.
- Encourage retention of open space, scenic aspects of rural areas, entranceways to urban areas, and transition areas between urban areas.
- Promote the region's status as one of New Mexico's most productive and economically important agricultural areas.

## Water

- Ensure the availability of a safe, dependable, affordable, and sustainable water supply to meet or exceed the needs of all reasonable beneficial uses.
- Protect existing surface and groundwater from pollution and ensure it meets or exceeds water quality standards.

## Air Quality

- Support regional efforts to maintain and improve air quality by meeting or exceeding State and Federal Air Quality Standards.

## Environmental Resources

- Make land use decisions that protect and enhance the natural environment.
- Protect and maintain natural habitat and wildlife connectivity to the greatest extent possible and mitigate damage that may result from development.
- Minimize impacts created by development and human activities to realize the full potential of the environmental resources as a community asset.



# Regional Goals

Table 1-2

## Hazards

- Protect people and property from hazards.
- Protect people and property from the negative effects of stormwater.

## Transportation

- Encourage the development of a safe, efficient, and effective intermodal transportation system for a variety of transportation choices.
- Coordinate transportation planning with other functions, including land use planning.
- Increase access to non-motorized transportation options to promote healthy living and provide mobility alternatives.
- Increase transit ridership, accessibility, and convenience.

## Community Facilities & Services

- Provide community facilities and services that are necessary or desirable to support the future land use plan.
- Meet the existing and projected needs of residents through location, access, extent and timing, staffing, and category of community facilities and services.
- Coordinate with other local government, special districts, school districts, and state and federal agencies on the provision of community facilities that have multijurisdictional impacts.
- Ensure that local governments provide adequate, properly located recreational and leisure opportunities.
- Provide a variety of opportunities for outdoor recreation to utilize open spaces to a greater extent.

## Utilities & Infrastructure

- Provide utilities and infrastructure that are necessary or desirable to support the future land use plan.
- Meet the projected needs of residents through location, access, character, extent and timing of public utilities and infrastructure.
- Coordinate with other local governments, utility districts, and state and federal agencies on the provision of utilities that have multijurisdictional impacts.
- Develop and implement comprehensive measures to maximize resource conservation.

# Regional Goals

Table 1-2

## Housing

- Create livable mixed-use neighborhoods with increased mobility options and a strong sense of community.
- Provide a range of housing alternatives that provides safe, clean, comfortable, and affordable living environments.

## Economy

- Sustain and attract economic activities that play a vital role to the region in providing jobs, services, and adding to quality of life.
- Diversify business communities to enhance economic vitality and workforce opportunities.
- Establish communities that attract and retain a well-trained workforce.
- Enhance the economic potential of the Rio Grande in a way that protects its environmental and agricultural functions.
- Provide sustainable and efficient infrastructure to advance economic growth and revitalization.

## Community Character, Design, & Historic Preservation

- Preserve and respect scenic views, sites, and corridors in a manner that reasonably compensates, provides incentives, maintains similar existing property rights, or in another similar manner that balances the public and property owner interests.
- Encourage innovative design that is compatible with the surrounding character.
- Support a visually cohesive region respecting the character of communities that makes them unique.
- Identify, preserve, and enhance the historic and cultural resources of Doña Ana County.

## Intergovernmental Cooperation

- Improve effective intergovernmental cooperation in addressing regional matters and guiding quality growth.
- Engage a diverse group of residents in the process of local government and intergovernmental cooperation.

# Chapter 1, Executive Summary

The “Consensus Growth Strategy - 2040” is a hybrid strategy of three different growth strategy alternatives considered during the planning process for this plan: trend, satellite, and compact. Figure 1-4, “Rural Illustration Small Community Central Square,” and Figure 1-5, “Urban Illustration of Downtown Las Cruces, NM 2040,” convey the core concepts of the “Consensus Growth Strategy - 2040” and the guiding principles of this plan.

Chapter 8, “Regional Growth Strategies,” describes the jobs methodologies used to develop the concept plan of Map 12, “Consensus Jobs Strategy - 2040.” The “Consensus Jobs Strategy - 2040” includes a key assumption to double the number of jobs from 95,000 to 180,000 by 2040. In addition, this strategy encourages a jobs/housing balance and economic gardening approach. The jobs/housing balance strives to locate jobs and housing at price ranges

that economically match the range of jobs within a reasonable commute time. The economic gardening approach looks to create a nurturing environment allowing smaller, local companies to grow. Table 1-4, “Consensus Jobs Strategy Assumptions - 2040,” provides the key assumptions envisioned with the “Consensus Jobs Strategy - 2040.”

Chapter 8, “Regional Growth Strategies,” concludes with Map 13, “Regional Plan - 2040.” The “Regional Plan - 2040” is a composite of the concept plans “Consensus Growth Strategy - 2040” and “Consensus Jobs Strategy - 2040.” The concept plan “Regional Plan - 2040” recognizes growth will and can occur outside designated growth areas; however, growth should be incentivized toward the identified growth areas. This plan represents the large-scale conceptual vision for Doña Ana County in regards to growth and employment.

Figure 1-4: Rural Illustration Small Community Central Square



Table 1-3

## Consensus Growth Strategy Assumptions - 2040 Doña Ana County Region

Key Assumptions	Consensus Growth Strategy
2010 Land Use Supply (Undeveloped)	397 sq. mi.
2040 Land Use Demand	5.39 sq. mi.
Population Distribution	70% Municipalities 30% County
Infrastructure	Growth incentivized impact fee infrastructure.
Density	Central city & small community cores more dense
Growth Pattern	Concentrated in central city & small planned communities
Building Envelopes	Mid-hi rise central city & low rise small communities

Table 1-4

## Consensus Jobs Strategy Assumptions - 2040 Doña Ana County Region

Key Assumptions	Jobs Growth Strategy
2011 Jobs Supply	95,000 Jobs total
2040 Jobs Demand	180,000 Jobs total
Jobs Distribution	Jobs housing balance & economic gardening
Infrastructure	Growth incentivized impact fee infrastructure
Density	Central city & small community more dense
Growth Pattern	Concentrated in central city & small planned communities
Building Envelopes	Mid-hi rise central city & low rise small communities

# Chapter 1, Executive Summary

Chapter 9, "Implementation," describes who will monitor the plan, the amendment process, the application of this plan in the planning decision-making process, and a preliminary list of actions local governing bodies might consider over the next five years in Table 9-1, "Regional Action Plan." The "Regional Action Plan" lists the goals associated with each action, primary responsible entities, and a priority ranking of actions for 2012 to 2013.

The last chapters in the plan are Chapter 10, "Acronyms & Glossary" and Chapter 11, "Bibliography."

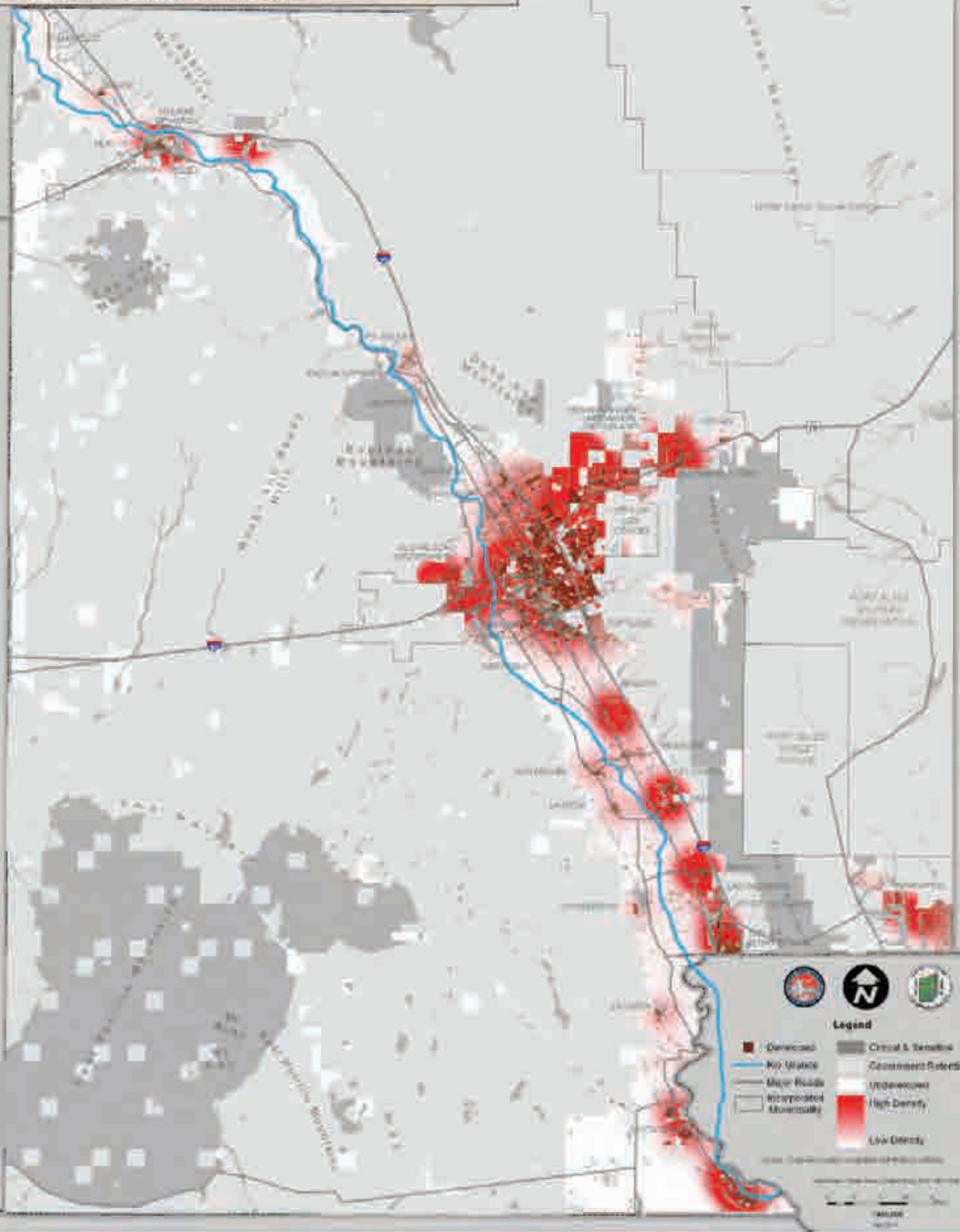
## 1.3 Conclusion

The One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan intends to create a unified sense of direction, describing the vision expressed by the residents of Doña Ana County. It is a cumulative expression of the values, concerns, and goals of the people here. It shows the resources valued and how they want to protect those resources in the future. It shows how they want to accommodate future growth, while protecting and maintaining the valuable aspects of the region. As a whole, this regional planning effort has created a collaborative vision; together we are shaping our destiny by working together as one valley with one vision.

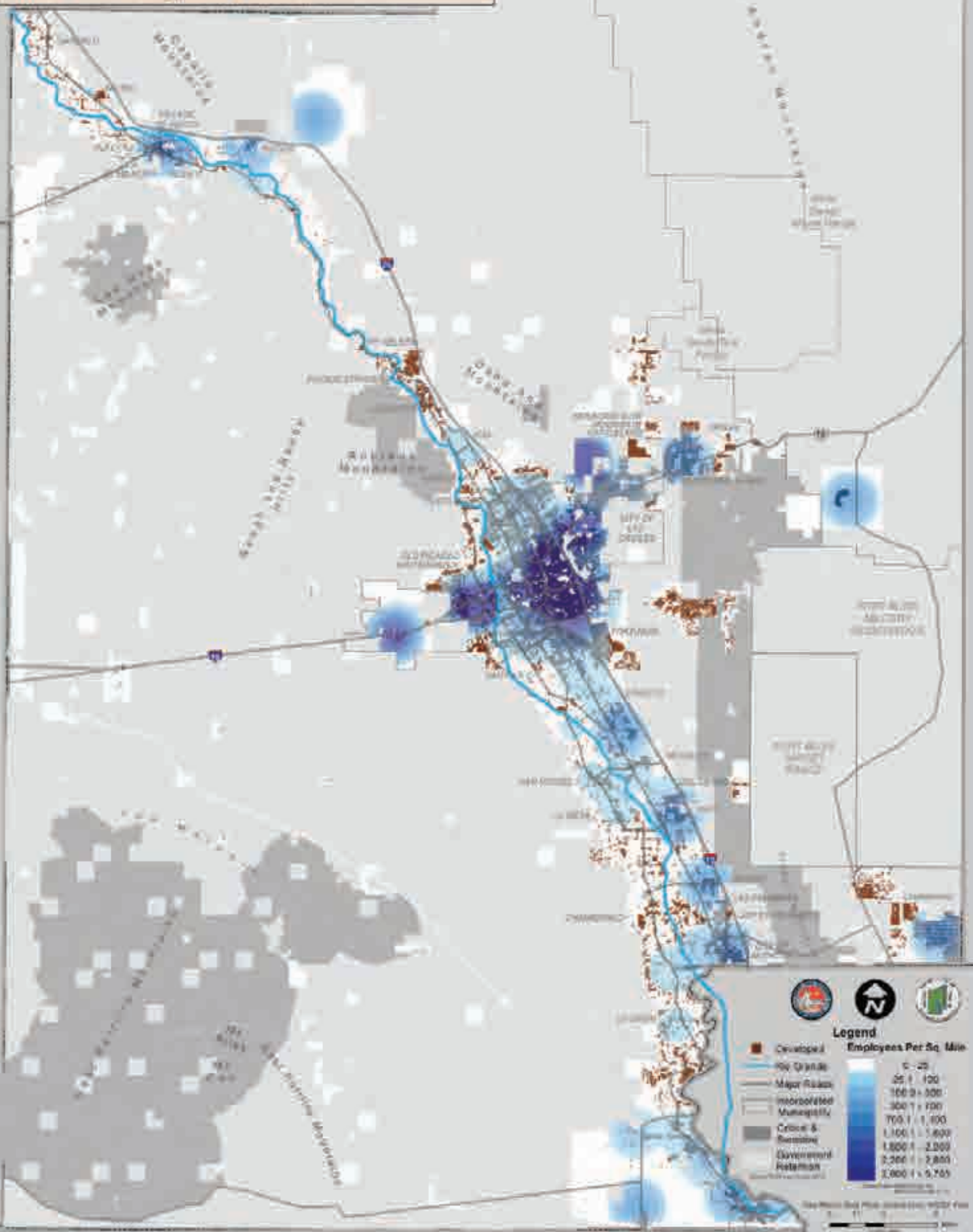
Figure 1-5: Urban Illustration of Downtown Las Cruces, NM 2040



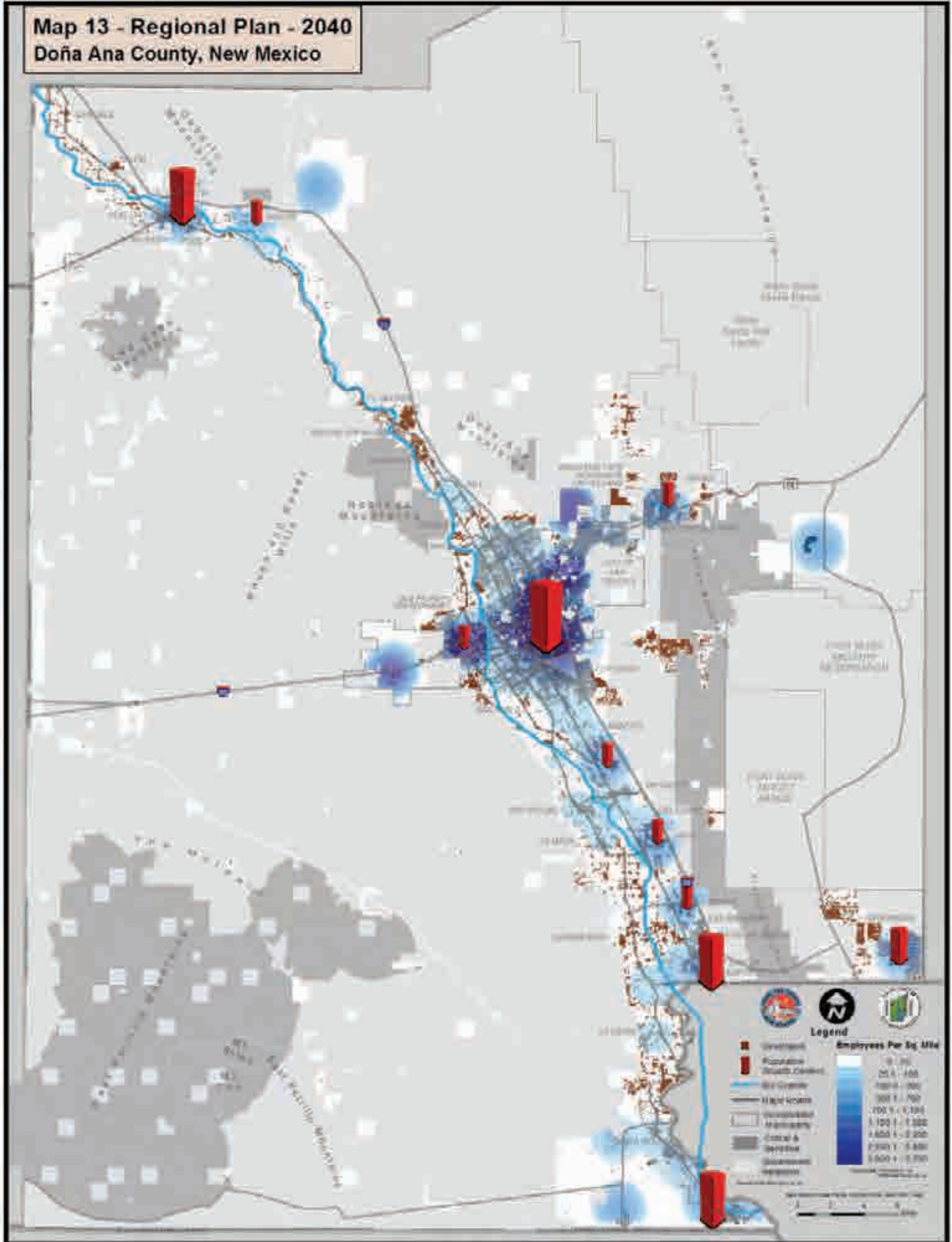
**Map 11 - Consensus Growth Strategy - 2040**  
**Doña Ana County, New Mexico**



**Map 12 - Consensus Jobs Strategy - 2040**  
**Doña Ana County, New Mexico**



**Map 13 - Regional Plan - 2040**  
**Doña Ana County, New Mexico**





# Chapter 2, Regional Vision Statement

“It is always important to have a vision of where you are going. After all, how would you know if you got there if you do not know where you are going.”

— Judd Singer, Vision 2040 Advisory Steering Committee

The basis for regional planning is its community vision. To achieve a basis of consensus, “One Valley, One Vision 2040” used an intensive public input program and inventory process. The goal of having a shared vision is to help reduce land use conflicts between jurisdictions and to better manage future growth and development in a proactive and cost-efficient manner.

This chapter lays out the vision for Doña Ana County, its incorporated and unincorporated communities, based on the common themes that arose out of the public input summarized in Section 3.2, “Public Engagement”. In April 2010, the Doña Ana County Board of County Commissioners and Las Cruces City Council approved resolutions on a vision statement for use by the Vision 2040 Advisory Committee. The final vision represents the input of the Vision 2040 Advisory Committee, input received during the 2011 public review period, recommendation of the various planning and zoning commissions, and input by the local governing bodies.

## Our Vision

We want to make Doña Ana County and all its communities a truly great place to live, work, and play for residents of all ages, backgrounds, cultures, and economic levels.

Our vision encompasses planned and managed growth in areas such as jobs, economy, tourism, and infrastructure, and encourages new opportunities that improve our quality of life.

We envision strong economic growth in the region. We are prepared to take advantage of arising opportunities to provide new and better jobs and to increase the economic vitality of the area for all of our residents.

As we plan our future, we recognize the value of our mountains, desert environment, rivers, agriculture, and private-property rights and the importance of planning to live within the limitations of our unique land and natural resources.

We envision a development plan that embraces the rich historical and cultural heritage of Doña Ana County, as well as its ties with Mexico and Texas. We embrace the value of an integrated multimodal transportation network that connects people with each other as well as with economic, housing, recreational, medical, and educational opportunities.



Rio Grande



Dripping Springs Trail

# Chapter 3, Introduction

This chapter outlines the purpose of the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan. It provides a brief summary on the types of public engagement used during the regional plan process. It moves into the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT) for the region that the Vision 2040 Advisory Committee identified as a tool to help specify the issues and accomplishments listed in Chapter 5, “Regional Snapshot”, and develop the goals and strategies listed in Chapter 6, “Regional Goals & Strategies”. The chapter continues with demographic data, focusing on the historic and future population growth. The region’s population was approximately 210,000 people in 2010, with a mid-range projection by 2040 of 325,000 people. This chapter ends with a description of the organization of the plan and its relationship to other plans.

## 3.1 Purpose

The One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan is advisory and looks at growth from various perspectives beyond any one political district or authority. It addresses issues in much the same way local comprehensive plans do, but from a broader perspective. It establishes basic guidelines regarding plans and development and helps to attain consistency. It recognizes a balance exists between the interests of the public and those of private property owners, and seeks to respect private property rights, due process, and just compensation.

The plan does not take the place of or change existing local planning or regulatory functions, nor does it apply to all local issues. It is a voluntary guide and addresses what may occur in the future; however, unanticipated events may require future decisions contrary to stated goals, strategies, and actions. This regional plan has the following characteristics:

### **Long Range/Broad Scope**

It seeks to address topics that are shared among jurisdictions and communities, grouping identifiable themes for which strategies are then prepared. The time horizon in which the plan seeks to identify and address the issues spans a 30-year period, thus reflecting the communities’ desire for long-range planning.

### **Vision**

The plan establishes a common vision of this region’s future. Through the long range/ broad scope approach, the dynamics of each community, particularly land use and growth perspectives, can begin to take shape and be realized.

### **Practicability**

Valley, One Vision 2040 allows subsequent comprehensive planning activities to draw from work carried out in this regional effort. If the principal themes of this plan are incorporated, each jurisdiction’s local policy and plans should remain consistent with the



Vision 2040 Advisory Committee

regional perspective. At the same time, it will address the individual community's need and remain true to that community's organizational and operational structure.

### **3.2 Public Engagement**

There was an extensive public-engagement process for this plan, which provided a broad range of opportunities for people to express their vision and preferences for the region's growth. This input was vital to developing the vision, goals, strategies, and actions for the plan.

The methodology used to develop this plan relied on several methods for gathering public input in advance of drafting the plan. It tapped into a broad-based stakeholder group through the Vision 2040 Advisory Committee to help drive the draft plan from varying perspectives. Once drafted, the plan was refined based upon public input at a number of stakeholder, planning and

zoning commission, Extra-Territorial Zoning Commission (ETZ), and elected-governing body meetings.

Common themes developed by (1) counting the number of similar comments using the twelve resource topics of this plan as a template from the input gathered during the public forums, focus group sessions, and stakeholder meetings, and (2) assessing where people agreed or disagreed on the survey questions. The initial vision statement, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats provided to the Vision 2040 Advisory Committee used the common recurring themes that the Vision 2040 Advisory Committee built upon through recommendation of its Steering Committee. The plan had further refinements based on the input gathered during the public input phase held during June and July 2011. To assist the decision-making bodies, they had access to the written public input received and a comment matrix summarizing this input.

# Chapter 3, Introduction

Additional details about the public engagement process and findings are available in the Appendices referenced in the bibliography of this plan. Along with various public relations and noticing, public input consisted of the following:

## **Elected-Governing Body Meetings**

There were fifteen meetings held, with all meetings open to the public. The Anthony Board of Trustees met once. The Doña Ana County Board of Commissioners met eight times, five of these jointly with the Las Cruces City Council. The Hatch Board of Trustees met once. The Las Cruces City Council met eight times, five of these jointly with the Doña Ana County Board of Commissioners. The Mesilla Board of Trustees met once. The Sunland Park Board of Trustees met once.

## **Commission Meetings**

There were eighteen meetings held, with all meetings open to the public. The Anthony Planning and Zoning Commission met once. The Las Cruces ETZ met six times. The Las Cruces Planning and Zoning Commission met six times. The Doña Ana County Planning and Zoning Commission met five times.

## **Vision 2040 Advisory Committee**

The Advisory Committee included 45 stakeholders invited to guide development of the plan. There were twenty-five meetings held. The Advisory Committee met seven times throughout 2007 and 2009, and met eleven times throughout 2010

and 2011. It appointed a seven-member steering committee to represent the recommendations of its five subcommittees. The steering committee had five meetings as part of the advisory committee meetings, and met seven times between meetings. All meetings were open to the public.

## **Public Forums**

There were 25 of these forums held between March 2008 and October 2009.<sup>40</sup>

## **Focus Group Sessions and Stakeholder Meetings**

There were 36 meetings held throughout the process.<sup>40</sup>

## **Surveys**

There was a mail survey done in May 2008, which was updated in October 2008<sup>40</sup>, along with a phone survey done in October 2008<sup>44</sup>. Development of the survey questions applied to the regional plan and comprehensive plan updates of the City of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County. Therefore, not all the survey questions were applicable to the regional plan. The mail survey went to 1,600 randomly selected households throughout Doña Ana County. There were one hundred and sixty mail surveys returned, for a ten-percent response rate. There were five hundred completed phone surveys made to persons to align with demographic characteristics of Doña Ana County.

## Website

Throughout the process, the One Valley, One Vision website ([www.vision2040.las-cruces.org](http://www.vision2040.las-cruces.org)) was available for information on the process. It included drafts of the plan, contact information, instructions on how to leave comments, meeting material, and meeting dates. In addition, meeting agendas were available on the county website.

"I have experienced years of serving on all kinds of boards but never have I experienced greater diversity of people, professions, and ideas than the dedicated individuals serving on the Vision 2040 Advisory Committee."

— William "Bill" Mattiace, Vision 2040 Advisory Committee Chairman



Vision 2040 Advisory Committee



Vision 2040 Steering Committee

# Chapter 3, Introduction

## 3.3 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats analysis (SWOT) is a strategic planning tool that aids in specifying goals and identifying factors involved in achieving them. The following summarizes the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified during the process.

### Strengths

- Participants recognize the region is growing, and they support planned growth.
- Institutions such as education, aerospace, military (i.e., White Sands Missile Range), government, healthcare, and construction and development play vital roles in the regional economy.



White Sands Missile Range



Downtown Las Cruces Farmer's Market

- Agriculture is one of the historical foundations of the area's culture and provides a significant and sustainable economic base for the region.
- Agricultural and rangeland practices benefit the area by providing groundwater recharge, wildlife habitat, green space, open space, and cultural traditions for the region.
- The climate and environment are assets. Some of the positive aspects of the region include: (1) temperate weather, (2) communities surrounded by vast undeveloped public space, (3) diverse plant and wildlife, and (4) scenic landscapes.
- The region enjoys a rich cultural heritage and offers an agrarian small-town lifestyle with urban amenities. It has a diverse borderland culture and a growing retirement population.

- There is an evolving arts community. It promotes performing, visual, and literary arts as an integral part of education, economic growth, and community development.
- There is a comprehensive system of educational institutions serving the area as shown in Table 5-18, "Agencies for Intergovernmental Cooperation".

One way to measure regional performance is through outside opinion.

- Las Cruces was ranked in the top ten of best-performing small cities for 2009 and 2010.
- Las Cruces was ranked number two on "America's Top Places to Retire" list for 2010.

Source: Milken Institute and CNBC.com



New Mexico State University



# Chapter 3, Introduction

## Weaknesses

- The region must increase the employment and wage base.
- The belief is many of those educated and trained in the area seek employment outside the region.
- Not all parts of the region have comparable levels of basic infrastructure.
- The large distance between communities creates challenges.
- A need exists to improve transportation systems for existing users and to accommodate future growth.
- There is a developing health-care network constrained by long travel distances for certain needs.
- The region must do better in improving the sense of identity or branding for its urban center, the city of Las Cruces.
- A fragmentation of infrastructure planning and management, such as those for stormwater management, can potentially affect responsiveness during an emergency, available funding priorities, or impacts of decisions to adjacent communities.
- Not all young people get the education they need or obtain a high school diploma or equivalent degree, which can negatively affect all aspects of the quality of life from increased public assistance to the type of economic development the region attracts.
- Many people outside the region lack an awareness of the historic, cultural, and environmental resources; this negatively affects tourism potential.
- There are limited arts and entertainment venues for youth, except for those within the Las Cruces area.

91.6% of respondents identified the need for economic solutions that create a higher wage base.

Source: Vision 2040 Mail Survey 2008

When asked if the region is doing a sufficient job to address water conservation, stormwater management, air pollution, waste management and illegal dumping, over a third of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Source: Vision 2040 Mail Survey 2008

## Opportunities

- Possible regional transit connection enhancements may exist between communities as well as to Albuquerque, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas; options include commuter rail, enhanced rapid bus routes, and recreational trails or similar connections.

- There are economic development opportunities in manufacturing, agricultural processing, aerospace, engineering and management operations, Spaceport, transportation-related sectors, alternative energy utilities, health care, tourism, space tourism, arts/entertainment, public and private partnerships, and at port of entries.

- Economic synergy potential exists in pursuing rail connection of the region's industrial and airport facilities like the West Mesa Industrial Park and Las Cruces International Airport to the rail operations in Santa Teresa.

- There is the ability to maintain, preserve, enhance or replicate our important historical, cultural, and natural resources.

- Development opportunities are possible near existing urban areas on public lands, e.g., land too small to use for open space or land reserved for a use that is no longer needed.

- There is potential to enhance the Rio Grande as a community asset.

60.4% to 78.0% agreed or strongly agreed to encourage retail, light industrial/high technology, office parks, and mixed-use.

Source: Vision 2040 Mail Survey 2008



2011 Mesilla Valley Balloon Rally, Las Cruces

## Suggestions for Economic Development Opportunities Noted During the Vision 2040 Process:

- Support maintenance and construction businesses.
- Take advantage of free-trade opportunities, including spill-over business from maquiladoras.
- Encourage recycling-related businesses.
- Pursue manufacturing and related aerospace opportunities.
- Expand agricultural sales and exports, including value-added processing and large-scale farm to market enterprises.
- Seek opportunities to expand the dairy industry, including transporting and processing facilities.
- Integrate urban development with mid or small-scale agriculture.
- Foster energy industries such as bio-fuel, biomass, solar, wind, geothermal, or low-head hydro.
- **Promote increased tourism**, including rock art and native historic sites and agricultural tourism.
- Expand agricultural museums in the area.
- **Develop more tourism and activity around equestrian uses.**
- **Implement nature-based tourism highlighting the region's public lands, open space, natural beauty, biodiversity and year-round opportunities.**
- **Develop tourism along the Rio Grande.**
- Support efforts for regional watershed management, including enhancement of irrigation systems and capture and reclamation of stormwater.
- Look at retiree-centric services and businesses.
- Foster more industrial park development.
- Support the ongoing master planning in downtown Las Cruces.
- Pursue opportunities related to alternative energy and energy efficiency.

Source: Vision 2040 Visioning Sessions 2008 & Advisory Committee 2010-2011

## Threats

- Recessions are cyclical requiring planning to provide essential services and funding.
- Despite a view as an affordable place to live, differences in incomes, cost of housing, and other household expenses affect affordability in the region.
- There is potential for damage from flooding in specific parts of the region from intensive precipitation during monsoon periods and by the design, age, and condition of the flood-control infrastructure. In addition, there is sometimes disruption of the function of flood-control systems from such factors as illegal dumping, loss of vegetation, lack of maintenance, or unlawful construction in flood hazard areas.
- Built environment includes the threat of encroachment on our historical, cultural, agricultural, and natural resources.
- Growth is causing denser populations near military installations, airports, and other economic engines. We need to be mindful of how this encroachment may negatively affect our quality of life and the operations of these facilities.
- All land uses have potential negative aspects that could detract from quality of life, for agricultural land use this may be odor or misuse of pesticides and fertilizers.

- The transportation system is not always in pace or ahead of growth.
- Political changes outside the region and available resources affect the level and type of economic activity at military facilities and military-related industries.
- Occurrences of drought can affect the region's resources, including agricultural production and limitations to surface water.
- Potential decreases to water quantity are possible because of cyclical droughts and climate change that could jeopardize community sustainability and growth if not periodically considered in existing drought emergency and water conservation plans.
- Inadequate regional stormwater management and pollution prevention could jeopardize water quality.

56.8% of respondents either disagree or strongly disagree that the stakeholders in the region are doing a sufficient job managing growth

Source: Vision 2040 Mail Survey 2008

# Chapter 3, Introduction

## 3.4 Population

This section looks at how the region compares to other counties in New Mexico, adjacent areas, and areas within the region regarding population growth over the last thirty and ten years. Contributors to this increase included retirees, residents relocating from nearby El Paso, Texas, military personnel and related professionals, university students and faculty, people relocating for employment opportunities, and people who are simply drawn to the desert environment.

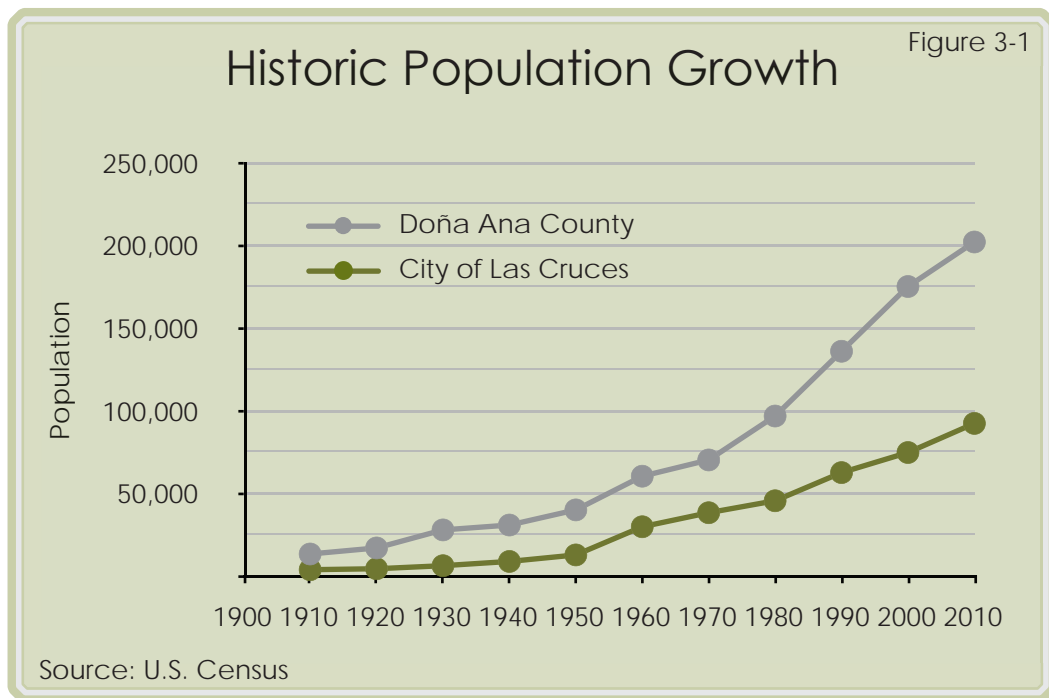
### Historic Growth

According to the decennial U.S. Census, Doña Ana County ranked second among all New Mexico counties in total population growth from 2000 to 2010. Sandoval County

ranked first at a population growth rate of 31.7 percent compared to Doña Ana County at 16.5 percent. For the period 1980 to 2010, Sandoval County ranked first at a population growth rate of 73.6 percent, with Torrance County at a growth rate of 54.3 percent and Doña Ana County at 54.0 percent.

Compared to neighboring areas, Doña Ana County had the highest population growth rates from 2000 to 2010. Juárez, Mexico had the highest population growth rate from 1980 to 2010, closely followed by Doña Ana County, as shown in Table 3-1, "Neighboring Area Population Change 1980 to 2010."

Within the region, Las Cruces experienced the highest population growth from 2000 to 2010, while Anthony and Sunland Park experienced the highest growth from 1980



## Neighboring Area Population Change (1980 to 2010)

Table 3-1

Area	Size (Square Miles)	1980 Population	2000 Population	2010 Population	Growth (1980 - 2010)	Growth (2000 - 2010)
Doña Ana County, NM	3,815	96,340	174,682	209,233	+ 53.96%	+ 16.51%
El Paso County, TX	1,015	591,610	679,622	800,647	+ 26.11%	+ 15.12%
Juárez (City), Mexico	1,875	567,365	1,168,000	1,332,131	+ 57.41%	+ 12.32%
Otero County, NM	6,627	44,665	62,298	63,797	+ 29.99%	+ 2.35%
Luna County, NM	2,965	15,585	25,016	25,095	+ 37.90%	+ 0.31%
Sierra County, NM	4,236	8,454	13,270	11,988	+ 29.48%	- 10.69%

Source: U.S. Census – American Fact Finder and Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía

to 2010 as shown in Table 3-2, “Select Areas Population Change 1980 to 2010.” Over the last thirty years, approximately 54 percent of the population lived within incorporated municipalities and 46 percent of the population lived within the unincorporated areas of Doña Ana County. With the 2010 incorporation of Anthony, the percentage of the population living within municipalities increased to 60 percent.

Figure 3-1, “Historic Population Growth,” shows the population from 1910 to 2010 for Doña Ana County and its largest populated municipality, Las Cruces. The fastest

decade of growth for the county was at 39.7 percent, between 1920 and 1930. For Las Cruces, the fastest decade of growth was at 58 percent, between 1950 and 1960. The slowest decade of growth for the county was at 9.7 percent, between 1930 and 1940. For Las Cruces, the slowest decade of growth was at 16 percent, between 1970 and 1980.

### Future Growth

In order to assess future growth, this plan examined local population projections from four different institutions: NMSU Arrowhead Center (NMSU), New Mexico Bureau of

## Select Areas Population Change Doña Ana County - 1980 to 2010

Area	Size (Square Miles)	1980 Population	1990 Population	2000 Population	2010 Population	Growth Rate (1980 - 2010)	Growth Rate (2000 - 2010)
Las Cruces	76.90	45,086	62,126	74,267	97,618	+ 53.80%	+ 23.90%
Las Cruces ETZ <sup>1</sup>	342.88	Not Available	Not Available	57,000	72,500	Not Available	+ 21.38%
Anthony (CDP) <sup>2</sup>	2.70	2,200	5,133	7,904	9,360	+ 76.50%	+ 15.60%
Doña Ana County (Unincorporated) <sup>3</sup>	3,704.81	41,684	56,960	75,349	84,305	+ 50.60%	+ 10.60%
Sunland Park	10.80	4,313	8,179	13,309	14,106	+ 69.40%	+ 5.70%
Mesilla	5.70	2,029	1,976	2,180	2,196	+ 7.60%	+ 0.70%
Hatch	3.10	1,028	1,136	1,673	1,648	+ 37.60%	- 1.50%

Source: U.S. Census – American Fact Finder and Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía

1 Data provided are estimates; 2 Provides Anthony Census Designated Place (CDP) data, city data unavailable; 3 Includes Las Cruces ETZ data

Business and Economic Research (BBER), UTEP Border Regional Modeling Project (UTEP), and the city of El Paso's Regional Economic Model (REMI).

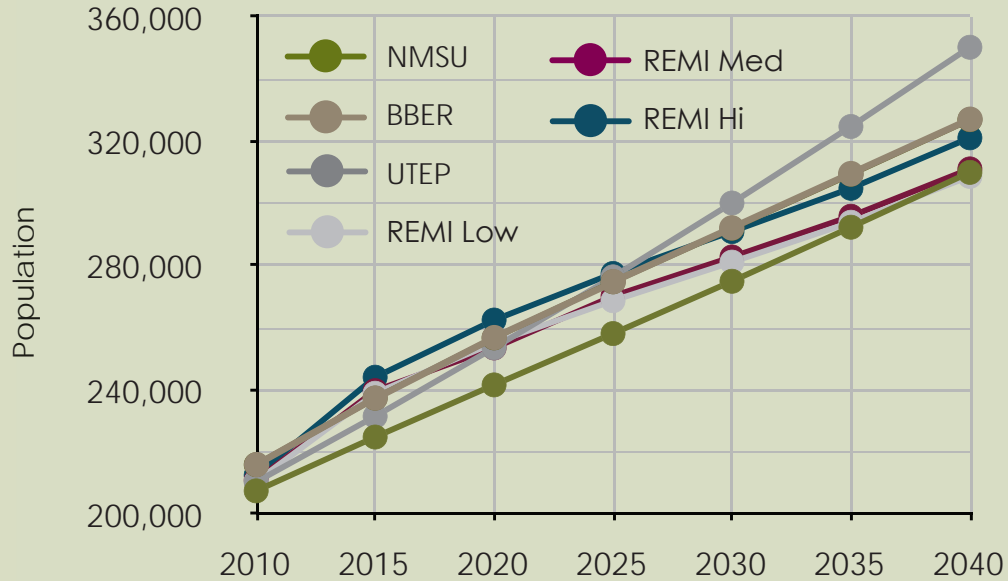
The projected 2040 population ranged from about 309,000 for the NMSU and low REMI scenarios, to about 350,000 for the UTEP scenario. The UTEP and REMI models both take into consideration military growth of White Sands Missile Range and Fort

Bliss, which may no longer be as high as projected.

Figure 3-2, "Projected Population Growth," shows the results of these population projection scenarios. For planning purposes, this plan uses a population of 325,000 to represent a likely mid-range forecast for the year 2040 with an increase of approximately 115,000 residents from the 2010 population estimate of 210,000 people.

Figure 3-2

## Projected Population Growth Doña Ana County



Source: New Mexico State University Arrowhead Center (NMSU), New Mexico Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER), University of Texas El Paso Border Regional Modeling Project (UTEP), and City of El Paso Regional Economic Model (REMI).

### Relocation Sources

Table 3-3, "Relocation Sources," lists some of the top counties people moved from prior to moving to Doña Ana County. Excluding New Mexico, the top counties people moved from are El Paso County in Texas, Maricopa County in Arizona, and Los Angeles County in California.

Table 3-3

## Relocation Sources

### Top U.S. Counties, excluding New Mexico

El Paso County (El Paso) .....	Texas
Maricopa County (Phoenix) .....	Arizona
Los Angeles County (Los Angeles) .....	California

### Top New Mexico Counties

Bernalillo County (Albuquerque) .....	New Mexico
Otero County (Alamogordo) .....	New Mexico
Grant County (Silver City) .....	New Mexico
Luna County (Deming) .....	New Mexico

Source: IRS, Statistics of Income 2004 to 2008

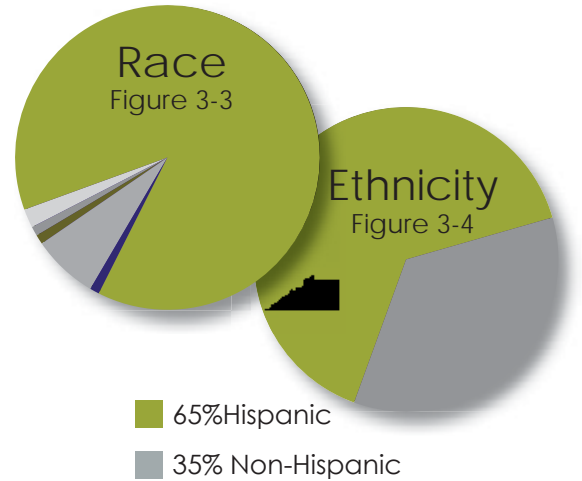


# Chapter 3, Introduction

## Ethnicity and Race

Based on the U.S. 2010 Census, the majority of people in the region identify their ethnicity as Hispanic and their race as white as shown in Figure 3-3, "Race" and Figure 3-4, "Ethnicity" respectively.

- 74% White
- 2% Black
- 2% American Indian
- 1% Asian
- 19% Other
- 3% 2+ Races



Source: 2010 Census Doña Ana County Redistricting Data

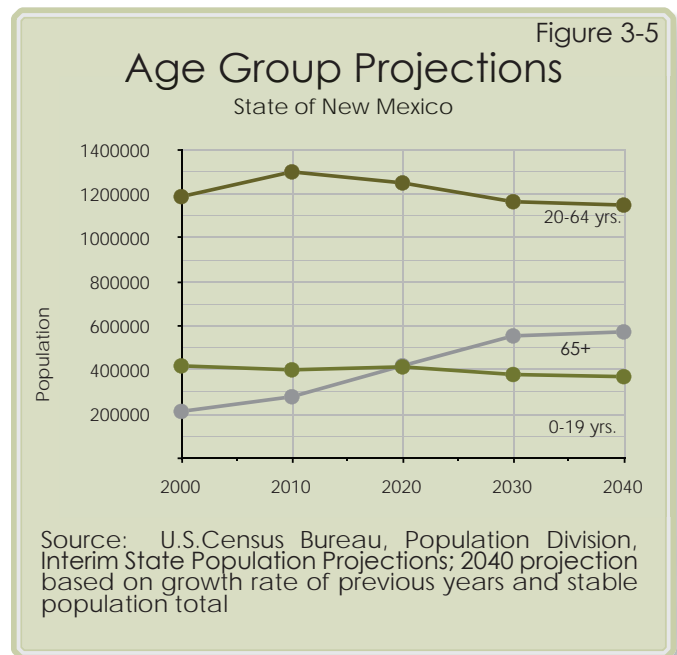
## Age

Overall, census data indicates that the general age and gender characteristics of the region's population have not changed much during the past decade. The past trend has been a decrease in school-aged people with slight increases of those within the workforce and retirement age groups. Compared to all of New Mexico, Doña Ana County has the most persons less than 19 years of age. The region's male to female ratio has remained relatively equal.

require consideration in the planning and service delivery local governments provide its residents. These needs and expectations require consideration in the various plans and implementation tools illustrated in Figure 3-6, "Plan Diagram".

Figure 3-5, "Age Group Projections," projects an increasing number of people over 65 years of age in New Mexico between 2010 and 2040. During this same period, the projection for all other age groups will remain stable or decrease.

A change in demographics, such as the increase in people over 65 years of age, brings different challenges and opportunities to the region. Older persons often bring skills and experience that is an asset to the workforce and volunteer positions. However, the needs or expectations of an aging population



### **3.5 Organization & Plan Relationships**

The One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan has an organization similar to a comprehensive plan. It covers a range of resource topics that closely match those identified in the local existing comprehensive plans.

The resource topics covered in this plan are the following: Land Use; Water; Air Quality; Environmental Resources; Hazards; Transportation; Community Facilities & Services; Utilities & Infrastructure; Housing; Economy; Community Character, Design, & Historic Preservation; and Intergovernmental Cooperation.

Chapter 1, "Executive Summary," provides an overview of the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan. Chapter 2, "Regional Vision Statement," outlines the shared vision the region ideally hopes to achieve by 2040. Chapter 3, "Introduction," explains the purpose of this plan, summarizes the public engagement process, lists the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT) used as a tool to help identify issues and goals in the plan, provides information on historic and future population, and illustrates how this plan relates to other plans. Chapter 4, "Concepts," outlines several encouraged guiding principles related to sustainability and smart growth. Chapter 5, "Regional Snapshot," provides existing condition information, issues, and accomplishments for the twelve resource topics covered in this plan. Chapter 6, "Regional Goals

& Strategies," list goals for each resource topic and some possible strategies to achieve those goals. Chapter 7, "Types of Communities," describes some broad characteristics of the various communities in the region. Chapter 8, "Regional Growth Strategies," describes the alternatives and assumptions examined on housing, development, and jobs that developed into the consensus strategy maps for distribution of housing, development, and jobs. Chapter 9, "Implementation," describes who will monitor the plan, the amendment process, the application of this plan in the planning decision-making process, and a preliminary list of actions local governing bodies might consider over the next five years. Chapter 10, "Acronyms and Glossary," list acronyms and terms defined in this plan. Chapter 11, "Bibliography," identifies the sources referenced in this plan.

Both the regional plan and local comprehensive plans provide a formal starting point for addressing the needs of the region. As illustrated in Figure 3-6, "Plan Diagram" they also provide a unifying framework for different and more specific types of planning that may arise throughout the process. Continual evaluation of these planning documents is encouraged.

# Chapter 3, Introduction

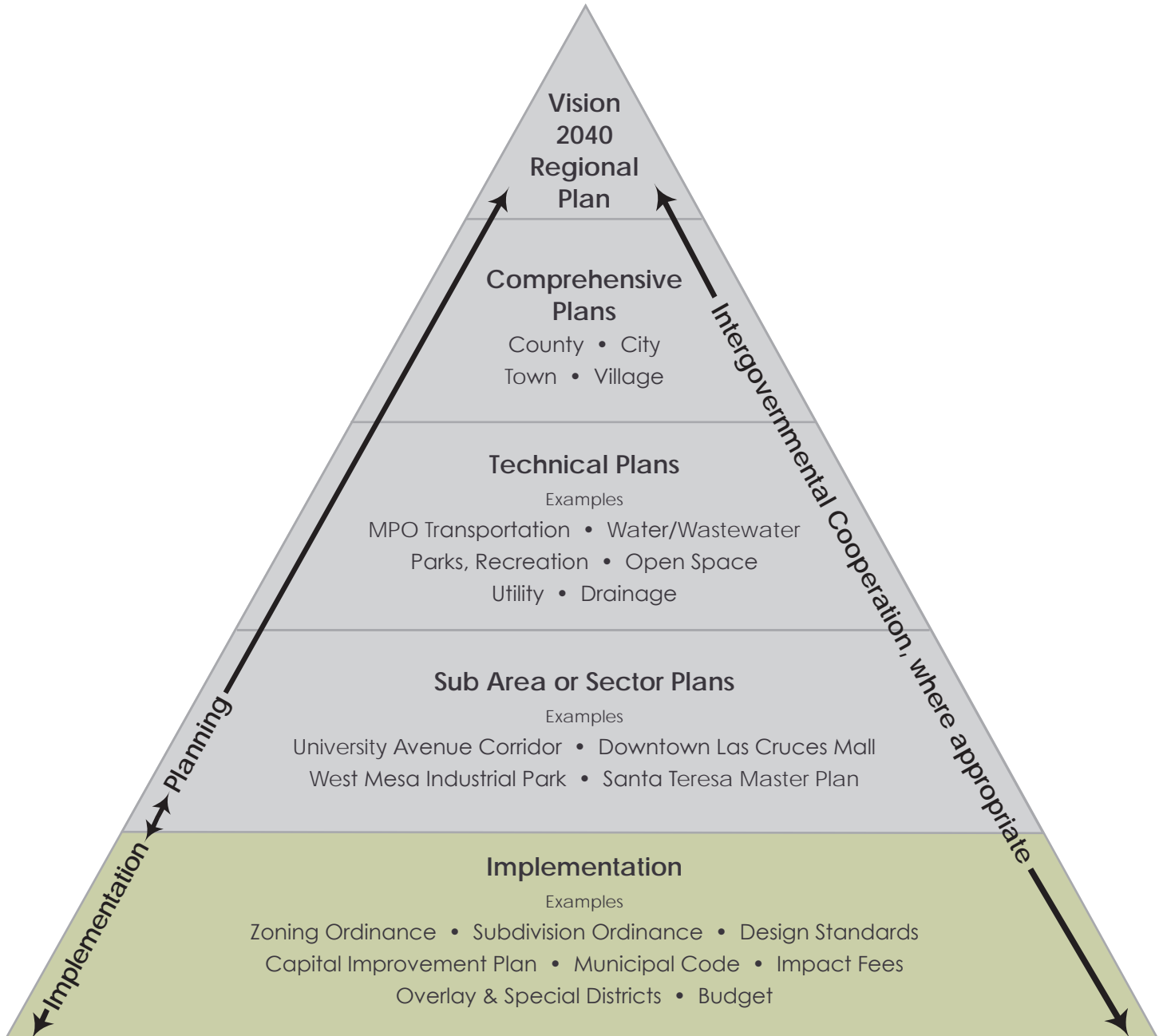


Figure 3-6, Plan Diagram

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

# Chapter 4, Concepts

This chapter looks at the concepts of sustainability and smart growth as a way for the local governing bodies in the Doña Ana County region to begin to think about the projected growth over the next three decades. These two concepts are not the only concepts, but provide some useful ideas toward achieving the vision for the region outlined in Chapter 2, "Regional Vision Statement". The last part of this chapter lists some guiding principles the Vision 2040 Advisory Committee identified that local governing bodies are encouraged to keep in mind as they develop and implement plans in their community.

## 4.1 Sustainability

The concept of sustainability<sup>1</sup> has grown in importance in recent years as communities have tried to manage their resources in the best way possible. This concept refers to responsible development and is not intended to connote anti-development.

Figure 4-1, "Triple Bottom Line," illustrates a popular concept on sustainability. It relates to the resiliency of a community to adapt in the face of change or growth. In this model, economic wellbeing, environmental health, and social equity are in balance with one another.

Social equity for local government refers to creating openness in the formation of public policy, encouraging participation in the public process, and providing public resources and services that are accessible and reasonably distributed.

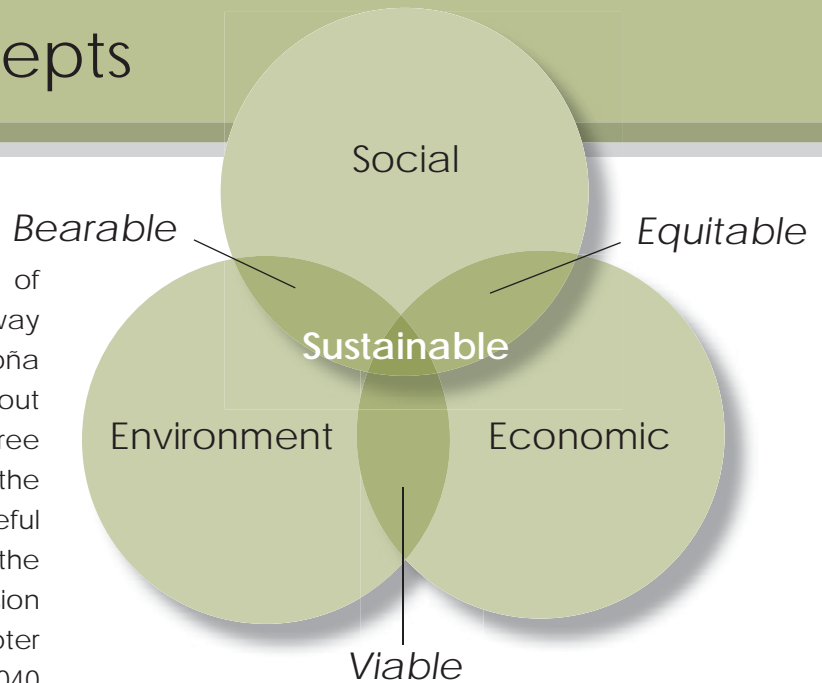


Figure 4-1, Triple Bottom Line

## 4.2 Smart Growth

Another concept that has gained support in recent years is smart growth<sup>2</sup>, an approach geared towards developing sustainable communities with more resilience and adaptability. In contrast to prevalent development practices, smart growth encourages a larger share of regional growth within areas already served by infrastructure and discourages this growth on environmentally sensitive areas according to the following principles developed by the Smart Growth Network and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:

- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.
- Provide a mix of land uses.
- Take advantage of compact building design.

- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices at all income levels.
- **Create walkable neighborhoods.**
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
- **Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.**
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.
- Provide a variety of transportation choices.
- Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective.

#### **4.3 Guiding Principles**

For this plan, carrying out sustainability and the principles of smart growth doesn't mean "no growth." It means a planned growth strategy that will:

- Create safe, clean, and affordable places to live that offer economic and other opportunities.
- Keep intact values for individual liberty, democracy, and private-property rights.
- Recognize natural market forces exist that are best left alone; however, opportunities to use, respond to, or guide these forces should be pursued to better manage the region's resources.

- Welcome growth in a way that is mindful of its impact to important historic, cultural and natural resources.
- Use renewable and finite resources wisely in a way that minimizes or reuses waste.
- Address the inter-relationship of the resource topics identified in this plan.
- Encourage communities to move toward sustainable practices over time.
- Use an open process that affords everyone opportunities to participate in public decisions.
- Foster a sense of community that best matches the region, municipalities and neighborhoods.
- Try to anticipate changes or events that may threaten the usual way of doing things so the region is more resilient.

The application of these principles will vary with the current condition and future plans of the particular geographic location in the region. By keeping these principles in mind when developing plans, this should help achieve a better balance of social needs, a strong economy, and protection of valued natural resources.

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

This chapter provides background information for each of the twelve resource topics. All resource topics include a subsection on organizations that describe key governmental entities for further information, a subsection on planning that highlights recent regional planning activities related to the particular resource topic, a list of issues, and a list of accomplishments. Where applicable, the Regional Snapshot includes additional subsections relevant to that particular resource topic.

## 5.1 Land Use

The land use element is a fundamental component of all comprehensive plans, defining the general distribution, location and characteristics of existing land use, future growth, and community form. The intent of a regional comprehensive plan is to address facilities and resources that affect more than one jurisdiction, and is used to provide a framework for municipal and county comprehensive plans.

### Organizations

Doña Ana County and the incorporated communities of Anthony, Hatch, Las Cruces, Mesilla, and Sunland Park all address land use. The Las Cruces ETZ and the Camino Real Regional Utility Authority, which has powers similar to an Extra-Territorial Zone, also address land use. The ETZ is a five-mile growth planning area described in more detail in Chapter 7, “Types of Communities”, in this plan. Table 5-1, “Land Ownership,” shows the four largest landowners in the county. These owners are the Bureau of

Land Management (BLM), Department of Defense, private owners, and State of New Mexico. Table 5-1, “Land Ownership,” lists several other key major landowners in planning land use for the region such as the Department of Agriculture and New Mexico State University (NMSU). More information is available at [www.co.dona-ana.nm.us](http://www.co.dona-ana.nm.us), [www.villageofhatch.org](http://www.villageofhatch.org), [www.las-cruces.org](http://www.las-cruces.org), [www.mesillanm.us](http://www.mesillanm.us), and [www.cityofsunlandpark.org](http://www.cityofsunlandpark.org).

### Planning

One Valley, One Vision 2040 is the first regional plan created for Doña Ana County. The primary land use planning process used to prepare this regional plan consisted of five tasks:

Task 1. Derive locational requirements for growth or for the land use in question. This involved determining assumptions and principles for locating growth, land use, or facilities.

Task 2. Map the suitability of growth for a particular use based on the locational assumption derived in Task 1.

Task 3. Estimate the space requirements for land use or growth projected over time.

Task 4. Analyze the holding capacity of land and projected growth in terms of dwelling units, households, employment, or square miles of growth.

Task 5. Identify alternative spatial arrangements of growth, land use, or employment.

Table 5-1

## Land Ownership

### Doña Ana County (2011)

Ownership	Area (Sq Mi)	Percent (%)
Bureau of Land Management	1,732.72	45.55
Department of Defense	770.28	20.25
Private	488.97	12.85
State of New Mexico	451.65	11.87
Department of Agriculture	171.04	4.50
Fish & Wildlife Service	88.71	2.33
National Parks Service	82.03	2.16
New Mexico State University	16.88	0.44
Bureau of Reclamation	1.31	0.03
State Park	0.42	0.02
	3804.01	100.00

Source: Doña Ana County GIS Mapping Division

These five tasks establish the forecast and location of growth through articulating assumptions and principles. They establish structure and rationale for the regional planning process in which various assumptions are tested and retested against the vision and planning goals. Consequently, the resulting regional plan, "One Valley, One vision – 2040," reaches an accord between locational criteria, space needs, and land supply for various growth alternatives examined in the planning process. This allows the regional plan to guide other functional area plan elements, such as Economy, Transportation, Community Facilities, and Utilities.

### Regional Land Use Categories

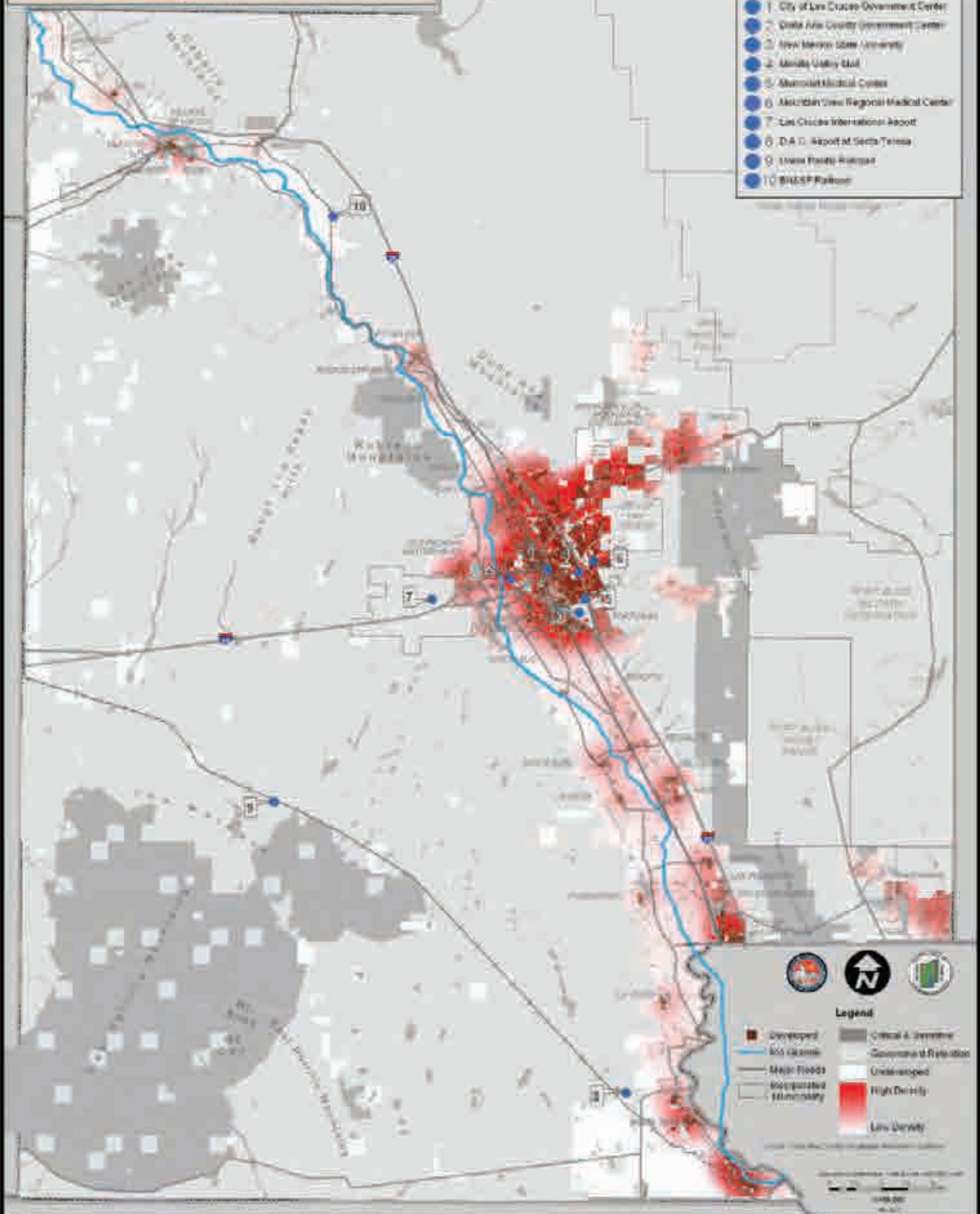
As noted above, existing land use in regional plans is far more general than in

local comprehensive plans. Subsequent municipal and county comprehensive plans may address many specific land use categories including: agriculture, single-family residential, multifamily residential, commercial (retail and office), public (schools and parks), semipublic (churches, other gathering places), industrial (light and heavy) and so forth. However, for the purposes of identifying the quantity, location, density, and form of regional growth, this plan identifies the following four existing land use categories: Developed, Critical and Sensitive, Government Retention, and Undeveloped. Map 2, "Existing Development – 2011," illustrates the location of existing development in Doña Ana County. Development is concentrated in and around Las Cruces, and along the I-10 corridor to the state line of Texas and New Mexico.



**Map 2 - Existing Development - 2011**  
**Doña Ana County, New Mexico**

- ### Key
- Regional Facilities**
- 1 City of Las Cruces Government Center
  - 2 Doña Ana County Government Center
  - 3 New Mexico State University
  - 4 Manly Valley Blvd
  - 5 Memorial Hospital Center
  - 6 Mountain View Regional Medical Center
  - 7 Las Cruces International Airport
  - 8 D.A.C. Airport at Santa Teresa
  - 9 Texas Energy Refinery
  - 10 BNSF Railroad



**Legend**

- Developed
- Major Floods
- Incorporated Municipality
- Critical & Sensitive Governance & Regulation
- Undeveloped
- High Density
- Low Density



*Developed:*

This includes lots with structures that are 12,000 square feet or smaller, with a minimum lot size of 6,000 square feet. The assumption is an 11, 999 square-foot lot (rounded up to 12,000 square feet for ease of computing purposes) with a structure or dwelling unit on it is unable to be subdivided based on a 6,000 square-foot minimum lot size for the county. This category includes nine square miles.

*Critical and Sensitive:*

This is land that generally should be conserved in its natural state (e.g., surface water, floodplains, wetlands, arroyos, steep slopes, protected wilderness, wildlife habitat, tree stands, and cultural areas) in a manner that reasonably compensates, provides incentives, maintains similar existing property rights, or balances the public and property owner interests. This category includes thirteen square miles.

81.2% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed to identify and protect the region's environmentally sensitive lands.

Source: Vision 2040 Mail Survey 2008

*Government Retention:*

This is land owned and generally maintained by the State of New Mexico and/or the



Arroyo

Federal Government. This land is generally not available for development today. It is the largest land use category at 3,385 square miles.

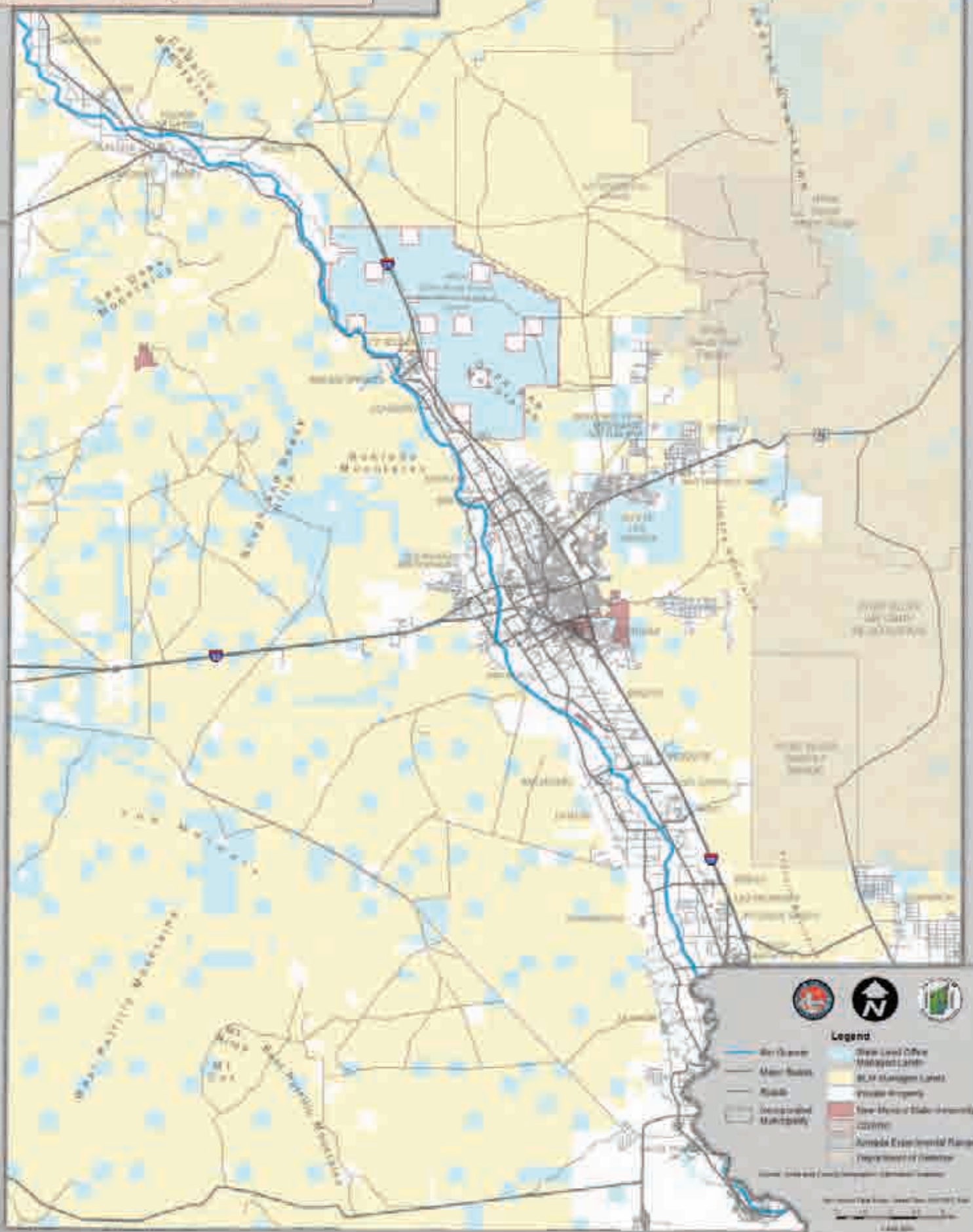
*Undeveloped:*

The remaining land in the county is determined to be undeveloped or land suitable for development purposes. The total area under this designation is 397 square miles.

**Ownership**

Map 3, "Land Ownership – 2011," and Table 5-1, "Land Ownership," delineate the land ownership in the region. Federal agencies and the State of New Mexico own the majority of the land in Doña Ana County. Private land accounts for about 13.3 percent of the land area. The assumption is most development will occur on private land, yet, many of the federal and state lands may become available creating large developable areas released at a single time. In these instances, it will be necessary to coordinate the release of such lands with existing land use plans.

**Map 3 - Land Ownership - 2011**  
**Dofa Ana County, New Mexico**



# Annexations

Table 5-2

(2000 to 2011)

Municipality	Date of Incorporation	2000 Total Area (Sq. Mi.)	Total 2000 to 2010 Annexations (Sq. Mi.)	2010 Total Area (Sq. Mi.)
Anthony	2010	0.00	2.70	2.70
Hatch	1927	3.10	0.00	3.10
Las Cruces	1907	51.70	25.20	76.90
Mesilla	1861	5.40	0.30	5.70
Sunland Park	1983	10.80	0.00	10.80

Source: Censuses 2000 and municipal plans/planning departments

## Annexations

Annexations take unincorporated land of Doña Ana County and add it to existing municipal boundaries. Table 5-2, "Annexations," summarizes the amount of land annexed by the region's municipalities between 2000 and 2010. The square miles of annexed land range from zero square miles to 25.20 square miles for Las Cruces. The listed date of incorporation may be different from when the community was founded, recognized as a community, or before New Mexico became a state in 1912.

## Issues

- The proximity of Mesilla, Las Cruces, and the Las Cruces ETZ along with the proximity of the urbanized area of El Paso to unincorporated Doña Ana County, Anthony, and Sunland Park create a need for jurisdictional collaboration on where growth and annexations should occur.
- Growth has occurred on the outskirts of communities or away from existing/planned infrastructure.
- The proximity of developing urban areas close to the Rio Grande has increased development pressure to convert agricultural land to other uses.

- There is no mechanism for transfer of development rights, conservation easements, or similar programs in the county.

- Residents and local decision makers near agricultural areas are often unaware that agriculture is a commercial/industrial business with corresponding needs and economic considerations.

## Accomplishments

- In 2009, efforts by Doña Ana County and Sunland Park resulted in establishing the Camino Real Regional Utility Authority to better plan for water, wastewater, zoning, planning, and platting in advance of anticipated growth.
- In 2010, the residents of Anthony, after years of effort, incorporated to be in direct control of planning for their community.

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

## 5.2 Water

Water is one of New Mexico's most precious resources, affecting growth and quality of life. Section 5-5, "Hazards," includes additional information about flooding. Section 5-8, "Utilities and Infrastructure," includes additional information on wastewater.

### Organizations

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) is an international agency of the Federal government established in 1889. It provides boundary and water services along the United States and Mexico border region. More information is available at [www.ibwc.state.gov](http://www.ibwc.state.gov).

The U.S. established the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) in 1902. In 1905, it began construction of the Rio Grande Project to protect property from flooding and to allow equitable distribution of the river water to the Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID), El Paso County Water Improvement District (EPCWID#1), and the Republic of Mexico. The BOR owns and maintains the dams and reservoirs of the Rio Grande Project. More information is available at [www.usbr.gov](http://www.usbr.gov).

New Mexico created the Office of the State Engineer (OSE) and its first State Water Code in 1912. The OSE has jurisdiction over all new appropriations, transfers, drilling of wells, and changes of ownership of surface and groundwater rights in New Mexico. The

judicial system has the authority to settle water rights. In Doña Ana County, the OSE oversees approximately 125 water entities serving 25 or more persons and approves wells used to serve less than 25 persons, agriculture/livestock, and commercial/industrial facilities. More information is available at [www.eidea.nmenv.state.nm.us/SDWIS](http://www.eidea.nmenv.state.nm.us/SDWIS).

Established in its present form in 1918, the Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID) manages the surface water of the Rio Grande throughout Doña Ana County and parts of Sierra County. EBID owns the canals, laterals, and drains. Individual property owners own water rights. More information is available at [www.ebidnm.org](http://www.ebidnm.org).

Established in 1935, the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission is authorized by statute to investigate and develop the water supplies of the state and institute legal proceedings for planning, conservation, protection, and development of public waters. Its Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) is responsible for quality management of surface water and groundwater. More information is available at [www.ose.state.nm.us](http://www.ose.state.nm.us).

91.3% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed water conservation should be a high priority

Source: Vision 2040 Mail Survey 2008

Formed in 1997, the Lower Rio Grande Water Users Organization (LRGWUO) guides the regional planning effort in the Lower Rio Grande region. LRGWUO members include Las Cruces, Doña Ana County, Doña Ana Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association, Mesilla, the Anthony Water and Sanitation District, Hatch, New Mexico State University, the Lower Rio Grande Public Works Authority, and EBID. More information is available at [www.wrri.nmsu.edu/lrgwu](http://www.wrri.nmsu.edu/lrgwu).

Created in 2000, the Paso del Norte Watershed Council (PdNWC) works to address issues related to the establishment and maintenance of a viable watershed. These include promoting projects to improve water quality and quantity, ecosystem integrity, the quality of life, and economic sustainability in the Paso del Norte watershed. The PdNWC also provides a forum for exchanging information about activities on the Rio Grande. Among its members are representatives of non-governmental organizations, federal and state agencies, water utilities, municipal governments, and universities, as well as private citizens. More information is available at [www.pdnwc.org](http://www.pdnwc.org).

Formed in 2011, the South-Central New Mexico Stormwater Management Coalition is a joint agreement between the Caballo Soil and Water Conservation District (CSWCD) EBID, Doña Ana County, Doña Ana County Flood Commissioner, Doña Ana Soil and Water Conservation District (DASWCD), Las Cruces, Mesilla, and the Office of the Sierra County Flood Commissioner. The Coalition addresses areas of common concern with

respect to stormwater management and flood control. This includes collaborating, coordinating, partnering, and planning with others on mutually beneficial stormwater management and flood control projects. The Coalition members work together in identifying problems related to stormwater management and developing potential solutions. In addition, it includes lobbying for and acquiring funding for such projects, along with associated education, workshops, and training.

### Planning

Water planning has existed in New Mexico at some level since before statehood, and recent planning efforts have become more comprehensive and broadened in approach. In 2003, the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer and Interstate Stream Commission adopted the New Mexico State Water Plan. The primary purpose of this plan is to move New Mexico forward on techniques and technologies for improved water supply and quality. This plan has a broader regional scope than the “40-year water plans” provided by New Mexico State Statute that some municipal and community water supply entities adopt.

The Lower Rio Grande Water Users Organization (LRGWUO) prepared the 2003 New Mexico Lower Rio Grande Regional Water Plan, encompassing all of Doña Ana County and a portion of south Sierra County. This plan includes analysis of the surface and groundwater supply available to the region, demographic analysis,

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

population projections to 2040, current water use, and projected water demand, as well as strategies for future management of the region's water. It estimates ample groundwater supply based on a projected water demand by 2040 of 733,730 acre-feet per year that is dependent upon factors that include localized conditions, rate of use, and water recharge capacity. LRGWUO is presently embarking on an update to this 2004 plan.<sup>51</sup>

In 2008, the Paso del Norte Watershed Council received funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under a grant from Section 319(h) of the federal Clean Water Act to prepare a Watershed Restoration Action Strategy to address bacteriological impairment from E. coli in the Rio Grande in southern New Mexico. They are presently updating this plan with mitigation measures that include improved stormwater management and smart growth strategies.

## **Water Rights**

Under New Mexico water law, all ground and surface waters belong to the public and are subject to appropriation under the Doctrine of Prior Appropriation. A water right is the legal right to use a specific quantity of water, on a specific time schedule, at a specific place and for a specific purpose. By state statute, the New Mexico State Engineer has general supervision of waters of the state, though there are also federally reserved water rights.

The water rights for the planning region are within the Lower Rio Grande stream system where the New Mexico State Engineer is conducting a hydrographic survey of ground and surface water rights for the Lower Rio Grande Stream Adjudication. Court actions, known as general stream adjudications, confirm water rights. The owner, place of use, purpose of use, diversion point, and quantity of each water right are determined in stream adjudication.

## **Water Conservation**

Conservation policies and plans exist for many of the entities within Doña Ana County. Table 5-3, "Conservation Plans and Policies," highlights some of these.

Las Cruces has taken many steps towards water conservation. A Sustainability Officer oversees the Las Cruces Sustainability Program, which includes assessing the impact of sustainability practices within the city and community at large. The city has a full-time Water Conservation Coordinator administering a multi-faceted water conservation program. Doña Ana County and the other municipalities incorporate conservation in conjunction with other functions.

## **Water Sources**

Rainfall and snowmelt in southern Colorado form the headwaters of the Rio Grande. Precipitation, irrigation, and climate conditions throughout the flow of the Rio Grande to the Gulf of Mexico affect its water

## Conservation Plans and Policies

Las Cruces Sustainability Plan	In 2011, Las Cruces adopted a sustainability plan with goals and actions toward making the city more sustainable.
Doña Ana Soil and Water Conservation District (DASWCD)	In 2011, DASWCD updated its plan in providing protection of soil and water resources, improved intergovernmental coordination, and strategies and policies for enhancing the preservation, improvement, and management of these resources.
Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID)	Since 2005, developed real time measurement of surface water diversions and conservation techniques.
Town of Mesilla	In 2004, the town adopted a Water Conservation Ordinance, along with other efforts.
Sunland Park Conservation Plan	In 2002, the city adopted a plan to promote water conservation awareness, apply more stringent requirements to city facilities, and encourage voluntary water conservation.
Sunland Park Conservation Plan	In 1999, Las Cruces adopted its first Water Conservation Program, along with many other outreach efforts developed since that time.

level. River water for use in the planning region is stored initially at the Elephant Butte and Caballo Reservoirs and released for diversion and distribution in the EBID system comprised of canals, laterals, and drains that return water to the river.

There is a hydrologic link between the surface water system of the Rio Grande and the groundwater supply. Irrigation provides the major source of groundwater recharge in the region, and, in return, the aquifer provides water to the river under certain conditions. Rangeland improvements associated with ranching, such as brush treatments, can provide water sources in the remote desert environment. Existing conditions, which affect the relations between the surface water sources and the underlying shallow aquifer, include irrigation

practices, weather and precipitation patterns, releases of water from the Caballo Reservoir upstream, and groundwater well pumping.

### Surface Water

The sources that supply surface water throughout the planning region include the following:

- Waters of the Rio Grande and storage at Elephant Butte and Caballo Reservoir
- Stormwater runoff
- Municipal effluent discharged into the river
- Return flows from EBID drains



# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

The allocation for the use of the surface-water supply available to New Mexico from Elephant Butte Reservoir is exclusively for irrigated agriculture. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) determines the allocation and releases water from storage as designated Project Water users order it. This management is pursuant to an operating agreement established in 2008 between EBID, EP#1, and the Bureau of Reclamation.

Usage is limited to the annually determined allocation, with past allocations ranging from 180,000 to 1,500,000 acre-feet per year. The Rio Grande Compact of 1938 set the normal supply of surface water at 790,000 acre-feet per year. Throughout the planning region, EBID's irrigation distribution system of canals and laterals deliver released water to eligible constituents once diverted from the Rio Grande at three diversion dams in New Mexico for the following uses:

- Irrigation of agriculture and other water-righted lands
- Conversion of water rights from agriculture to municipal use through the establishment of a Special Water User Association with EBID

In August 2011, the New Mexico Third Judicial District Court approved an agreement between agricultural groups and the State Engineer's Office that set maximum water deliveries to agricultural land in the Lower Rio Grande Basin. The Farm Delivery Requirement (FDR) for combined surface



Rio Grande

and groundwater use is 4.5 acre-feet per year. Farmers with unique farm conditions can file notice up to December 31, 2011 of their intent to ask for up to 5.5 acre-feet based on proof of beneficial use. EBID members without supplemental wells will continue to receive whatever allotment is available from the Rio Grande Project. The Court also ruled that the Consumptive Irrigation Requirement (CIR) is 2.6 acre-feet. This number represents the amount of water available when transferring an irrigation right from agricultural use to municipal or commercial use.

## Groundwater

There are seven hydrologic basins, also called aquifers, which supply groundwater throughout the planning region. This plan excludes the Mimbres basin since it supplies water primarily for Luna County, New Mexico and is in a predominately-uninhabited portion of the region along the west-southwest of Doña Ana County. The

Rio Grande replenishes the Rincon Valley and Mesilla basins. The other basins are essentially closed replenishment basins that rely mostly on precipitation.<sup>51</sup>

- Hueco Bolson - Located in the southeastern corner of Doña Ana County near Chaparral and extends eastward from Otero County. Only three percent of the Bolson lies within New Mexico, and the average water level in this portion is about 350 feet below ground.
- Jornada del Muerto - Lies between the San Andres Mountains to the east and the Caballo, San Diego, and Doña Ana Mountains, and the Mesilla Basin to the west. A large portion of this basin extends from Sierra County, New Mexico. Water levels range from 50 feet to over 500 feet below ground.
- Mesilla Basin - Occupies the central portion of Doña Ana County and extends into Mexico. Water levels range from 10 feet to 300 feet below ground.
- Nutt-Hockett – Located in the northwest portion of the region near Hatch. This basin extends from adjoining Luna County, New Mexico. Water levels are typically more than 200 feet below ground.
- Rincon Valley Basin- Located in south-central Sierra County and the northwestern corner of Doña Ana County. Water levels range from zero to 400 feet below ground.
- Tularosa – Located east of the San

Andres and Organ Mountains. It extends across several counties, with the White Sands area served by this basin. Water levels range from 300 to over 900 feet below ground.

Virtually all of the public water supply is from groundwater; however, there are plans for the development of surface-water treatment plants to serve Las Cruces, Doña Ana Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association, the Lower Rio Grande Public Water Works Authority, and Hatch. The Office of the State Engineer (OSE) issues permits to pump groundwater for the following uses throughout the region:

- Public – municipalities, small communities, and mutual domestic water associations
- Domestic – private residential
- Livestock
- Irrigation of agriculture and other water-righted lands
- Industrial
- Commercial
- Mining – sand, gravel, and rock quarries
- Power – cooling towers

### **Stormwater Management**

As typical of the Southwest, regional

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

rainstorms are often intense and highly localized, causing runoff. As a result, there is erosion of slopes, sediment dumping, and frequent flooding. Stormwater runoff carries sediment with or without nutrients, pollution, and other contaminants.

A multitude of stormwater dams and levees protect the region. Included among these structures is the retention dam for Las Cruces located on the east mesa between U.S. 70 and Lohman Avenue and the major dams and levees along the Rio Grande. The region is in the middle of ongoing levee enhancements by the USBIWC along the length of the Rio Grande from Percha Dam, New Mexico, to the American Dam in El Paso, Texas.

The South-Central New Mexico Stormwater Management Coalition works toward a more structured regional approach and organization for stormwater management and flood control in the region for many of the following reasons. The El Paso - Las Cruces sub-basin of the Rio Grande watershed that stretches from Caballo Dam to the New Mexico and Texas state line contains some 2,400 square miles. Approximately 800 square miles, or one third of the acreage, has no infrastructure to slow or stop flood flows. More residential and commercial development exists in previously rural desert and agricultural areas. This development generally includes its own stormwater retention, but primary flood protection often occurs by existing dams originally designed to protect farmland that surpassed their engineered 50-year lifespan. Varying

information is available on the condition of existing dams and levees in the region. There is no funding for rehabilitation of existing or development of new stormwater management infrastructure while the level of need and areas for flood protection that merit protection are increasing.

In a positive perspective of stormwater runoff, local water authorities have begun to promulgate the potential for a “new” water source in the region through the capture, storage, management, and beneficial use of stormwater. In addition, many of the various organizations that are responsible for stormwater, flood control, and water quality have begun to consider green infrastructure and low-impact development techniques to conserve water. Green infrastructure techniques slow, capture, treat, infiltrate and/or store runoff at its source. Low-impact development techniques focus on development and construction (e.g., minimizing land disturbance, preserving natural features, and reducing impervious surfaces).

## Quality

Overall, the quality of the region’s water is good; however, natural and manmade actions affect water quality. One such natural event occurs with flooding that can concentrate pollutants. Depending on the intended use, natural conditions exist that make water unusable or too expensive to treat. One such condition is high concentrations of natural salts and minerals. Areas where the groundwater is close to the

## Primary Water Quality Issues

Basins	Issues
Hueco	Elevated water hardness and chloride
Jornada	Salinity levels
Mesilla	Irrigation carrying pollutants, bedrock in recharge areas, presence of geothermal water, leaking underground storage tanks, elevated bacterial concentration and salinity in Rio Grande
Nutt-Hockett	Not available.
Rincon Valley	Dissolved solids, leaking underground storage tanks, water table close to surface
Tularosa	Dissolved solids

Source: 2004 New Mexico Lower Rio Grande Regional Water Plan by LRGWUO

surface make these areas sensitive to possible pollutants.

Man-made actions that affect water quality include leaking underground waste or fuel storage, and stormwater runoff. Contaminants in stormwater can include oils from roadways, fertilizers, and pesticides from farmlands. It can also include E. coli bacteria from ranch and farm stock, dairies, human recreation areas, and municipal areas. Certain levels and types of these substances found in water are normal and pose no risk to plants, animals, or people. The potential risk occurs when many of these contaminants exceed a certain concentration. For example, the county has one designated Superfund site due to the high level of perchloroethylene (PCE). This site is in Las Cruces and presently under remediation. Table 5-4, "Primary Water Quality Issues," shows the primary water issues for the region's water basins.<sup>51</sup>

### Issues

- Drought conditions presently exist in the planning region. Historically, the planning region experiences cyclical periods of 10-year-or-more droughts that affect recharge of groundwater basins,

cause depletion of surface water supply, and corresponding changes in agriculture practices including crops grown.

- The region is experiencing long-term climate trends including: decrease in snowpack, increase in severity of extreme rainfall events during monsoon season (July-September), and increase in duration and severity of drought.
- The cost to treat and recover water for future water supplies could place a burden on meeting future water demands.
- Known and suspected sources of pollution threaten water quality, such as leaking underground storage tanks, older on-site wastewater systems, PCE contamination, and uncontrolled stormwater runoff that carries man-made and natural contaminants.

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

- Instances have occurred in which the Rio Grande has failed to meet New Mexico water quality standards for E. coli bacteria; this has potential to negatively affect human health and the quality and safety of fresh vegetables grown in the region.
- Current building codes regulating stormwater fail to reference water-conserving stormwater management techniques such as green infrastructure and low-impact development that could be beneficial toward improving groundwater recharge, pollution mitigation, and water quality.
- Some claims to service areas remain, including litigation between Doña Ana County and the city of Sunland Park over the right to serve in the southern part of Doña Ana County.
- Certain public water suppliers will fully use their water rights and need additional rights by 2040 or sooner.
- A fragmentation of water providers and agencies focuses the management and maintenance of stormwater system of dams, levees, channels, basins, and natural systems locally rather than regionally.
- There are no regional cooperative approaches to adopting best management practices for watershed management.
- The region needs enhanced measures to capture stormwater for later use as part of its water management practices.
- Needs exist for new and rehabilitation of existing flood-protection infrastructure above available funding levels that require prioritization of timing, the level of protection, and what areas need protection.
- Federal legislation requires the preservation of species such as the Southwest Willow Flycatcher that is nesting in the empty bed of Elephant Butte Reservoir, creating a potential problem when water is available to refill the reservoir.

## Accomplishments

- In 2005, the Office of the New Mexico State Engineer required flow metering of all irrigation groundwater wells with the exclusion of single households, irrigation of up to one acre of non-commercial agriculture, and watering of livestock.
- In 2008, twenty-nine years of negotiation ended in an agreement to compromise and settle all claims for sharing the so-named Texas apportion of Rio Grande Project water. Signed by the EBID, EPCWID#1, and BOR, the landmark Operating Agreement established procedures for the allocation, accounting, and delivery of Project water.
- In 2010, the city of Las Cruces exceeded its five-year goal in its Water Conservation Program of five gallons per capita per day residential reduction by over ten percent.
- In 2011, there was approval of an adjudication settlement agreement on irrigation water sharing in the Lower Rio

Grande that allows farmers with only surface water rights a delivery of 3.024 acre-feet per year annually and farmers with combined surface and groundwater rights a delivery of 4.5 acre-feet annually, with a provision of up to 5.5 acre-feet annually possible based on water use.

### 5.3 Air Quality

Doña Ana County is part of the Paso del Norte air shed, which includes El Paso County, Texas and Juárez, Mexico. The shared aspect of the air shed makes addressing air-quality issues dependent upon intergovernmental cooperation.

#### **Organizations**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets the standards for monitoring outdoor air quality on six primary pollutants. Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) are the two major pollutants for the region. The EPA requires plans, monitoring, and other regulations when an area fails to meet these standards, designating that area as a “non-attainment area” for that particular source. More information is available at [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov).

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) is responsible for monitoring air quality throughout the state. There are presently nine monitoring sites located within Doña Ana County, most located along the border of Texas and Mexico. Additional information is available at [www.nmenv.state.nm.us/aqb](http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/aqb).

As many air-quality issues relate to emissions, the Las Cruces and El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) are good sources of local data related to transportation. However, MPO’s are not required to mitigate or monitor air quality unless the EPA designates all or part of the MPO boundary for non-attainment. Additional information is available at [www.lcmpoweb.las-cruces.org](http://www.lcmpoweb.las-cruces.org) and [www.elpasompo.org](http://www.elpasompo.org).

#### **Planning**

Air-quality planning at the local level within Doña Ana County occurs through many long-range planning policies, programs, and regulations. Listed below are some of these planning efforts.

- Las Cruces included a comprehensive Environmental Concerns Element with its 1985 and present 1999 Comprehensive Plan.
- Doña Ana County has air-quality policies and actions in its present 1994 Comprehensive Plan, including establishment of a regional air-quality board of stakeholders in New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico.
- The prior transit authority and present RoadRUNNER Transit serving the Las Cruces area include goals and objectives in their operations to improve air quality.
- In 1997, and later updated in 2000, Las Cruces and Doña Ana County got Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

approval of the Natural Events Action Plan to identify issues associated with dust violations caused by natural events to avoid declaring the entire county as a non-attainment area, a designation denoting failure to meet set standards.

- Through the Natural Events Action Plan, NMSU, New Mexico Highway and Transportation Department, White Sands Missile Range (WSMR), Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and Fort Bliss entered into stakeholder agreements to mitigate possible dust disturbances.
- In 2000, Doña Ana County and Las Cruces adopted dust-control ordinances. Las Cruces is in process of updating its dust-control ordinance.
- In 2009, Las Cruces hired a Sustainability Officer and adopted its first Sustainability Action Plan, which includes actions on air quality, in 2011.
- The Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization (LCMPO) 2010 Transport 2040 plan and the El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization (EPMPO) Mission 2035 plan incorporate aspects and actions toward improving air quality.

## Air-Quality Exceedences

Air quality within Doña Ana County is better than in years past. Throughout much of the 1970s, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designated Doña Ana

County as an air-quality maintenance area that often exceeded both state and national standards for carbon monoxide, suspended dust particles, and ozone precursors. Improved vehicle and industrial emissions, and closure of heavy industrial smelter sites like ASARCO in El Paso, helped improve air quality.

The 1990s brought the return of air-quality exceedences on dust and ozone. In 1991, the EPA designated the area around the present city of Anthony as a non-attainment area for PM-10 dust. The County experienced several dust exceedences between 1994 and 1997. As noted above, the county avoided non-attainment of the entire county through approval of the Natural Events Action Plan last updated in 2005. In 2008, the region was able to demonstrate that natural events caused many of these exceedences in accordance with the EPA exceptional event rule.

In 1995, a 42 square mile area from Sunland Park to south of Anthony was designated as a marginal non-attainment area for ozone. In 2004, the adoption of the EPA eight-hour ozone standard downgraded it to a maintenance area. In 2008, EPA recommended the Sunland Park maintenance area for upgrade to a non-attainment area. Currently, this recommendation is still pending as the EPA reviews possible monitor error and contribution of emission sources outside New Mexico.<sup>31</sup>

## Issues

- Existing non-attainment areas for ozone and particulate matter (dust) affect the southern part of the county, and predominately originate out of Mexico or El Paso, Texas.
- Many particulate issues are a natural occurrence from seasonal high winds, undeveloped desert environment, unpaved roads, and agricultural land uses.
- For the most part, setting standards, registration, labeling, distribution, sale, handling, use, application, and transportation or disposal of sources of pollutants are under the authority of the state or federal government. This limits local government's role to intergovernmental cooperation and education of the public.

## Accomplishments

- The air quality over the past 10 years in Doña Ana County has remained the same or improved as the region's population grew.
- Municipal and county dust-control ordinances exist, with an ongoing update for Las Cruces.

## 5.4 Environmental Resources

The One Valley, One Vision 2040 planning area lies within the northern portion of the Chihuahuan Desert, which is one of the most biologically rich desert regions of the

world. Noted for its abundance of bird, reptile, cactus, and mammal species, the Chihuahuan Desert is also surprising for its aquatic diversity. As used in this plan, environmental resources include natural and historical resources that when left in their relatively unmodified state provide economic value or add to the quality of life for the residents of Doña Ana County.

## Organizations

As the majority of the land within Doña Ana County is under the ownership of federal agencies, the following organizations have a key role in the planning and use of many of the region's environmental resources: Bureau of Land Management, Department of Defense, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Natural Resources Conservation Service. More information is available at [www.blm.gov/nm](http://www.blm.gov/nm), [www.wsmr.army.mil](http://www.wsmr.army.mil), [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov), and [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov).

State agencies that govern many of the region's environmental resources include the New Mexico State Land Office, New Mexico Department of Agriculture, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, State Parks Division, and other various boards and commissions, such as the Soil and Water Conservation Commission. More information is available at [www.nmstatelands.org](http://www.nmstatelands.org), [www.nmdaweb.nmsu.edu](http://www.nmdaweb.nmsu.edu), [www.wildlife.state.nm.us](http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us), and [www.emnrd.state.nm.us](http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us).

Soil and Water Conservation Districts in New Mexico are governmental subdivisions of the State of New Mexico that work



# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

in partnership with the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, other state and federal agencies, and various organizations to advance conservation on private and public lands. Part of their mission is to conserve and develop the natural resources of the state, provide for flood control, preserve wildlife, protect the tax base and promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people within its service area. Two Soil and Water Conservation Districts serve Doña Ana County, the Doña Ana Soil and Water Conservation District (DASWCD) and the Caballo Soil and Water Conservation District (CSWCD). In 2010, residents of Doña Ana County approved a referendum that expanded the service area of DASWCD to the entire Doña Ana County, excluding the northwest portion of the county served by the CSWCD. More information is available at [www.daswcd.org](http://www.daswcd.org) or [www.nmacd.org/swcds](http://www.nmacd.org/swcds).

Several local government organizations exist that address environmental resources in the region. Doña Ana County, Las Cruces ETZ, and municipal governments through various task forces affect the environmental resources of the region. EBID and organizations listed in Section 5.2, "Water," play an important role regarding the Rio Grande.

As with other resources, there are hosts of private, non-profit, and local grassroots groups that help shape many of the plans and efforts related to environmental resources.

## Planning

Many of the organizations listed at the end of this section have prepared plans addressing the region's environmental resources. Section 5.2, "Water," and Section 5.5, "Hazards," of this plan list some of the major water and stormwater management plans. Section 5.7, "Community Facilities & Services," identifies parks and recreation plans that may include environmental resources.

Doña Ana County and the city of Las Cruces both have arroyo protection plans in progress. The comprehensive or master plans for Doña Ana County, Las Cruces ETZ, and the municipalities all include an environmental resource component. Table 5-5, "Environmental Resource Plans," provides an illustrative list of a few recent or ongoing plans for the region.

## Climate

The region offers 350 days of sunshine per year and mild temperatures, with average summer highs in the 90's and winter highs in the 50's. The average annual rainfall is less than ten inches and temperatures can exceed 100°F.

## Desert

The natural areas are dominated by shrubs, mesquite and creosote, and maintain a wealth of both plant and animal species.

## Environmental Resource Plans

International Boundary and Water Commission	2009 Conceptual Restoration Plan and Cumulative Effects Analysis, Rio Grande - Caballo Dam to American Dam.
Las Cruces	Rio Grande Corridor Project Comprehensive Plan, 2004 which was a joint project between the city of Las Cruces and EPA, along with other organizations. The project resulted in construction of a 14-acre wetland and 1.1 mile trail.
NM Department of Game and Fish	2005 Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for New Mexico.
Paso del Norte Watershed Council	PdNWC is updating the 1997 Rio Grande watershed plan to re-examine Best Management Practices (BMP's) for enhancing the watershed health and reducing nonpoint source pollution.
U.S. Bureau of Land Management	<p>The Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service completed a Comprehensive Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement for El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail in April 2004</p> <p>BLM is in the process of updating its 1993 Mimbres Resource Management Plan, called the Tri-County Resource Management Plan, which includes special management designations as Wilderness Areas and National Conservation Areas that protect open space and guide land for future development.</p>



Desert landscape near Picacho Dam

### Mountains

Doña Ana County has a series of mountains providing stunning vistas and rock formations. Receiving higher amounts of

rainfall than lowland areas, they are home to pinyon-juniper and oak woodlands. The three primary ranges are the San Andrés-Organ-Franklin, Sierra de las Uvas-Doña Ana-Robledo, and Potrillos.

The mountain areas are predominantly under ownership of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or other public agencies. They are largely accessible for recreation when not restricted for military or other approved activities. The geology of the region is extremely diverse and popular with those interested in rocks, fossils, and minerals. The Robledo Mountains are home to globally significant fossil beds as well as the Prehistoric Trackways National Monument.

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot



The Organ Mountains

## Wetland and Riparian

The region's riparian, or streamside, areas include drainage ditches, irrigation canals, stormwater basins and levees. The Rio Grande is the region's primary riparian feature.

Wetland habitats and the species that occupy them are sporadic and many aquatic species that may occupy the channel during irrigation season retreat to the drains during the winter. Un-mown drains and canal banks are habitat for many nesting bird species. Beaver are common in the river channel, and catfish are abundant during the irrigation season. Riparian habitats in the desert environment are very rare and are usually associated with the Organ and San Andres Mountains.

## Arroyos

In their natural state, arroyos are a dominant feature across the desert landscape. They are dry most of the year. During rainfall events, they serve multiple purposes: they transport stormwater, recharge aquifers, and provide habitat and corridors for plants and animals.



Leasburg Dam

## Native Plants and Animals

The region has a variety of plants and animals found only in the Southwest. Several entities focus on plants and animals including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Bureau of Land Management, and New Mexico Rare Plant Technical Council. These groups identify endangered species, threatened species, and potentially threatened species referenced in more detail in the appendix for this plan.



Yucca Plant



Local Onion Farm

### Agricultural Soil

Map 4, "High-Quality Agricultural Land," provides information on farmland of statewide importance using federal soil classifications and data on agriculturally used land based on Doña Ana County Assessor information. There are approximately 100 square miles in agricultural use in the county, with 416 square miles of high-quality soil designated as farmland of statewide importance. Existing agricultural uses, which are beneficial to providing exported and local food supplies, occur on the region's high-quality soil.

By 2040, some of these existing lands may convert to other uses. Currently, the majority of farms in the region are less than 10 acres in size, and, as shown in Figure 5-1, "Number and Size of Farms," there has been a decline in the number of farms that are 180 acres or greater. Evaluating the potential loss of agricultural lands is important as the region grows.

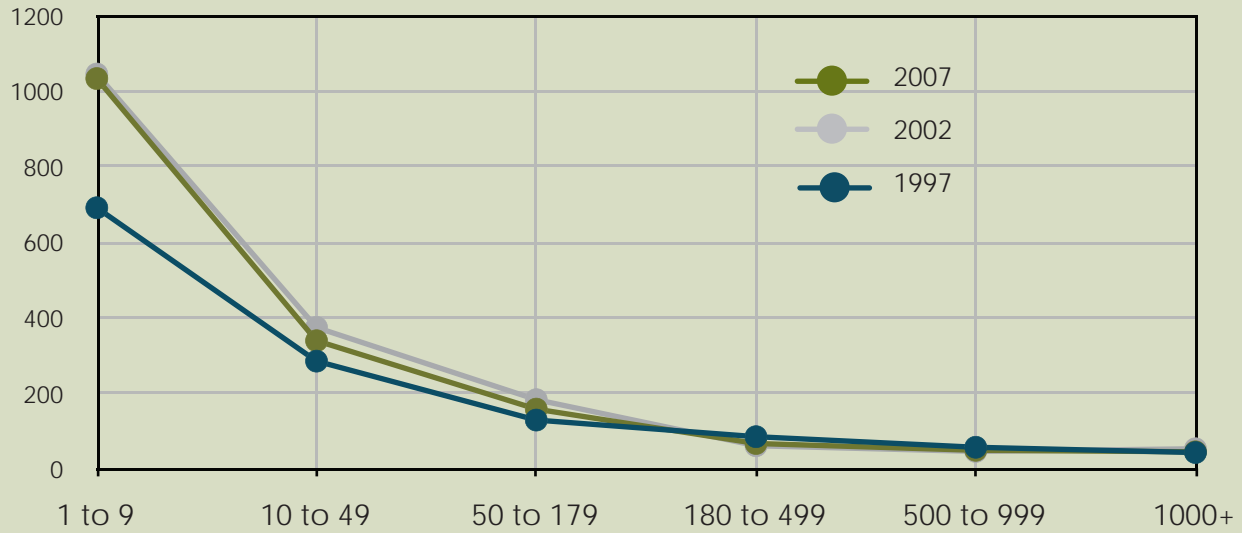
87.1% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed agricultural land should be protected where feasible; 89.0% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed agriculture is vital to our region and should be encouraged.

Source: Vision 2040 Mail Survey 2008

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

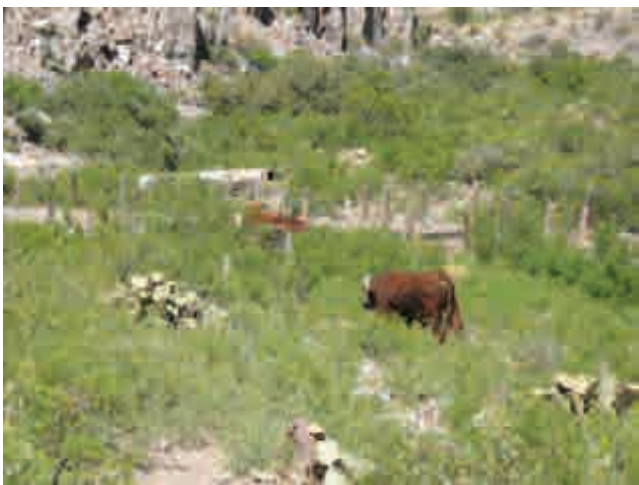
## Number and Size of Farms - Doña Ana County

Figure 5-1



Acres	1 to 9	10 to 49	50 to 179	180 to 499	500 to 999	1000+
1997	691	285	129	85	57	43
2002	1033	339	158	67	49	45
2007	1045	374	183	61	46	53

Source: USDA Census of Agriculture

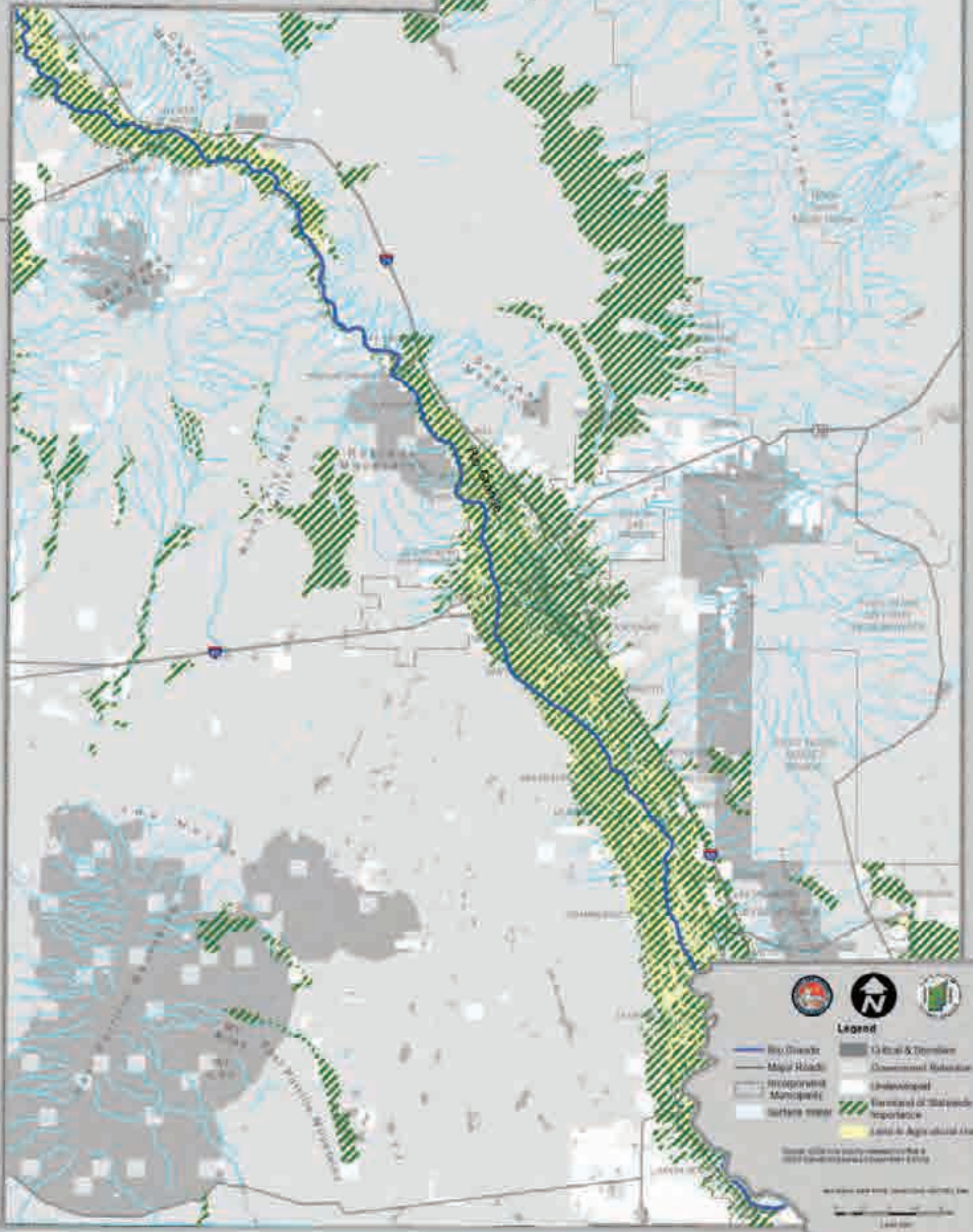


Local Ranch



Local Farm

**Map 4 - High-Quality Agricultural Land - 2011**  
**Doña Ana County, New Mexico**



**Legend**

-  Rio Grande
-  Major Roads
-  Incorporated Municipalities
-  Surface Water
-  Areas of Statewide Importance
-  Land of Agricultural Use
-  State & Federal
-  Unincorporated
-  Undeveloped

Source: USDA NR Conservation Assessment & Inventory National Inventory of Wetlands

Scale: 1:50,000

1:50,000

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

## Significant Natural Open Spaces Doña Ana County (2011)

Table 5-6

Open Space Feature	Ownership or Management	Special Designation	Acres
Aden Lava Flow	BLM	Wilderness Study Area Research Natural Area	25,287
Broad Canyon Ranch	NM Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources	Future State Park	700 *
Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park	Asombro Institute for Science Education	Non-Profit Park	935
Doña Ana Mountains	BLM	Special Recreation Management Area	8,300
Kilbourne Hole	BLM	National Natural Landmark	5,500
Leasburg Dam	NM Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources	State Park	293
Mesilla Valley Bosque	NM Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources	State Park	307
Organ Mountains	BLM	Wilderness Study Area	7,283
Organ Needles	BLM	Wilderness Study Area	7,600
Peña Blanca	BLM	Wilderness Study Area	4,470
Prehistoric Trackways	BLM	National Monument	5,280
Robledo Mountains	BLM	Wilderness Study Area	12,946
Sierra de las Uvas	BLM	Wilderness Study Area	11,067
West Potrillo Mountain/ Mount Riley	BLM	Wilderness Study Area	148,540
		Total Acres	238,508

\* Excludes 4,800 acres of federal and state grazing leases

## Open Space

Table 5-6, "Significant Natural Open Spaces," lists the significant natural open spaces that are set aside for public benefit, including low-impact recreation. This definition of open space does not include developed parks with lawns, restrooms, and other facilities.

## Archeological and Historical Sites

Throughout Doña Ana County are traces of human history of Native American, Spanish, and Mexican influences. Approximately half of all recognized historic resources in Doña Ana County are located in Las Cruces and nearby Mesilla. The region has a large number of organizations, sites and other cultural resources. Table 5-7, "Major Regional Archeological-Historical Sites and Plans," lists some of the major regional sites and planning occurring in the region.



San Albino Church, Mesilla



Camino Real De Tierra Adentro



Buffalo Soldier at Fort Selden, Radium Springs



# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

Table 5-7

## Major Regional Archeological-Historical Sites & Plans

Las Cruces Downtown Revitalization Plan	This plan encompasses the historic Alameda Depot Neighborhood Overlay and the Mesquite Overlay District, rehabilitation of buildings like the Rio Grande Theatre, and re-opening of Main Street from a pedestrian mall to a two-way street.
National, State and Local Historic Registered Properties	The region has approximately 50 total designated national, state and local historic registered properties. About half of these are within Las Cruces, with the others located within Doña Ana County.
National Historic Landmarks & Trails	This designation is only given to landmarks having exceptional value or quality in illustrating the heritage of the U.S. Doña Ana County has two national landmarks and two national trails: Mesilla Plaza that retains the historical flavor of a Mexican village, White Sands V-2 Launching Site as the origins of the American rocket program, El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro was the primary route from Mexico City to the northern frontier, and the El Camino Real Scenic Byway roadway.
NM State Monuments	Fort Selden, Mesilla Plaza, Barela-Reynolds House
Archaeological Sites	Many archaeological sites exist that have remnants of prehistoric settlements, pit houses, petroglyphs, and fossils. Some of these sites include the Prehistoric Trackways National Park, Potrillo Volcanic Field, La Cueva at Dripping Springs Natural Area, San Diego Mountain Petroglyphs, and the Los Tules Pithouses near Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park.

## Issues

- The Rio Grande Project and the Elephant Butte Irrigation District were established for delivery of irrigation water, and currently have exclusive control of its use.
- Doña Ana County is home to open space, arroyos, mountains, and native habitat not currently protected through a regional approach.
- Public transportation access to many open space recreation sites does not exist.
- Non-native species such as salt cedar and horsetail consume large volumes of water and impede flow of water through the river, canals, and drains.
- Transportation planning and implementation typically do not incorporate wildlife corridors.
- Currently, there is no comprehensive list or map of critical and sensitive natural areas.

## Accomplishments

- In 2008, the Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park opened along the Rio Grande to provide protection for riverside and upland habitats. This is New Mexico's 34th state park, encompassing 300 acres of bosque (riverside forest) and 600 acres of adjacent Chihuahuan Desert.

- In 2009, the U.S. Congress through local efforts established the Prehistoric Trackways National Monument on approximately 5,280 acres to conserve, protect, and enhance the unique and nationally important paleontological, scientific, educational, scenic, recreational resources, and values of the Robledo Mountains. The Monument includes a major deposit of Paleozoic Era fossilized footprints that date back 280 million years.
- In 2010, the International Boundary and Water Commission approved canalization improvements that will enhance riverine habitats along the Rio Grande.

## 5.5 Hazards

Hazards have the potential to affect all or part of the region. The section below describes some of the regional efforts in this regard.

### Organizations

Doña Ana County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and its associated Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) of volunteers from throughout the region have a major role in planning related to hazards. The various police, fire, and emergency organizations identified in Section 5.7, "Community Facilities & Services," are an integral part of the region's hazard preparedness. This also applies to the organizations listed under Section 5.2, "Water," for stormwater management.

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

## Planning

The 'All Hazard Mitigation Plan,' which was updated in 2011, addresses ongoing emergency management planning. All incorporated municipalities and the county participate in this planning effort that focuses on an array of potential hazards and the steps before, during, and after such an event. Table 5-8, "Potential Hazards," provides a list of the hazards and probability of occurrence in the region.

For flood prevention and stormwater management, the EPA requires a Stormwater Management Program (SWMP) for all small municipal storm sewer systems located in urbanized areas and for small construction activities that disturb equal to or larger than one acre and less than five acres of land. Some of these plans for the region include the 2009 city of Las Cruces Stormwater Management Plan and the 2009 Doña Ana County Stormwater Management Plan.

## Severe Weather

High elevation and usual low humidity in the region allow for extreme temperature fluctuations ranging over the year from -10°F to 110°F and a daily temperature difference of as much as 34°F. Thunderstorms can arise and dissipate in less than an hour during the summer months and can produce large damaging hailstones without warning.

94.6% of respondents noted the region needs to better control and plan stormwater to prevent flooding.

Source: Vision 2040 Workbook Responses 2008

## Flooding

Typical flood events in the area are flash floods, resulting from a large amount of rainfall in a short period. These events have the potential to cause damage to property, roadways, and structures; erosion and destruction of riparian habitat; concentration of soil and pollutants; disruption of communications and services; and the release of stored hazardous materials among other consequences. Map 5, "1% Annual Chance Flood," shows the major floodplains in the region.

## High Winds

The region experiences a windy season predominately in the spring. Due to high variation in surface and high altitude temperatures and abrupt changes in topography, the area has experienced high wind events capable of causing damage to roofs and damage from trees falling into power poles, buildings and vehicles. High winds can result in dust storms, which can cause respiratory distress and traffic accidents.

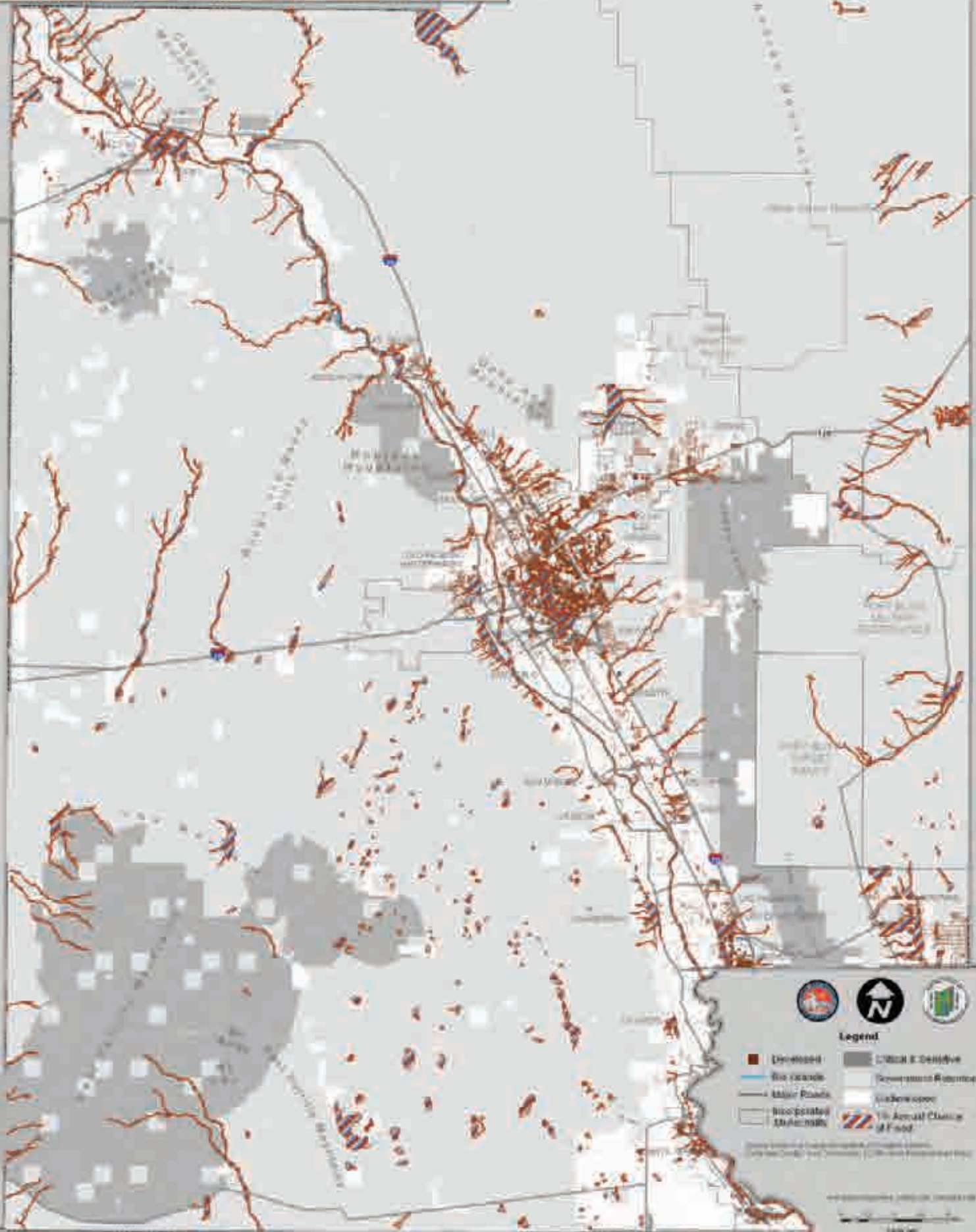
Table 5-8

## Potential Hazards

Hazard	Probability	Primary Risk
Severe weather storms (winter storm and extreme heat)	High	Reduced communications, infrastructure, weakly constructed or anchored building
Flood, dam, levee events	Flood – High Levee – High Dam - Low	Lives, property, crops, infrastructure, medical services
High winds	High	Lives, property, reduced communications, infrastructure, weakly constructed or anchored building
Hazardous material accidents		Lives, property, medical services
Highway/Railroad Fixed facility Nuclear	High Medium Low	
Urban fires or wildfires	Medium	Lives, property, infrastructure, ruptured water mains from over-demand
Power outage Prolonged communications Utilities loss	Medium Low	Emergency services, residents, home health care
Tornado	Medium	Lives, property, infrastructure, etc.
Drought	Medium	Water system
Earthquake	Low	Lives, property, infrastructure, etc.
Terrorist attack	Low	Communications, property, medical services

Source: Doña Ana County/City of Las Cruces All-Hazard Emergency Operations Plan, January 2011

**Map 5 - 1% Annual Chance of Flood - 2011**  
**Doña Ana County, New Mexico**



**Legend**

- Developed
- Critical E. Delineate
- Rio Grande
- Government Reservoir
- Major Roads
- Underwood
- Incorporated Municipalities
- 1% Annual Chance of Flood

Source: National Flood Insurance Program, FEMA, 2011  
 Copyright © 2011 Doña Ana County, New Mexico  
 1000 Feet  
 1:50,000  
 10/11

## **Hazardous Material**

The most probable risk, should a hazardous material accident occur, is on the region's highway and railroad corridors. Interstate 10, Interstate 25, and U.S. 70 are the primary transportation corridors into and out of Doña Ana County. Closure of these major roadways would negatively affect travel.

The Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) rail line that runs north-south passes through communities like Las Cruces at numerous at-grade crossings, runs along portions of the Rio Grande and agricultural land, and parallels in close proximity to Interstates 10 and 25. To a lesser extent, the Union Pacific (UP) rail line that runs west-east traverses mostly uninhabited lands once it is west of Santa Teresa/Sunland Park. Should a hazardous rail event occur, this could negatively affect mobility options, business operation, and persons living near the rail line.

## **Wildfire and Urban Fire**

Fire codes and zoning setbacks exist to reduce the spread of urban fires to other structures. Rapid response from emergency services along with a robust fire-control hydrant infrastructure further mitigates the probability of a regional urban-fire event.

Wildfire, however, is another matter. With the large amount of undeveloped Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and state land surrounding the more developed areas, wildfire is a threat. The vast area where

it can occur is problematic in that many firefighting personnel are often necessary to extinguish it. Wildfire can be a natural event, and management of natural fires may include allowing them to burn.

## **Drought**

Drought is a regular event and occurs in cycles that affect water supply. An indicator of drought at the local level is the amount of surface water stored in Elephant Butte Reservoir. Records show that there have been several periods of local drought. Water levels in the reservoir dropped sharply in the late 1990s, affecting release from the reservoir around 2003. Since then, the amount of water stored in the reservoir has been lower than any time since the late 1970s.

## **Earthquake**

The United States Geologic Survey (USGS) places most of Doña Ana County in Seismic Design Category B with a portion within the Organ and San Andres Mountain Ranges within Seismic Design Category C. These are the second and third lowest or least intensive design categories defined by the USGS. However, there are numerous fault lines within Doña Ana County. These fault lines, coupled with many buildings not constructed to withstand a moderate earthquake, have a potential for unexpected consequences.

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

## Tornado

Tornadoes are uncommon in the region. Of those that have occurred, they were on the low end of the Fujita tornado scale.

## Climate Change

Climate change is the fluctuation of natural climate patterns. There are a wide range of interpretations and varied opinions about the existence of and impacts on climate change that make monitoring the science and trends prudent. Likewise, it is wise to plan for weather extremes in the region as well.

## Issues

- Growth will heighten the need for increased funding of emergency personnel.
  - Inadequately maintained dams and levees throughout the county pose a threat for flooding and damage.
  - Emergency response infrastructure and training are underfunded.
  - There are no designated “Hazardous Cargo” routes in the county.
  - There are limited public-information methods in place on a permanent basis, such as highway signs or emergency radio stations to instruct the public about what to do or where to go in the event of an emergency.
- There is a lack of public awareness and education regarding emergency response.
  - Severe dust storms increase the incidence of traffic accidents and road closures, especially on highways.
  - Flash-flood events challenge the effectiveness of our natural and man-made stormwater systems.

94.6% of respondents noted the region needs to better control and plan for stormwater to prevent flooding.

Source: Vision 2040 PJS Appendix Workbook Responses 2008

- There is potential for damage from flooding in specific parts of the region from intensive precipitation during monsoon periods and by the design, age, and condition of the flood-control infrastructure. In addition, there is sometimes disruption of the function of flood-control systems from such factors as illegal dumping, loss of vegetation, lack of maintenance, or unlawful construction in flood hazard areas.
- Further verification is necessary to address the concern over the proper

maintenance of some private flood-control dams in the desert uplands and mountain areas that may result in an increase in stormwater runoff during heavy rain events.

- There is concern that protection of wilderness areas may have unintended consequences on stormwater management and access if not addressed when these areas are protected.
- Potential for public warning service and state information delays exist since the media services for Doña Ana County come out of El Paso, Texas.

### **Accomplishments**

- There are continued improvements in floodplain management across the county from drain and levee improvements in Vado to re-engineered levee improvements along the Rio Grande.

### **5.6 Transportation**

Transportation systems are a network of non-motorized and motorized local and regional connections. To ensure management of future growth in a coordinated and well-planned manner the region needs a comprehensive approach to multi-modal infrastructure and congestion management that is in concert with development patterns.

### **Organizations**

The Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization (LCMPO) coordinates

the transportation planning needs for central Doña Ana County and the El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization (EPMPO) coordinates the transportation planning needs for southern Doña Ana County. The South Central Regional Transit Organization is a regional transit authority for neighboring New Mexico counties and municipalities. It should be noted that the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority (CRRMA) in Texas oversees many transportation-related projects bordering Doña Ana County. South Central Rural Planning Organization and the New Mexico Department of Transportation coordinate transportation planning for northern Doña Ana County. The Federal Highway Administration, New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT), and Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) are important federal and state organizations, particularly on major regional routes. More information is available at [www.lcmpoweb.las-cruces.org](http://www.lcmpoweb.las-cruces.org), [www.elpasompo.org](http://www.elpasompo.org), [www.crrma.org](http://www.crrma.org), [www.nmshtd.state.nm.us](http://www.nmshtd.state.nm.us), [www.fhwa.dot.gov](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov), and [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov).

### **Planning**

Each Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) develops a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) that includes long and short-range strategies and actions for developing an integrated multimodal transportation system. The Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization (LCMPO) MTP, known as Transport 2040, was adopted in June 2010 and the El



# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization (EPMPO) MTP, known as TransBorder 2035, was adopted in August 2010.

The MTPs address crucial transportation issues such as safety, population growth, providing transportation choices, and environmental impacts to the region. As a companion to the EPMPO, the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority (CRRMA) adopted its 2010 Strategic Plan addressing several transportation improvements, including Loop 375, that affect the regional mobility of residents along the Texas border travelling into El Paso County.

## Transportation Systems

The components of the region's transportation network includes non-motorized systems, a hierarchy of roadways, truck freight corridors, an international port-of-entry along the border of Mexico, transit routes, rail corridors, and air facilities. Some of the ways communities in the region have improved the transportation network include improved maintenance, looking at ways to mitigate incremental transportation improvements, improving transportation connections, and integration of transportation components via such policies as Complete Streets.

### *Non-Motorized*

The primary non-motorized systems in the region are pedestrian, bicycle, and multiuse trails. The individual comprehensive and

local plans for the region, including Transport 2040, provide a more detailed review of these systems. From a regional perspective, communities need to establish benchmarks so systems are compatible with each other.

### *Roads*

The road system is the primary transportation method in the region. They vary from agricultural roadways to freeways. There are seven major roadway transportation corridors:

- Interstate 10, from Santa Monica, California to Jacksonville, Florida.
- Interstate 25, from Las Cruces at I-10 to Buffalo, Wyoming.
- U.S. 70, from Globe, Arizona, to Atlantic, North Carolina.
- NM State Route 9, runs along the Mexico border from near the Arizona line to Doña Ana County line at the Santa Teresa Port of Entry.
- NM Route 28 runs from Las Cruces to the New Mexico and Texas State line.
- NM State Route 185, known as Valley or Hall Road, from Las Cruces to Hatch.
- NM State Route 478, known as Main Street, from Las Cruces to El Paso via Route 20.

65.1% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree local governments are prepared for the future when it comes to the street system

Source: Vision 2040 Mail Survey 2008

### *Transit*

Public transit service in the region operates in the central portion of Doña Ana County in the Las Cruces area. Roadrunner Transit is a fixed bus route service with nine local routes. In addition, there are three routes serving the NMSU and DACC main campus and shuttle service from the Mesilla Valley Mall to the DACC East Mesa campus. The New Mexico Department of Transportation provides two regional Park & Ride routes. The Silver route provides service from central Las Cruces and NMSU to White Sands Missile Range. The Gold route provides service from downtown Las Cruces, NMSU, and Anthony to El Paso, Texas Sun Metro public transit system. Roadrunner Transit also offers curb-to-curb service via Dial-A-Ride for persons with eligible disabilities and for eligible senior citizens. Other private and specialized transit services operate in the Las Cruces area. More transit information is available at [www.las-cruces.org](http://www.las-cruces.org).

The northern and southern portions of Doña Ana County depend on private transportation services that include taxi and specialized services. The El Paso Sun Metro public transit system runs to the New Mexico-Texas line adjacent to Sunland Park, New Mexico and is approximately four miles from Anthony, New Mexico at the terminus near Route 375, Transmountain Road. Presently, the nearest Sun Metro service is

approximately five miles from the state line near Chaparral, New Mexico.

According to the 2008 South Central Council of Governments Transit Service and Financial Plan, most communities in Doña Ana County have a transit need higher than the national average based on five indices of mobility. These indices are access to a vehicle, percentage of persons over 65 years of age, financial resources as measured by the median household income, percentage of households below the poverty line, and percentage of persons with a disability. This study ranked Chaparral, Hatch, Radium Springs and Sunland Park with the highest transit needs.

81.5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed for better public transit and 89.8% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed for better walking/bike trails.

Source: Vision 2040 PJS Appendix Workbook Responses 2008

### *Port of Entry*

Doña Ana County borders Mexico for approximately 53 miles and includes one port of entry at Santa Teresa, New Mexico. This port is located 42 miles south of New Mexico's second largest city, Las Cruces, 20 miles from downtown El Paso, Texas, and enters Chihuahua, Mexico located 15 miles from the west side of Juárez, Mexico,

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

and allows access further into the interior of Mexico. The port opened in 1992. It is the only port processing most types of exported used vehicles and has the largest livestock import/export facility of any port of entry on the Mexican border. Expansion plans are underway to double the capacity of this port by the end of 2012.<sup>30</sup>

The Santa Teresa and Sunland Park, New Mexico area around the Santa Teresa Port of Entry is fast becoming a transportation hub. A hub that moves people and goods through the expansions at the Port of Entry, proximity of the Doña Ana County Airport, railroad improvements, industrial-zoned land, some 1,200-ares of designated Foreign Trade Zone properties, and easy interstate freeway access to I-10. This helps create new job and housing opportunities.

## *Truck Freight*

According to a 2008 report from the New Mexico Department of Transportation, truck freight travelling through New Mexico accounted for a significant percentage of total freight shipments – approximately 67 percent by value. The projection is truck freight will rise to 75 percent by 2035, increasing traffic along major trade corridors, particularly I-10 and I-40. This will result in a greater need for roadway maintenance and operations, including implementation of Intelligent Transportation System technology. These needs will require funding through additional revenue sources as the state has already recognized that

existing sources will not keep up with current demand.

## *Rail*

Doña Ana County currently does not have any passenger rail stations, though AMTRAK does traverse the southern county with stations in Deming and El Paso. Commuter rail is an emerging issue for the region. Participants in the One Valley, One Vision 2040 process indicated a desire for more transportation options, particularly a connection to the El Paso International Airport. Efforts have begun on defining the feasibility of a commuter rail servicing Doña Ana and El Paso County.

There are two freight rail corridors crossing Doña Ana County. Union Pacific (UP) operates an east-west line that connects the San Pedro Bay ports of California to markets in the eastern part of the country. The UP is currently developing a new facility at Santa Teresa, that will include fueling facilities, crew change buildings, and an intermodal yard designed to handle 250,000 containers per year for easy transfer of goods. This UP facility is adjacent to the Doña Ana County Airport and Santa Teresa industrial park, and approximately five miles to the Santa Teresa Port of Entry. Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) operates a north-south line that roughly parallels I-25 and splits into two lines at Rincon, one line going through Hatch toward Deming and the other line continuing north toward Albuquerque.

## Air

The region has three public-use airports: Las Cruces, Doña Ana County Airport at Santa Teresa, and Hatch. Las Cruces and Doña Ana County are regional general aviation airports, and Hatch is a community general aviation airport. None has scheduled commercial passenger service, though regular commercial service is available from the El Paso International Airport.

Las Cruces International Airport provides access for corporate flights and cargo, provides a base of operations for Air National Guard patrolling the border, houses the region's air ambulance service, is a refueling stop for smaller planes traveling cross-country, and is home to NMSU's unmanned aerial vehicles for research, development, testing, and evaluation. Foreign Trade Zones (FTZ) exists at both the Las Cruces and Doña Ana County Airport. In 2010, both made improvements to their runways and weather reporting equipment, which had noted deficiencies in the New Mexico Airport System Plan Update 2009 prepared by the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT).

Doña Ana County Airport provides flight training, air charter and taxi service, and maintenance facilities. Recent improvements include runway extensions, pavement condition, and weather reporting equipment. There are also future expansion plans to accommodate large passenger and cargo jets, including DC-10 aircraft.

Hatch Airport provides many crop-dusting services in addition to its general aviation operations. In June 2010, the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) secured grant money for runway rehabilitation.

There are also several military and related air installations in or near Doña Ana County. These include White Sands Missile Range in Doña Ana County, Holloman Air Force Base in Otero County, Fort Bliss in El Paso County with test and training ranges in Doña Ana County and Otero County, and the Spaceport in Sierra County.

Air related facilities have both positive and negative impacts on the region. Table 5-9, "Economic Impact of Public Airports," indicates some of the measurable financial impacts the local airports have on the economy.

Las Cruces Airport averages 125 aircraft operations per day.

Doña Ana County Airport averages 95 aircraft operations per day.

Hatch Airport averages 46 aircraft operations per week.

Source: [www.airnav.com](http://www.airnav.com), Spring 2010 data

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

Table 5-9

## Economic Impact of Public Airports

Airport	Total Employed	Total Payroll	Total Output
Las Cruces	567	\$14,415,800	\$43,103,100
Doña Ana County	234	\$7,511,400	\$17,960,300
Hatch	13	\$339,101	\$725,800

Source: New Mexico Airport System Plan Update 2009, New Mexico Department of Transportation, Aviation Division

- Total Employed, Payroll, and Output reflect the state-wide impact and multiplier effect created by the airport which is higher than the actual employment and associated dollar impact.

### Issues

- There is a need for greater intermodal connectivity for people, goods, and services in the region and across the border.
- The region needs an efficient multi-modal transportation network developed in concert with land use plans.
- The region has very few public transportation options.
- The region's transportation system presently lacks new technologies and green infrastructure strategies.
- There is a need for improved roadway maintenance, and stabilized surface roadways, sidewalks, streetlights, and school

signals/zones, particularly in the colonias and rural parts of the county.

- The region has no regional transportation plan that covers all of Doña Ana County and its communities.
- The transportation system is rarely in pace or ahead of growth, in part due to funding limitations.
- There will likely be a need for more transportation options in addition to driving a personal vehicle due to the upward trend in population over 65 years of age and number of persons with a disability and unable to drive.



Doña Ana County Government Center



Las Cruces City Hall

### Accomplishments

- Safe Routes to School started in 2005.
- In 2009, Las Cruces adopted a Complete Streets resolution in an effort to make walking, cycling, and accessing transit safer and more convenient.
- Since 2009, there have been several expansions to transit service. This includes service on the NMSU campus, service to the DACC East Mesa campus, and commuter routes to White Sands Missile Range and El Paso, Texas.
- In 2011, the League of American Bicyclists designated Las Cruces as a bicycle-friendly community at the bronze level.

### 5.7 Community Facilities & Services

Regional community facilities consist of the built public environment including buildings, structures on land, interest in land, and whole systems of activities of governmental services on behalf of the public serving more than one jurisdiction. Community facilities may include public agencies as well as

facilities owned or operated by private for-profit or non-profit enterprise. Regional community facilities for this plan must meet three criteria: Their service or market area is regional; they are in Doña Ana County; they are within a community facility subcategory listed in this section.

### Organizations

Doña Ana County, White Sands Missile Range, and the five incorporated municipalities in the county are major governmental organizations that provide and plan for many of the community facilities and services in the region. Many of these facilities and services are local in scope, but often serve a wider group of people. In addition, there are numerous private for-profit or non-profit organizations not identified in the scope of this plan. There are other important quasi or government organizations providing community facilities and services identified in the respective subsections that follow.

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

Table 5-10

## School District Facilities (2011)

School	No. Facilities
<b>Hatch Valley Public Schools</b>	
Elementary	3
Middle	1
High	1
<b>Las Cruces Public Schools</b>	
Elementary	24
Middle	7
High	6
Charter	3
<b>Gadsden Independent Schools</b>	
Elementary	14
Middle	3
High	4
Charter	1

Source: New Mexico Public Education Department, Information Technology Division

provide a variety of services explored in greater depth in local plans.

### Education

Doña Ana County divides into three regional K-12 school districts: Hatch Valley Public Schools, Las Cruces Public Schools, and Gadsden Independent Schools. Each district provides elementary, middle, and high school facilities as shown in Table 5-10, "School District Facilities." These schools operate independently of most local government control, but can have local impacts. These impacts may include new school locations or student population changes resulting from new subdivisions. Table 5-10 does not include private non-charter schools in the region.

Since 1888, New Mexico State University (NMSU) has provided advanced educational opportunities to the community. Located in Las Cruces, NMSU is one of the leading educational facilities serving and employing the people in Doña Ana County with a projection to grow an additional 25,000 students within the next 20 years.

Doña Ana Community College (DACC), in affiliation with NMSU, also provides higher education in the region. In 2008, it had approximately 4,607 full-time equivalent students. It offers two campuses in Las Cruces, one campus in Anthony, one campus in Sunland Park, one campus in Hatch, a learning center at both White Sands Missile Range and Mesquite, and a

### Planning

Where available, the subsections identify any applicable regional planning.

### Public Administration Buildings

These buildings throughout the region

Workforce Center for customized training to various businesses/agencies.

### Parks and Recreation

Most of these facilities are local, but others have regional significance. Table 5-6, "Significant Natural Open Spaces," lists the significant recreational open spaces within the region. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Plan provides further detail of its many recreation areas accessible to those within Doña Ana County. Additionally, the State of New Mexico owns and operates two state parks and one state monument within Doña Ana County: Leasburg Dam State Park, Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, and Fort Seldon State Monument.

Park and recreation planning occurs at the local level through the respective comprehensive or master plans (i.e., ongoing update to the Las Cruces 2005 City Parks and Recreation Master Plan). The respective municipal and county parks departments can provide further information and detail on existing and proposed parks. The BLM is in the process of updating its 1993 Mimbres Resource Management Plan, called the Tri-County Resource Management Plan.

Possible future projects include development of more indoor recreation facilities, continued development of a national system of public lands, and development of a regional park with active and passive recreation that provides broad appeal. As the parks and recreation system

grows, it is important to factor the required maintenance costs and travel distances for residents.

Approximately two-thirds of respondents agreed that the region needs more parks, with more people responding for active and indoor recreation opportunities.

Source: Vision 2040 Mail Survey 2008

### Public Safety

Some of the local public safety agencies within Doña Ana County include the public safety departments for each individual municipality, the Doña Ana County Sheriff's Office, New Mexico State University Police Department, and White Sands Missile Range Police Department. These local agencies many times coordinate with each other and public safety agencies in New Mexico, Texas, Mexico, and U.S. Federal agencies. Some of these other agencies include the New Mexico State Police, United States Customs and Border Patrol, U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

Doña Ana County and its individual municipalities have their own fire departments. Las Cruces employs paid positions, Hatch has a volunteer department, Doña Ana County has a



# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

volunteer department and a paid fire chief, and the other municipalities have a mix of paid and volunteer positions.

Proximity to the Mexican border presents unique public safety issues for the region, analysis of which is left for other studies. Figures 5-2, "Violent Crime," and 5-3, "Property Crime," provide a basic oversight of crime statistics, which have remained relatively stable in the region from 2005 to 2008. A full assessment requires a careful study of the range of conditions affecting each local law enforcement jurisdiction.

## Healthcare

Private and non-profit organizations provide many healthcare facilities and services in the region. Some of the largest healthcare facilities in Doña Ana County include Memorial Medical Center and Mountain View Regional Medical Center in Las Cruces. Several specialty-focused health facilities are available in the area, including Advanced Care Hospital of Southern New Mexico and Rehabilitation Hospital of Southern New Mexico. Providers of healthcare in the rural communities include

70.4% to 78% of people feel safe in their communities.

63.2% to 71.0% believe the region is prepared on fire, police and ambulance services

Source: Vision 2040 Mail & Phone Survey 2008

Ben Archer Health Centers and La Clinica de Familia. Examples of private organizations serving the region that fund a variety of programs and partnerships with local agencies on health include the Paso del Norte Health Foundation and Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico. The proximity to El Paso, Texas, affords many residents additional healthcare options. This includes the level one comprehensive

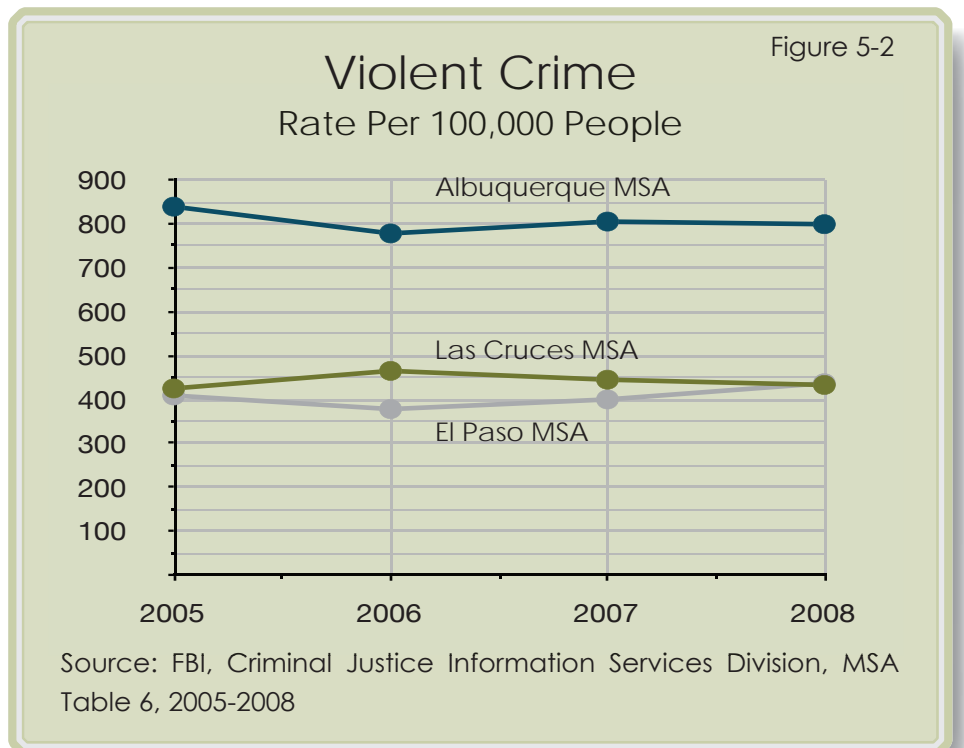
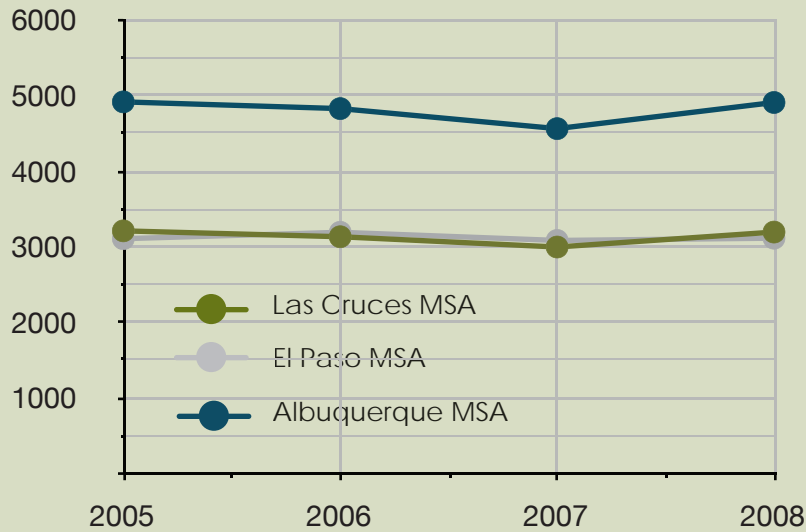


Figure 5-3

## Property Crime Rate Per 100,000 People



Source: FBI, Criminal Justice Information Services Division, MSA Table 6, 2005-2008

trauma center at Texas Tech and University Medical Center in El Paso, Texas.

Doña Ana County and its incorporated municipalities provide several types of health-related services to residents. These include health and wellness activities offered at community resource centers and other facilities. More information on these and other services provided is available by contacting the particular jurisdiction.

The United States/Mexico Border Health Commission, New Mexico Health Department, and Doña Ana County Health and Human Services Department provide education, planning, and collection of health information. Services provided by the Doña Ana County Health and Human Services Department relate to outreach and education at community resource centers, assistance with contracted health care providers, advancing health in the region's

colonias, coordination of the Local DWI-Prevention Program, and leveraging funding and technical assistance. More information is available at [www.borderhealth.org](http://www.borderhealth.org), [www.health.state.nm.us](http://www.health.state.nm.us), and [www.donaanacounty.org/health](http://www.donaanacounty.org/health).

Examples of planning include the Healthy Gente/Healthy Border 2010 Program, a regional health-focused plan for

bi-national health promotion and disease prevention in the border region. In 2009, the Doña Ana County Board Commissioners approved an update to its 2006 Doña Ana County Health and Human Services Alliance Action Plan that identified the following seven health care priorities: access to care, behavioral health, diabetes, injury and violence prevention, maternal-infant-child health, oral health, and teen pregnancy.

Some of the healthcare challenges for the region include a large medically underserved population, medical services for the growing senior population, and shortages of healthcare professionals. Outreach to residents in colonia communities remains an ongoing issue, as many residents lack access to resources.

Some of the accomplishments in terms of healthcare throughout Doña Ana County

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

include enhanced or additional programs (i.e., crisis-response system, and intervention training, teen-pregnancy prevention, and DWI prevention), development of a mental health mobile crisis team, and expansion of services at existing healthcare facilities.

## Cultural

Doña Ana County has a rich blend of historic cultures, which shape the region's unique identity. Preserving and restoring the elements of those cultures is an area in which grants and other assistance programs may be used. Communities should determine ways to promote identity of these cultural resources, such as through use of historic centers. There are currently many such institutions, such as museums, library services, theaters, historic places, natural amenities, and other cultural resources. Detailed listings of these are available through various local Chambers of Commerce and municipal websites. These include Las Cruces Area Info at [www.las-cruces.org](http://www.las-cruces.org), Doña Ana County at [www.co.dona-ana.nm.us](http://www.co.dona-ana.nm.us), Hatch at [www.villageofhatch.org](http://www.villageofhatch.org), Mesilla at [www.mesilla-nm.us](http://www.mesilla-nm.us), and Sunland Park at [www.cityofsunlandpark.org](http://www.cityofsunlandpark.org).

## Issues

- Constrained funding stresses the importance of regular asset management and capital improvement planning of public buildings and sites to ensure continued maintenance, operation, and planned expansion of these facilities.

- Many rural and developing communities lack adequate parks, park amenities, community centers, police substations, activities geared toward young people, and a regional system of public parks with active and passive recreation that provides broad appeal.

- No regional public safety training facilities for law enforcement and fire protection exist within Doña Ana County.

- The region's large rural areas, high poverty rate, and large number of un- and underinsured residents create challenges for health care delivery and access.

- The region has untapped opportunities to develop and promote national identity and attraction of the region's cultural resources.

- There is a fragmentation of community facility providers and this increases redundancy in providing services.

- There will likely be a need for additional healthcare services due to the upward trend in population over 65 years of age.

## Accomplishments

- In 2000, the U.S. National Parks Service proclaimed the 404-mile section of the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro in the U.S. as a National Historic Trail. This route brought thousands of Spanish and Mexican colonists to New Mexico from Mexico City,

Mexico to Sante Fe, New Mexico. Progress on trail signage and education programs is ongoing.

- In 2005, The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) through local efforts designated the drivable route of the El Camino Real as a National Scenic Byway. In Doña Ana County, this includes portions of former U.S 85 now New Mexico State Routes 185 and 478.
- There was expansion of regional health care facilities and services. This includes the addition of a third Cardiac Cath Lab , the expansion of the Critical Care Unit, and equipment upgrades at Mountain View Regional Medical Center such as the Da Vinci Robotic Surgical System. In 2006 to 2008, the region added the Rehabilitation Hospital of Southern New Mexico and the Advanced Care Hospital of Southern New Mexico in Las Cruces.
- The various volunteer fire departments within the unincorporated county unified into one paid department in 2007.
- There has been construction of new, and transitioning out of older, government facilities over the past few years, including the Las Cruces City Hall, Federal Courthouse in Las Cruces, and Doña Ana Government Center.
- In 2010, a partnership between the

Bridge of Southern New Mexico, Las Cruces Public School District, NMSU, DACC, and private business opened the first early college high school in New Mexico.

- In 2010, Doña Ana County agreed to move forward on constructing its first mental health correctional triage center.
- In 2010, the region's first convention center opened in Las Cruces.
- There has been expansion of public indoor-recreation facilities, such as the 2010 opening of the Regional Aquatic Center.
- In 2011, the Munson Senior Center in Las Cruces became the first nationally accredited senior center in the state of New Mexico.

## **5.8 Utilities & Infrastructure**

Infrastructure is the basic physical and organizational structure needed for the operation of a community, or the services and facilities necessary for an economy to function. Utilities or infrastructure systems are large-scale public systems, services, and facilities necessary for economic activity and include power and water supplies, public transportation, telecommunications, and roads.

### **Organizations**

The New Mexico Environment Department regulateswastewatersystemsandsolidwaste landfills. The New Mexico Public Regulation

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

Commission oversees privately owned electric, natural gas, telecommunications, and related utilities. Publicly owned utilities like the city of Las Cruces oversee their own city-owned water, wastewater, natural gas, and solid waste utilities. The U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration provides data and trends, including electric and natural gas, at the state and national level. More information is available at [www.nmprc.state.nm.us](http://www.nmprc.state.nm.us) and [www.eia.doe.gov](http://www.eia.doe.gov).

## Planning

Where available, the subsections below identify any applicable regional planning.

## Water

Section 5.2, "Water," of this plan provides information on water.

## Transportation

Section 5.6, "Transportation," of this plan provides information on transportation.

## Wastewater Systems

Doña Ana County, the city of Las Cruces, Doña Ana Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association (DAMDWCA), and White Sands Missile Range all operate wastewater treatment facilities. In addition, there are two sanitation districts located in the southern part of the county: the Anthony Water and Sanitation District and the Camino Real Regional Utility Authority serving Sunland Park-Santa Teresa.

An estimate is Doña Ana County and its communities have municipal sewage collection and treatment systems serving approximately 65 percent or more of households. The remaining households use on-site wastewater treatment systems, such as septic tanks with leach fields or other alternative on-site systems. Cesspools have been illegal in New Mexico since 1973.

Las Cruces and Doña Ana County both have programs aimed at reducing the number of individual on-site disposal systems. These efforts include new wastewater treatment plants and increased capacity throughout the county to keep pace with anticipated growth. This includes the East Mesa Water Reclamation Facility in Las Cruces that began operation in 2009. Some ongoing wastewater treatment projects include the Camino Real Regional Utility Authority North Wastewater Treatment Plant serving Sunland Park/Santa Teresa, the DAMDWCA treatment facility near Radium Springs, and the Doña Ana County treatment plant in Chaparral.

## Solid Waste

In 1990, Las Cruces and Doña Ana County entered into an agreement to cooperate and seek solutions to solid waste disposal problems on a regional basis. This began the master planning and permitting process for the operation of the Corralitos landfill. Through a Joint Powers Agreement in 1995, Las Cruces and Doña Ana County formed the South Central Solid Waste Authority (SCSWA) to provide integrated solid waste

# Solid Waste Management Facilities

## Doña Ana County (2011)

Table 5-11

Facility	Size* (in acres)	Approximate Lifespan (in years)	Service Area
Corralitos Landfill	640	99	Las Cruces and rest of Doña Ana County
Camino Real Environmental Center Landfill	480	20	Sunland Park and southern Doña Ana County; El Paso, Texas; Juárez, Mexico
Transfer Stations	Las Cruces		
Community Collection Centers	Anthony, Butterfield, Hatch, Hill, La Mesa, Mesquite, Garfield, La Union		
Recycling Locations	Community Collection Centers, Las Cruces Transfer Station, New Mexico State University, Public Schools (Select Sites), State Parks (Select Sites), Sunland Park – Camino Real Environmental Center, and various business locations		
Composting Locations	Las Cruces, New Mexico State University		

Source: South Central Solid Waste Authority (SCSWA) & NM Environment Department & Doña Ana County Public Works

\* Size is total site acreage, not acres permitted to receive waste

management solutions for area residents and businesses. In 1996, SCSWA began operation of the Corralitos landfill located off I-10 south of the Las Cruces airport. This is the primary public landfill serving Doña Ana County. Another landfill that serves the public in the region is the privately owned Camino Real Environmental Center landfill located in Sunland Park, NM. This landfill serves many of the communities in the southern portion of Doña Ana County.

Both Doña Ana County landfills accept a certain level of waste from outside the county. Other landfills exist in adjoining counties that accept outside waste, such as the Butterfield Trail Regional Landfill

in adjoining Luna County. The nearest proposed landfill is in adjoining Otero County at Chaparral. Chaparral lies within both Doña Ana County and Otero County. The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has an open request for consideration on the suitability of a 375-acre landfill site in Chaparral. This proposed site is an alternate site from an earlier 160-acre site the community successfully appealed to the New Mexico Supreme Court regarding the potential adverse impact a landfill may have on a community's quality of life.

A transfer station in Las Cruces and several community collection centers that hold waste for later movement to the above

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

landfills exist throughout the county, as well as recycling centers and composting centers as listed in Table 5-11, "Solid Waste Management Facilities." Table 5-11 provides size, lifespan, and service area information on the Corralitos and Camino Real solid waste facilities. Hatch, Las Cruces, Mesilla, and Sunland Park all provide residential curbside solid waste disposal. For others, their options are to haul or pay for a private curbside waste service. Las Cruces and Mesilla offer residential curbside recycling, with other communities having access to the many recycling drop-off centers in the region. More information on recycling locations and the types of recycling waste facilities is available by the South Central Recycling Partnership (SCRaP), a grassroots board formed by SCSWA, at [www.thescrappages.com](http://www.thescrappages.com).

## Electricity

El Paso Electric Company provides electricity for the region, with a service area covering Doña Ana and El Paso Counties, along with portions of some adjacent counties. El Paso Electric Company generates electricity mostly from fossil-fuel sources like coal; however, New Mexico State Statute requires it to use 15% renewable sources by 2015 and 20% renewable sources by 2020.

Presently, there is only one generating station within Doña Ana County, located near Sunland Park. El Paso Electric has the capability to import power from outside its service area, including the nuclear generating Palo Verde Facility west of Phoenix, Arizona, and the fossil-fuel

generating Four Corners Facility west of Farmington, New Mexico. El Paso Electric has an ownership interest in both the Palo Verde and Four Corners Facilities. Present renewable non-residential sources include Hueco Mountain Wind Ranch in Horizon City, Texas, Southwest Environmental Center Solar System in Las Cruces, New Mexico, and the Camino Real Landfill methane gas-to-energy facility near Sunland Park, New Mexico.

## Natural Gas

Zia Natural Gas Company provides service in Hatch and some northern portions of Doña Ana County since its 2011 purchase of a portion of the Rio Grande Natural Gas Association (RGNGA) service area. RGNGA was a non-profit corporation owned by the city of Las Cruces and the Village of Hatch, providing service to residents of Las Cruces, Hatch, and portions of Doña Ana County.

The city of Las Cruces provides natural gas service to residents of Las Cruces and a portion of unincorporated Doña Ana County previously served by RGNGA. New Mexico Gas Company, a subsidiary of Continental Energy Systems L.L.C., provides service to southern Doña Ana County, which includes the communities of Anthony and Sunland Park.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, New Mexico has the third largest natural domestic gas reserves. Most of these reserves are in the northwest part of New Mexico.

## Telecommunications

Doña Ana County has a variety of telecommunications providers that range from landlines to cellular phone services offering voice (telephone), video (cable) and data (internet) connections. This is a dynamic market with new suppliers added at a rapid rate. Coverage relies on a network of lines, towers, and other infrastructure.

## Renewable Energy

Renewable energy comes from sources other than petroleum, natural gas, coal, or nuclear sources. These are typically biomass, hydropower, wind, geothermal, and solar. Doña Ana County, its municipalities, businesses, and residents are actively working toward better energy choices. Table 5-12, "Renewable Energy Projects and Policies," lists some of the renewable energy projects and policies in the region.

## Issues

- Growth requires assessment and improvement of the collection, treatment, storage, distribution, and delivery capacity of public and quasi-public water and wastewater systems.
- Growth and the limited lifespan of the Camino Real Environmental Center landfill in Santa Teresa may leave the Corralitos landfill as the only existing public solid waste disposal site serving the region as 2040 approaches.
- The region needs additional sources

of financial assistance for making utility system improvements related to capacity or extensions for water, sewer, gas, and electric services.

- High-speed, broadband communications services are not uniformly accessible in some parts of Doña Ana County.
- The utility providers need a more transparent process of where and when to extend utilities for the public.

## Accomplishments

- In 2007, the formation of the Lower Rio Grande Mutual Domestic Water Association of five water systems in southern Doña Ana County to improve economies of scale and eliminate redundancy in providing water and wastewater services: Berino MDWC & MSWA, Desert Sands MDWCA, La Mesa MDWCA, Mesquite MDWC & MSWA and Vado MDWCA. In 2010, this Association met one of its goals to form an Authority under State Statute. It is now the Lower Rio Grande Public Water Works Authority.
- In 2008, the formation of the Camino Real Regional Utility Authority to address utility and wastewater needs in the Santa Teresa/Sunland Park area.
- In 2010, the city completed the East Mesa Water Reclamation Facility in Las Cruces.
- In 2011, the city of Las Cruces and New Mexico State University initiated curbside recycling.



# Renewable Energy Projects and Policies

Table 5-12

Camino Real Environmental Center Landfill	Methane produced by the landfill is used to produce electricity for purchase by local power companies and used by homes and businesses in the area.
City of Las Cruces	City Hall uses geothermal wells to pre-cool or pre-heat the indoor air. The Las Cruces Convention Center has solar panels in its parking lot. Funding is in place to install photovoltaic arrays at the new downtown location of the Museum of Nature and Science.
City of Las Cruces	In 2011, adopted the city Sustainability Action Plan.
El Paso Electric	Renewable incentives that include the ability to sell back electricity and energy credits found at <a href="http://www.epelectric.com">www.epelectric.com</a>
F&A Dairy	F&A Dairy Company cheese plant uses solar panels to supplement energy needs and power its water treatment facility at the West Mesa Industrial Park, Las Cruces.
Jacob Hands Wastewater Treatment Plant	The city of Las Cruces uses a system to capture methane to supply some of the energy required by the treatment operation in its Jacob Hands Treatment Plant.
NextEra Energy	NextEra Energy Inc. operates a solar power plant in the Hatch Industrial Park.
R-Qubed	Construction of plant near Vado to convert the methane gas in animal and agricultural waste to electricity, high-grade fertilizer, compost, and other material.
Rio Grande Power Plant	El Paso Electric's Power Plant near Sunland Park and Newman Power Plant in El Paso include a photovoltaic system creating 260,000 kWh per year of electricity.
Roadrunner Solar Electric Facility	NRG Energy Inc. operates a solar power plant near Santa Teresa, NM.
Sapphire Energy	Sapphire Energy operates a series of biofuel research and development ponds at the West Mesa Industrial Park, Las Cruces.
Southwest Environmental Center	The Center's offices located in downtown Las Cruces is one example of photovoltaic solar panels used on the roof to supplement energy needs and sell back any unused energy. Since 2007, there have been over 200 grid-connected photovoltaic systems installed in the El Paso Electric territory.
Town of Mesilla	In 2011, adopted an ordinance regulating alternative energy systems, particularly wind generators.
White Sands Missile Range (WSMR)	WSMR will be constructing a four MW solar power plant on the installation. It is expected to be in operation by early summer 2012.

## 5.9 Housing

Assessing regional housing issues is vital to meeting the needs of the region's growing and diverse population. The housing option for the area is typically single-family detached dwellings, whether manufactured or site-built; attached single-family dwellings such as townhouses and condominiums; and multi-family dwellings like apartments built in a variety of configurations.

### **Organizations**

Various organizations throughout the county are instrumental in providing safe and sanitary housing for the population. Las Cruces and Doña Ana County historically provided federal and state grant monies to non-profit organizations so that they may assist in supplying affordable housing and home rehabilitation. A major source of this grant funding is through the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program. In 2011, their respective housing authorities merged under the name of the Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority to create better efficiencies: Gospel Rescue Mission, Tierra del Sol, Habitat for Humanity, Community Action Agency, and many others. More information is available on the county and municipal websites.

### **Planning**

In terms of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) related grant monies various planning documents are required and come in the form of a Consolidated Plan and an

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice. Coordination with many non-profit agencies and governmental partners must take place for the period specified by the Federal Government, thus representing considerable planning coordination amongst those involved in the low and moderate income housing level.

Local comprehensive plans are another important planning tool to address housing. These plans often include housing elements emphasizing provisions on housing choice for all socioeconomic levels and land use issues that include mixed-use and mixed-housing types.

### **Existing homes**

As shown in Section 3.4, "Population," the region's population may reach as high as 350,000 by 2040. With this increase, the current housing stock becomes a viable resource for conservation and maintenance to meet a range of future housing needs.

The focus of much of this housing section is on affordable housing. However, unincorporated Doña Ana County and its municipalities provide a range of housing types, styles, and prices. Map 6, "Mean Property Values -2011," illustrates the range of housing using mean property values for Doña Ana County. The majority of developed land has a mean property value between \$75,000 and \$180,000. The mean value approaches \$500,000 in several residential areas, including on the west and east mesas of Las Cruces and on the western

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

slopes of the Organ Mountains. Many of the mean property values exceeding \$500,000 are non-residential areas as the West Mesa Industrial Park/Las Cruces Airport, Doña Ana County Airport, Santa Teresa Port of Entry, and Las Uvas Valley Dairy west of Hatch.

## **Maintenance**

A primary concern is many homeowners lacking the means to maintain, upgrade, or make their home more energy efficient as indicated in a 2006 survey conducted by BBC Research and Consulting for the city of Las Cruces Consolidated Plan FY 2006-2010, and Analysis to Impediments to Fair Housing.

Over half of the responding homeowners in the survey claimed inability to afford needed home repairs, with three percent indicating repairs were so important, failure to carry them out meant the house was “unlivable.” These numbers, although only focusing on Las Cruces, imply similar or higher figures may exist outside municipal boundaries.

## **Household Size and Familial Status**

According to the Las Cruces Consolidated Plan referenced above and the 2011-2015 New Mexico Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development -Doña Ana County Profile, the average household size declined in 2000 from the previous decade.

BBC Research and Consulting reports that in Las Cruces, based on 2000 Census data, single-parent households with their own children grew to 3,640 or 12 percent of

total households. Of these, 79 percent are female heads of household. Male heads of household for the same period showed the largest point increase of 42 percent from the previous decade. This suggests that with any further increase in related dynamics, households may find it harder to find affordable housing given the lack of dual incomes.

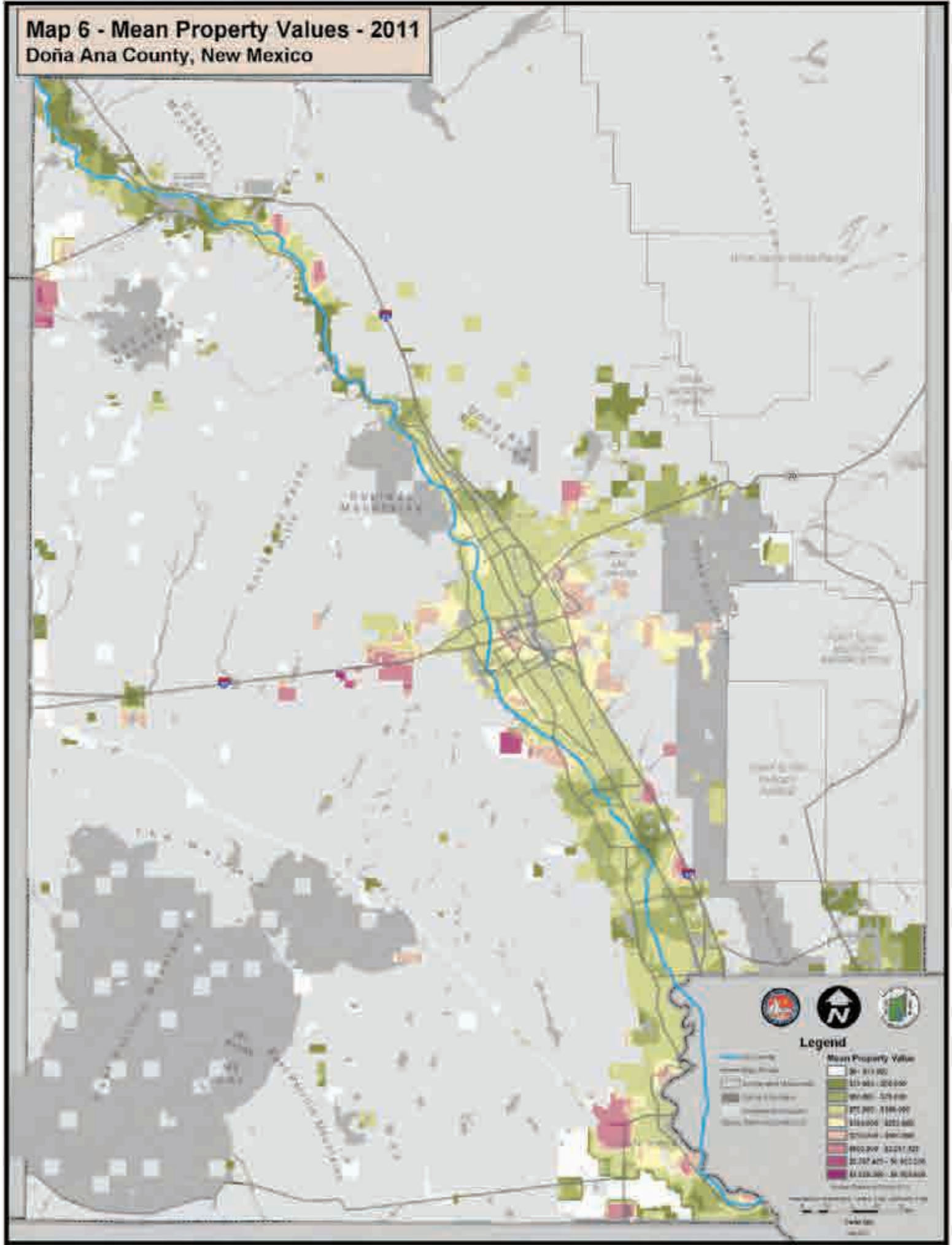
## **Income**

As discussed under Section 5.10, “Economy,” employment trends indicate the region is growing. However, much of this growth is in the very low to moderate wage range. Average annual income from the national to local level has declined in general over the past two years. These declines, coupled with the typical lower average annual incomes for Doña Ana County, mean housing affordability is a challenge for many residents.

## **Poverty**

As shown in Table 5-13, “Individuals in Poverty,” the poverty rate over the last ten years has remained relatively constant, with the average poverty rate for Doña Ana County approximately six-percent higher than the poverty rate for New Mexico. It is necessary to redefine affordable housing in this type of situation. Often, government assistance for housing is necessary and programs to generate specified housing to meet the demand become more important for the community to address.

**Map 6 - Mean Property Values - 2011**  
**Doña Ana County, New Mexico**



**Legend**

**Mean Property Value**

Lightest Green	\$0 - \$10,000
Light Green	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Yellow-Green	\$25,000 - \$50,000
Yellow	\$50,000 - \$100,000
Light Orange	\$100,000 - \$250,000
Orange	\$250,000 - \$500,000
Red-Orange	\$500,000 - \$1,000,000
Red	\$1,000,000 - \$2,000,000
Purple-Red	\$2,000,000 - \$4,000,000

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

## Colonias

Colonias create challenges over a range of housing issues that include keeping pace with the demand for affordable housing, providing utility payment assistance, and providing housing for young people, disabled, and persons over 65 years of age. Chapter 7, "Types of Communities," provides additional information about colonias within Doña Ana County.

## Renter vs. Owner

The cost of housing as a percentage of household expenses between 2005 and 2009 for Doña Ana County was higher for renters than for homeowners as shown in Figures 5-4, "Gross Rent as % of Household Income," 5-5, "Homeowner Cost as % of Household Income (Mortgage)," and 5-6, "Homeowner Cost as % of Household Income (Without Mortgage)." Approximately three-fifths of renters pay more than 30-percent of their income toward housing, compared to two-fifths of homeowners with a mortgage and one-fifth of homeowners without a mortgage.

## Manufactured and Mobile Housing

Mobile and manufactured homes are dwellings built on chassis substructures for transport. The major difference in the two designations relates to the construction standards existing in the year of manufacture. Per the uniform standards of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a unit built in 1976 or

Table 5-13

## Individuals in Poverty

Doña Ana County vs. New Mexico  
Census Data 1999-2009

Year	NM Rate (%)	County Rate (%)
1999	19	25
2000	17	23
2001	18	25
2002	18	25
2003	18	24
2004	17	23
2005	18	26
2006	18	23
2007	17	23
2008	17	23
2009	18	24

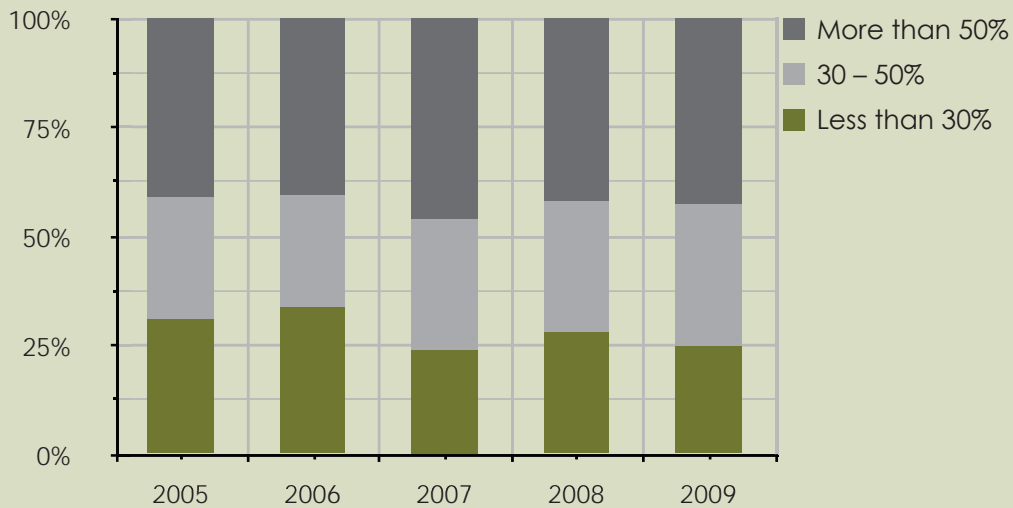
Source: U. S. Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

before is a mobile home. The designation varies for those built during 1976-1983. For those constructed in 1983 and beyond, HUD regulations tightened and the official name is manufactured home. Typically, the sale of a manufactured home occurs as real property, can qualify for Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (FHLMC) financing, and sits on permanent foundation.

Many zoning districts within the region allow for manufactured and mobile housing. Census data generally shows that 16 to 19 percent of the housing units in New Mexico since 1990 are manufactured and mobile homes. Figure 5-7, "Manufactured

## Gross Rent as % of Household Income

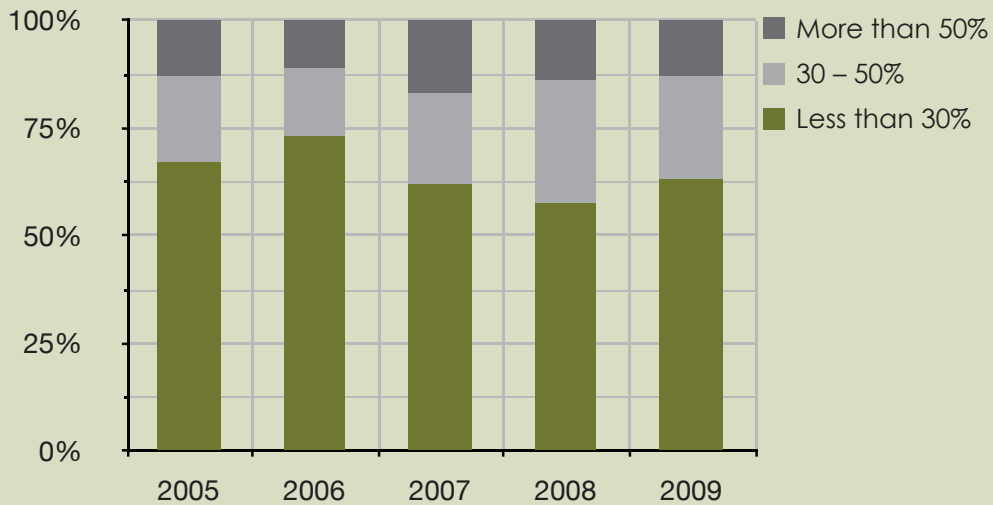
Figure 5-4



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey One-Year Estimates

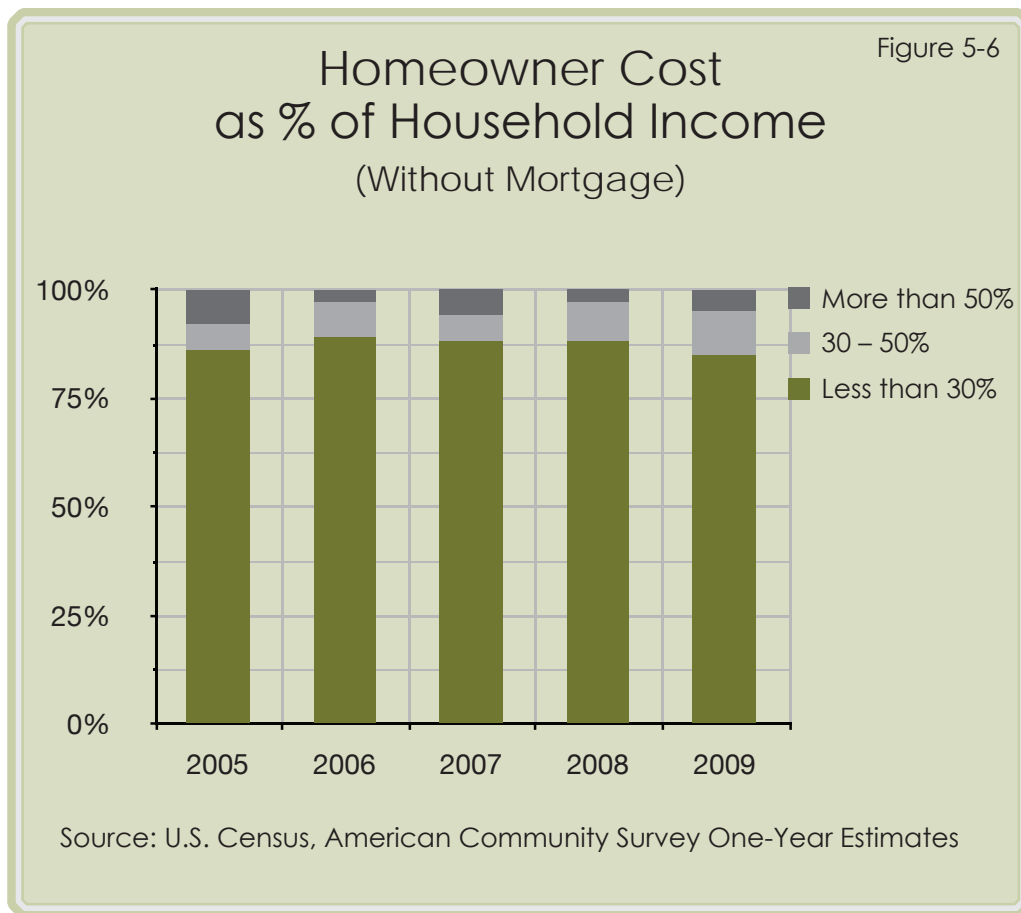
## Homeowner Cost as % of Household Income (Mortgage)

Figure 5-5



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey One-Year Estimates

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot



and Mobile Homes,” shows that Doña Ana County and its neighboring counties provide a greater percentage of manufactured and mobile homes than other counties in New Mexico. Neighboring El Paso County, Texas only provides about one-fourth the numbers of manufactured and mobile homes. These factors indicate potential affordability challenges that warrant further study or action, including considering the feasibility of establishing a region-wide definition for affordability.

### Affordability Index

Typically, a home is affordable when its cost accounts for no more than 30 percent of household income. One standard for consideration in the Las Cruces MPO Transport 2040 and the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) is a 45 percent of household income threshold for both housing and transportation costs combined. However, if applied to the region, a different threshold value may be more appropriate.

An affordability index combining housing and transportation costs may be beneficial

## Manufactured and Mobile Homes

Figure 5-7



Source: US Census Bureau, 1990 & 2000 Decennial Data and American Community Survey 2006-2008 on Units in Structure, 2008 data for Sierra County based on 2000 data

to the region since concerns over growth focus on the impact of new development to the fringes of the urban areas. Many of the smaller communities have further travel distances to obtain regional goods and services.

### Issues

- There is limited affordable housing supply and assistance to meet the projected demand of the region's low-to-moderate income homebuyers and low-income renters.

- Existing local public, private and non-profit entities have limited capacity or financial means to construct, maintain, and rehabilitate existing areas of substandard housing to meet present identified needs.

- There are ongoing efforts to provide safe housing, basic services, and infrastructure within the colonias in Doña Ana County.

- The upward trend in population over 65 years of age in Doña Ana County may require providing more housing options or amenities in addition to detached single-family dwellings.



# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

- There is a need to resolve indeterminate land ownership, illegal subdivisions, illegal construction, zoning and code violations in rural areas and colonias.

## Accomplishments

- The state of New Mexico adopted the Affordable Housing Act and Rules authorizing local governments to provide buildings, land, infrastructure, and financing for the creation of affordable housing, through state constitutional amendments approved in 2004 and 2006.

- Las Cruces prepared and adopted the Affordable Housing Strategic Plan in August 2009, identifying various ways to improve affordable housing opportunities citywide, including the creation of an Affordable Housing Land Bank, Affordable Housing Trust Fund, and revisions to various development codes to ease the creation of affordable housing. Implementation is ongoing.

- In 2009, the Casa del Quinto Sol 17-single-family home subdivision near Vado opened. The development uses sustainable building design and a variety of financial assistance methods to make housing affordable to local residents as part of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Model Colonia Initiative and Tierra del Sol.

- Las Cruces adopted the Affordable Housing Land Bank and Affordable Housing Trust Fund Ordinance in November 2010, as called for within the 2009 Affordable Housing Strategic Plan.

- In 2010, the state of New Mexico approved the Colonias Infrastructure Act, and legislation paves the way for ten million dollars annually to be available for infrastructure projects within designated colonias. Twenty-six percent of colonias in the state exist in Doña Ana County, and these will receive assistance in improving livability aspects therein.

- The National Association of Counties awarded the Doña Ana County's Colonia Initiative its 2006 and 2010 Achievement Award for its programs assisting colonias.

## 5.10 Economy

Economic development is about improving economic wealth for the region and creating higher wages and increased quality of life for all residents. It occurs when the number of dollars within and entering the region exceed the number leaving the region. Attainment of the ideal situation is through development of new commerce and industry and through the availability of natural and social resources.

## Organizations

Sources of regional economic development information involved in economic job creation include the New Mexico Partnership, the South Central Council of Governments (SCCOG), and the Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance (MVEDA). More information is available at [www.nmpartnership.com](http://www.nmpartnership.com), [www.sccognm.com](http://www.sccognm.com), and [www.mveda.com](http://www.mveda.com).

The New Mexico Partnership is a private, non-profit organization funded by the State of New Mexico to assist business throughout the State. SCCOG is a membership organization of local governments working together with local elected leaders to help solve common regional issues and to increase its leverage through combined planning and implementation throughout Doña Ana, Sierra, and Socorro Counties. MVEDA is a countywide public-private partnership to grow wealth in Doña Ana County.

Several business assistance organizations and programs are available. This includes finance and capital resources, workforce resources, and other incentives. MVEDA's Borderplex Business Resource Guide is a comprehensive directory for many of these resources.

The region has many local economic development organizations. These include the city of Las Cruces Economic Development and Revitalization Department, New Mexico Spaceport Authority, and Anthony-Berino Economic Development Agency to list a few. Community development, and related departments of Doña Ana County and the local municipalities are other ways to find out about local economic development opportunities.

Several chambers of commerce serve Doña Ana County. They include the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce, Village of Hatch Chamber of Commerce, Green Chamber of Commerce, High

Tech Consortium of Southern New Mexico, and Hispano Chamber of Commerce. More information is available at [www.spaceportamerica.com](http://www.spaceportamerica.com), [www.anthonynewmexico.org](http://www.anthonynewmexico.org), [www.lascruces.org](http://www.lascruces.org), [www.nmgreenchamber.com](http://www.nmgreenchamber.com), [www.htcnm.com](http://www.htcnm.com), and [www.thehispanochamber.com](http://www.thehispanochamber.com).

Three major organizations for regional business and industry research include the University of New Mexico (UNM), New Mexico State University (NMSU), and University of Texas El Paso (UTEP). These are the Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) through UNM, Arrowhead Center and New Mexico Business Outlook through NMSU, and the Border Regional Modeling Project through UTEP. More information is available at [www.bber.unm.edu](http://www.bber.unm.edu), [www.bbrs.nmsu.edu](http://www.bbrs.nmsu.edu), and [www.academics.utep.edu](http://www.academics.utep.edu).

## Planning

One of the most recently created economic plans of a regional nature is the 2010 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy prepared by the South Central Council of Governments (SCCOG). SCCOG is presently updating the 2010 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The SCCOG, the Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance (MVEDA), local municipalities, and the local Chambers of Commerce all assist their communities by collecting data or providing business assistance and information. These various organizations are actively involved in many localized economic development efforts and planning.

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

Since 2008, Doña Ana County, Las Cruces, and Hatch have adopted a Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) plan to assist on development, management, and funding as a way to attract and strengthen business. The intent behind the initial formation of LEDA was having a simultaneous Local Options Gross Receipts Tax Act (LOGRA) passed so that a local community could create an economic development fund through a tax. Very few communities in the state actually enacted the LOGRA. Therefore, a major funding source comes from the Capital Outlay by the State of New Mexico that fluctuates with State budget priorities and available funds.

## Agriculture

Agriculture is part of the region's heritage and is still very important to its economy and culture. Doña Ana County leads New Mexico counties in total market value and production of agricultural commodities like upland cotton, onions, tomatoes, chile, pecans, greenhouse products, colonies of bees, alfalfa hay, corn silage, and eggs. In 2010, Doña Ana County ranked third out of all other New Mexico counties for the number of milk cows and fifth for head of cattle and calves. Doña Ana County



Pecan Grove

89.0% of the mail survey respondents and 83.9% of the workbook respondents agreed or strongly agreed that agriculture is vital to the region and should be encouraged.

Source: Vision 2040 PJS Appendix Workbook Responses & Mail Survey 2008

regularly ranks first, or in the top three, of New Mexico counties for total annual cash receipts, with half this value from crops and half from livestock. Agricultural and ranching practices are commercial/industrial businesses with corresponding needs and economic considerations as shown in Table 5-14, "Economic Considerations in Agriculture and Ranching Practices." <sup>53, 54</sup>

Several farmers markets can be found throughout Doña Ana County, including the year-round downtown Las Cruces Farmers' and Crafts Market in operation since 1971.

Source: [www.farmersmarketsnm.org](http://www.farmersmarketsnm.org)

Doña Ana County is the top producer of pecans in the U.S., exporting pecans across the globe to countries like China and India.

Doña Ana County ranked 27<sup>th</sup> of all U.S. counties for milk production in the last Census of Agriculture.

Source: New Mexico Department of Agriculture, 2009 Agricultural Statistics

## Economic Considerations in Agriculture and Ranching Practices

Table 5-14

- Doña Ana County leads other counties in total market value and production in many agricultural and ranching commodities that points to the economic vitality agriculture and ranching has continued to bring to Doña Ana County since its early days of settlement.
- The type of product produced on a particular farm may change over time to accommodate viable markets and foster economic vitality.
- Agriculture is one of the major sources of groundwater recharge in the region.<sup>51</sup>
- Agriculture is dependent on natural and environmental factors like the amount of surface and groundwater availability.
- Agriculture, ranching, and their support businesses represent a long-standing custom and culture for Doña Ana County.
- Operations may require attention 24 hours a day and seven days a week.
- Doña Ana County leads other New Mexico counties in the number of organic farms certified by the New Mexico Organic Commodities Commission.
- Many crops still require spraying of (at the ground level or by air) fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides.
- Agriculture and ranching unlike many economic sectors in the region provide a primary resource that people need, this coupled with the known high-quality soil along the Rio Grande gives Doña Ana County opportunity for expansion of this economic sector.
- Hiring of seasonal workers occurs for planting, irrigating, weeding, and harvesting.
- Agriculture and ranching provides the region with many scenic and 'green' spaces area residents enjoy.
- Irrigation water and farm ponds may attract vegetation, wildlife, and insects.
- Agriculture and ranching provides Doña Ana County residents locally produced crops, dairy, and other related goods that reduces the need to import such goods.
- Farm equipment and vehicle usage typically increases traffic along local roads and at farm sites during harvesting and transport of goods to local and national markets.

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

## Employment

Map 7, “Jobs Supply – 2011,” illustrates existing employment locations in Doña Ana County. As the largest population center in the region, the central portion of Doña Ana County offers many existing and new employment opportunities. Las Cruces, Mesilla, and the Las Cruces Extra-Territorial Zone (ETZ) make up the majority of this area. It is home to many of the largest employers in the area, including Las Cruces Public Schools and New Mexico State University. East of this area is White Sands Missile Range – already one of the region’s largest employers, projected to grow over time despite current expansion plans on hold.



New Mexico State University



Las Cruces Public Schools, Columbia Elementary

The northern communities of Hatch and Rincon offer many agricultural and industrial opportunities. The development of Spaceport America in southern Sierra County has the potential to attract thousands of jobs, many of which may locate in Las Cruces and northern Doña Ana County.

The southern portion of Doña Ana County has potential to become a major center of activity due to its high rate of population growth over the past thirty years and adjacency to both the Mexican border and El Paso, Texas. The Santa Teresa Port of Entry, Doña Ana County Airport, and Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino are existing economic drivers for this area. The Union Pacific railroad is expanding its operations by building a new multi-mode railroad hub in Santa Teresa, projected to provide Southern New Mexico with a \$500 million economic boost.

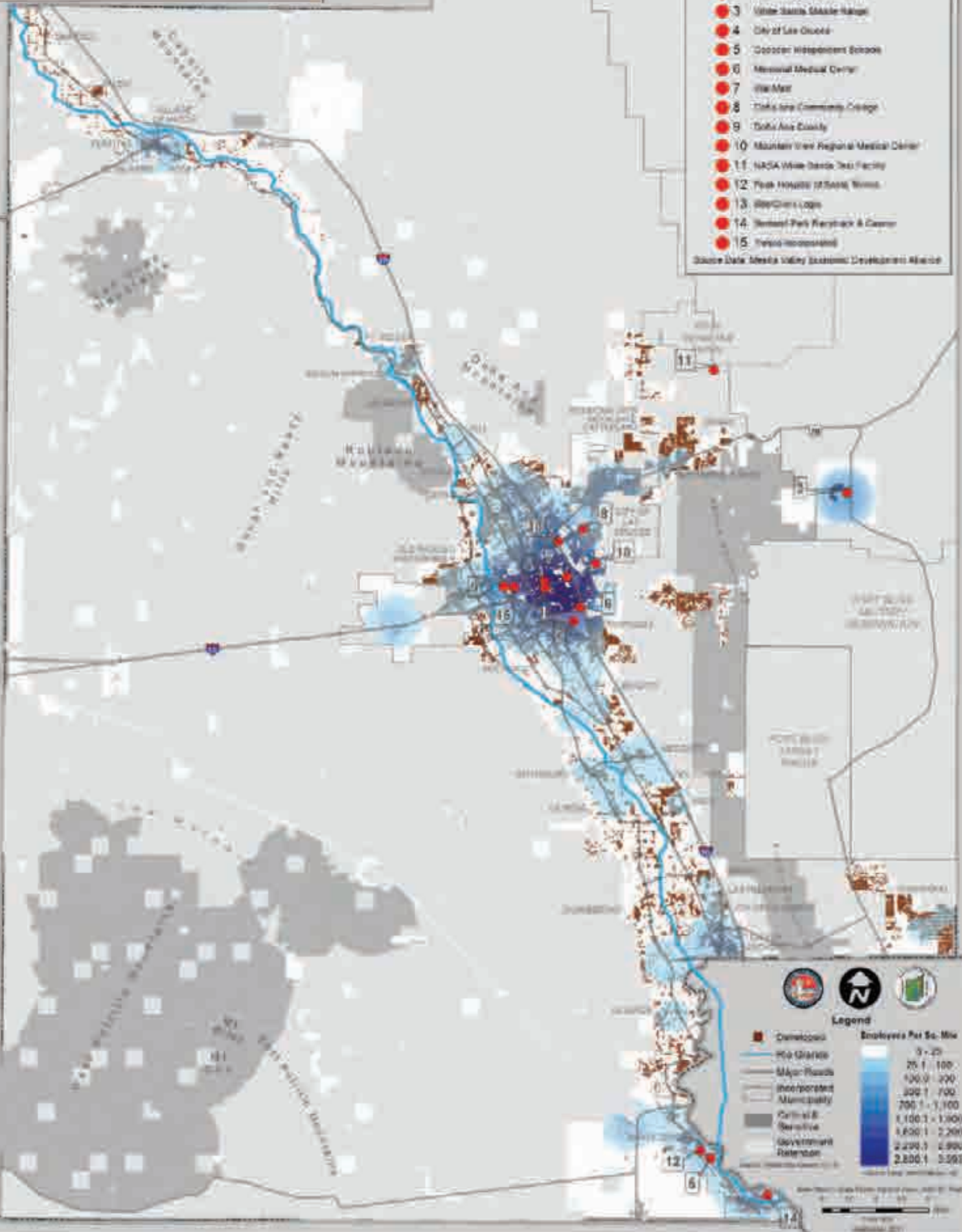


White Sands Missile Range

# Map 7 - Jobs Supply - 2011

## Doña Ana County, New Mexico

- ### Major Employers
- 1 Las Cruces Public Schools
  - 2 New Mexico State University
  - 3 White Sands Glass Harbor
  - 4 City of Las Cruces
  - 5 Doctor Independence School
  - 6 Memorial Medical Center
  - 7 Wal-Mart
  - 8 Doña Ana Community College
  - 9 Doña Ana County
  - 10 Mountain View Regional Medical Center
  - 11 NASA White Sands Test Facility
  - 12 Peak Hotels of South, West
  - 13 WalChick Logistics
  - 14 Sunset Park Recreation & Center
  - 15 Texas Roadways
- Source Data: Mesa Valley Economic Development Alliance



### Legend

- Development
- Rio Grande
- Major Roads
- Incorporated Municipality
- Central & Surrounding
- Government Retention

Employees Per Sq. Mile
9 - 25
26 - 100
100.0 - 200
300 - 700
700.1 - 1,100
1,100.1 - 1,500
1,500.1 - 2,200
2,200.1 - 4,900
2,200.1 - 3,500

Scale: 0 1 2 3 Miles

Map Date: 10/2011

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

**Largest Employers** Table 5-15  
Doña Ana County

Employer	Approximate Number of Employees per Employer
Las Cruces Public Schools	3000+
New Mexico State University	
White Sands Missile Range	
City of Las Cruces	1,000-2,999
Gadsden Schools	
Memorial Medical Center	
Wal-Mart	
Convergys	500-999
Coordinated Care Corporation	
Doña Ana Community College	
Doña Ana County	
Mountain View Regional Medical Center	
NASA White Sands Test Facility	
Peak Hospital of Santa Teresa	
Santillan Plumbing	
Sunland Park Race Track & Casino	
Tresco, Inc,	

Source: MVEDA, 1st Quarter 2011

Growth in manufacturing, transportation and warehouse jobs for the central and southern parts of the county are possible because of its proximity to maquiladora industries and ports of entry in New Mexico and Texas. Some major maquiladoras with plants in Chihuahua, Mexico include Lear Corporation, which manufactures

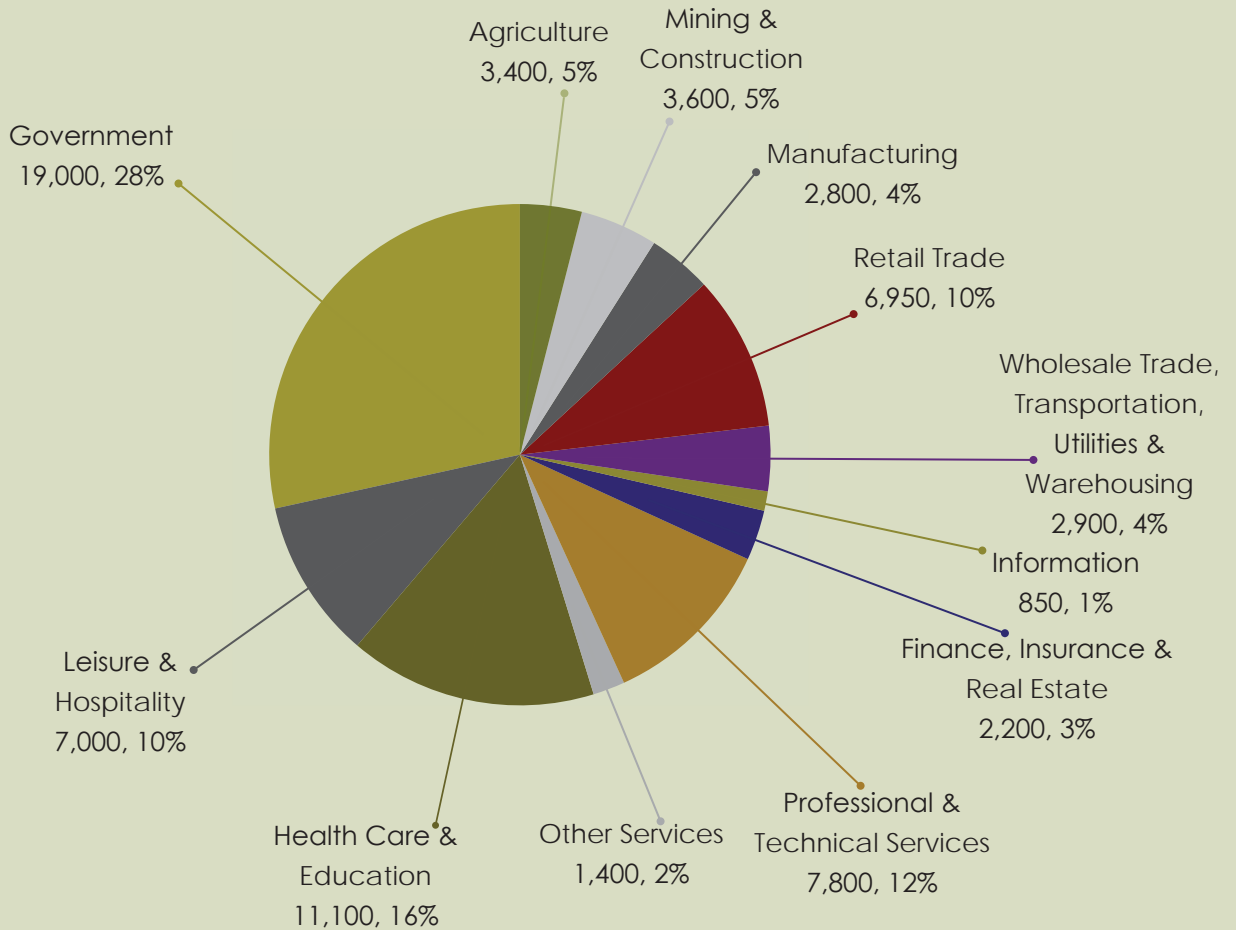
and distributes automotive interior systems, Electrolux, which manufactures appliances, Delphi Automotive LLP, a parts supplier for General Motors, and FoxConn which makes electronics. In recent years, clean-energy jobs have begun to develop, owing largely to the region's favorable climate and abundant solar resources. Agriculture, long the backbone of the economy in Doña Ana County, should continue to serve a major function.

Figure 5-8, "Employment by Sector," shows the 2010 employment sector percentages and Table 5-15, "Largest Employers," the largest employers. The sector responsible for the greatest share of employment in Doña Ana County has consistently been government.

According to the Regional Profile by MVEDA, employment in Doña Ana County continues to grow in most sectors. Education and health services are growing at an average annual rate of 5.8 percent over the past ten years from 1999 to 2009. Professional and business services are growing at an average annual rate of 3.5 percent. Construction is growing at a 4.7 percent average annual rate. The region's location along the Rio Grande trade corridor gives it access to the consumer and business markets of border cities in both Texas and Mexico.

## Employment by Sector Doña Ana County

Figure 5-8



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, NM Workforce Solutions, 2010 Annual Average

### Unemployment

Historically, Doña Ana County has had the highest unemployment rates compared to the rest of New Mexico as shown in Figure 5-9, "Unemployment Rate." The reasons for this are varied, and they occur despite good annual job growth. The community and dollar cost of unemployment affects the vitality of the region.

### Workforce Training

Doña Ana County has an active workforce-development network structure of area

universities and community colleges, public school districts, one-stop training offices, and numerous job-training organizations.

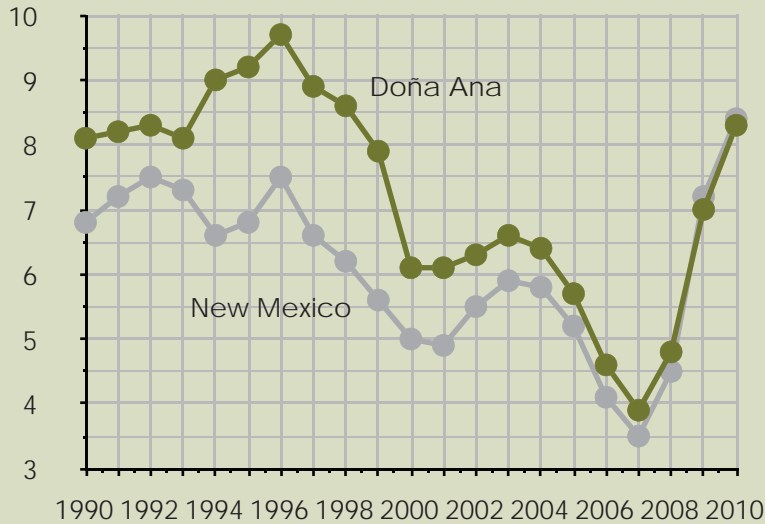
The SCCOG 2010 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy identifies opportunities for training entry-level workers, matching worker skills with high-tech industry needs, and updating job skills for workers changing fields. The MVEDA has also identified a need for "soft skill" training. Soft skills relate to subjects such as interacting with other people, conflict resolution and negotiation, problem solving, and team building.



# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

## Unemployment Rate Doña Ana County vs. New Mexico

Figure 5-9



Source: NM Department of Workforce Solutions

### Income

Table 5-16, "Median Household Income," shows Doña Ana County has a lower median household income compared to New Mexico and the U.S., with median income lower for all three areas in 2009, likely in response to the 2008 national recession. However, overall indicators show wages are improving in the region.

According to the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, the average annual wage for all occupations in Doña Ana County has increased approximately \$8,000 from 2005 to 2010. In comparison, the annual wage for all of New Mexico

increased approximately \$6,500 during this period. Wages vary depending on the industry and position. Some of the lowest paid occupations average less than \$25,000 annually. These include many support services related to agriculture, food service, health care, office, property maintenance, and transportation. Some of the highest paid occupations average more than \$70,000 annually. These include management, computer systems, and medical fields.

### Issues

- There is an ongoing need to keep workforce training in pace with future employment needs.

- Competition from outside Doña Ana County creates a loss of skilled and technical labor for the region. This also negatively affects locating business to the region. This is particularly evident along the El Paso, Texas border. In part, places like Chaparral lose labor potential because it has less infrastructure capacity to support industry.

- People in the region desire economic development that increases wages and salaries.

## Median Household Income Estimates

	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2009
<b>Doña Ana County</b>	\$29,647	\$28,977	\$30,740	\$33,878	\$36,361	\$35,541
<b>New Mexico</b>	\$34,487	\$34,827	\$37,838	\$40,610	\$43,719	\$42,830
<b>United States</b>	\$41,990	\$42,409	\$44,334	\$48,451	\$52,029	\$50,221

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates (SAIPE)

Latest estimates available are for 2009

- There is a need for a comprehensive economic development plan for all of Doña Ana County that incorporates the tri-county 2010 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy prepared by the SCCOG and efforts of the MVEDA.
- There is underutilization of the Foreign Trade Zone designation that provides special customs procedures to U.S. plants engaged in international trade-related activities available at the Las Cruces International and Doña Ana County International Airport.
- Political changes outside the region can affect in positive and negative ways the level and type of economic activity at military and military-related industries.
- Population density increases near military installations, airports, and other economic engines. If not planned, this encroachment may negatively affect quality of life and the operations of these facilities.

### Accomplishments

- Construction of the Spaceport, located in nearby southeastern Sierra County, is progressing. Virgin Galactic is the major tenant company with plans to launch suborbital spaceflights. This state-financed facility positions Doña Ana County for future

economic and development opportunities.

- There have been new road improvements, redevelopment, and increased community activities like the Farmer's Market in downtown Las Cruces.
- In 2010, a local Green Chamber of Commerce formed.
- Development of renewable energy facilities in solar and biofuel as illustrated in Table 5-12, "Renewable Energy Projects and Policies."

The Las Cruces Metropolitan area is at the top for employment

- 5th in U.S. on projected employment growth from 2009-2011 by Moody's Analytics, 2010
- 8th of 372 metro areas for strong job market by Garner Economics, September 2010
- 9th in U.S. for top recovering job market by Business Week, November 2009
- 14th in job growth from 2000 to 2009 Money, July 2010

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

## **5.11. Community Character, Design, & Historic Preservation**

This section looks at community character, design, and historic preservation. These three components work together in creating distinctive, attractive sites that become a factor in creating a sense of place. The inception and planning of community character, design, and historic preservation is often at the local level. The various long-range plans and implementation tools in a community are ways to encourage development fostering a sense of place. The One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan and the individual comprehensive plans are important in developing a sense of place since these long range plans highlight the unique characteristics of the area and represent the values, needs, or expectations of those within the community.

### **Organizations**

Doña Ana County, the ETZs, and the incorporated communities of Anthony, Hatch, Las Cruces, Mesilla, and Sunland Park all have authority to develop guidelines, policies, and regulations to shape community character, design, and historic preservation. Section 5.9, "Housing," identifies other organizations, that, through providing housing, create community design for particular groups across the region.

The National Parks Service through its Heritage Preservation Services helps communities preserve historic properties. Its National Register of Historic Places has

a database of places available on their website at [www.cr.nps.gov](http://www.cr.nps.gov). The State of New Mexico through the Cultural Properties Act of 1969 helped develop the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs and its Historic Preservation Division, which acts as an extension of the services by the National Parks Service. Its database of historic places is available on their website at [www.nmhistoricpreservation.org](http://www.nmhistoricpreservation.org).

The Doña Ana County Historical Society works to build historical awareness in the area. National preservation organizations like the National Trust for Historic Preservation also work to preserve historic buildings and neighborhoods. All of the region's cultural resources and their affiliated organizations including arts, museums, library services, theaters, historic structures, and natural amenities play a role in the region's overall community character, design, and historic preservation. Section 5.7, "Community Facilities & Services," and Section 5.4 "Environmental Resources," provide other organizations.

### **Planning**

The area's comprehensive and master plans offer extensive goals and policies on community character, design, and historic preservation. These, in turn, may become part of the implementation tools illustrated in Figure 3-6, "Plan Diagram." There are overarching plans for Doña Ana County, with each of its major constituents implementing specific measures of their own.

Doña Ana County- Doña Ana County's 1994 Comprehensive Plan includes a policy to provide design standards for new nonresidential and high-density residential in historic town sites. It lists development of a historic preservation plan, technical assistance related to state and national historic registers, and protecting and preserving such resources from incompatible uses. Some of the specifics of the plan include a Village District that recognizes the special character of historic communities like unincorporated Anthony, La Union, Santa Teresa, Rodney, and Vado.

#### *Las Cruces*

The Las Cruces ETZ 2000 Comprehensive Plan includes goals to be sensitive to image through aesthetic, design, and environmental guidelines and to promote the general welfare of the public through preservation, maintenance, and protection of structures and districts of significant historic, architectural, archeological or farmland interest. It includes some design criteria for new development, along with actions related to identifying community design, developing guidelines, creating zoning districts, and establishing a Historic Zoning Advisory Committee. Some of the specifics of the plan include a Village District that recognizes the special character of historic communities like Organ, Doña Ana, Picacho, Tortugas, and Brazito.

The 1999 Las Cruces Comprehensive Plan

includes an entire element on urban design, focusing on image, conservation, preservation, and design. Goals related to image encourage emphasis of gateways, management of signs, maintenance of buildings and sites, and development of themes to emphasize area character. Goals on conservation and preservation address open space, arroyo protection, historic buildings, and views. Design goals emphasize natural landscaping, creative site planning, and sensitivity to natural features.

The Las Cruces Downtown Revitalization Plan, Mesquite Neighborhood Overlay, and Alameda Depot Neighborhood Overlay are three examples of implementation. The City's 2010 Strategic Plan emphasizes the importance on historic preservation by identifying the need to initiate and develop a Historic Preservation Ordinance.

#### *Anthony*

Anthony's 2010 Draft Master Plan supports smart growth principles. It encourages multiple-family design that creates small gathering places, and it references the connection of design and downtown revitalization along with "green" building standards. The plan includes goals for rehabilitation or restoration of historic buildings, and development of a historic district or markers, as applicable.

#### *Hatch*

Hatch's 2003 Comprehensive Plan has a

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

strong focus on its community character that includes its historic commercial area along Hall Street and its chile production. The village leaves its implementation tools more to individual discretion.

## *Mesilla*

The 2004 Mesilla Comprehensive Plan includes a whole section on community character, town design, and historic preservation, reinforcing the town's rural character, agricultural way of life, Spanish Pueblo revival and Territorial architectural style, and Hispanic culture. Implementation tools include two historic zoning districts, approval of architectural exteriors in the historic districts, and allowance of cluster development for preservation of open



Mariachis on Mesilla Plaza

space and conservation of agricultural resources.

## *Sunland Park*

The 2004 Master Plan for Sunland Park provides a lot of detail about its

community character, with goals and objectives. It emphasizes its Hispanic and religious culture and its Southern New Mexico Territorial architecture. The plan encourages community design through design standards, master planned communities, landscaping, buffers, emphasis at key gateways, and sustainable designs. Historic preservation goals focus on preservation of historic structures over creating historic districts, with consideration on a preservation overlay for locations of fossils and artifacts. Implementation includes provision of a Preservation District to preserve environmentally and culturally vulnerable areas.

In 2007, the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs prepared a vision and priorities plan to guide preservation activities in New Mexico for the next five years called Preserving the Enchantment: A Plan for New Mexico, 2007-2011.

## **Community Character**

Community character is the identity of a location, as determined by the presence, type, and quality of certain elements of the physical and built environment. The desert environment and the cultural heritage of Doña Ana County mainly shape the region's character. The climate greatly influences the construction styles, lifestyle and agricultural practices of its people; these practices in turn influence the knowledge and skills of generations of residents of Native American, Mexican, Spanish, and Anglo heritage.

As Doña Ana County grows, its community character is evolving under the influence of new people and new economic models. While the traditional character of Doña Ana County closely ties to the land, the community character that is evolving relates to faster rhythms of urban and technological development.

The 2040 Advisory Committee mentioned improving a sense of identity or branding, particularly for Las Cruces. Communities in the area identified with a strong sense of identity were Hatch, known for its chiles;



Mesquite Historic District, Las Cruces



Fort Seldon, Radium Springs

46.1% of mail survey and 67.0% of phone survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed region had a strong sense of identity.

Source: Vision 2040 Survey Responses, 2008

Mesilla, known for its historical town center of shops and southwestern history; and Sunland Park, for its horse racing and casino.

### Community Design

The overarching goal of a community design element for a long-range plan is to address the positive and negative factors that constitute the visual environment of the community as a whole as well as the appearance and character of community gateways, business districts, and residential neighborhoods. This element includes goals and strategies to further the desired design principles by enabling the local government to make decisions about community appearance and character.

The incorporation of these concepts often occurs into the local design review processes, establishment of open space incentives, modification of sign ordinances, development of procedures for the review and approval of public art, and completion of local capital improvements to enhance streetscapes, such as special street lighting in historic districts, installing street furniture, fountains, or gateway structures.

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

## Historic Preservation

Aside from the existing efforts noted in subsection, “Archeological and Historical Sites” of Section 5.4, “Environmental Resources” and the “Planning” subsection of Section 5.11, “Community Character, Design, & Historic Preservation,” local governments could work more proactively with the State Historic Preservation Division and other preservation organizations to identify potential buildings and districts for new designations. This collaboration might include legal tools to facilitate the process, such as the establishment of Certified Local Governments (CLGs) and a local historic preservation ordinance.

## Issues

- Community design and historic preservation implementation relies on the private property owner since state and federal programs are voluntary and limited local implementation regulations and programs exist.
- No comprehensive survey of the region’s historic structures, sites or neighborhoods presently exist, only a patchwork of older small area surveys.
- Management of the built environment does not always include consideration of encroachment on historical, cultural, agricultural, and the natural environment.



Alameda Historic District, Las Cruces



Rio Grande Theater, Las Cruces

## Accomplishments

- In 2005 and 2010, Las Cruces included demolition-delay provisions in its historic overlay districts for the South Mesquite Neighborhood Overlay and Alameda Depot Neighborhood Overlay.
- In 2010, the Doña Ana Village State and National Historic District experienced restorative and adaptive reuse measures for the De la O Saloon and other significant adobe structures.

### 5.12 Intergovernmental Cooperation

Intergovernmental cooperation is any arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions coordinate to address and resolve issues of mutual interest. It can

be as simple as communicating and sharing information, or it can involve entering into formal intergovernmental agreements and sharing resources such as equipment, buildings, staff, and revenue. It can also involve consolidating services, jurisdictions, or transferring territory.

It is an important function since many issues cross jurisdictional boundaries and affect more than one community. Frequently, the actions of one community influence others. Watersheds and other ecosystems, economic conditions, land use, commuter patterns, housing, and effects from growth and change are all issues that can spill over municipal boundaries and affect the region as a whole. Table 5-17, “Benefits of Intergovernmental Cooperation,” lists some benefits of intergovernmental cooperation.

Table 5-17

### Benefits of Intergovernmental Cooperation

Benefit	Possible Examples
Better service to citizens	Ability to provide services, improvements to quality of life
Cost savings	Increase efficiency , avoid unnecessary duplication
Early identification of potential matters	Reduce litigation, compatible planning, greater predictability, build trust, create pattern of working relationships off past successes



# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

## Organizations

Table 5-18, “Agencies for Intergovernmental Cooperation,” lists some of the government or quasi-government agencies that may or will be involved in resolving the regional issues outlined in this Vision. Involvement of other groups, including those identified in the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Advisory Committee, and community water and sewer providers, are equally important.

## Planning

The region has several examples of intergovernmental cooperation. More opportunities exist to expand or create cooperation. Table 5-19, “Existing Intergovernmental Groups,” lists some of the ongoing intergovernmental groups and activities in the region.

## Issues

- Local governments tend to focus and address issues at their political boundary level and not at an intergovernmental level. Some of the regional issues identified for intergovernmental cooperation include:

- o issues of fragmentation among utility and other regional service providers and service area boundaries for utility extensions,

- o annexation policy,

- o school districts, including school locations and workforce training,

- o MPO jurisdictional studies,

- o air-quality issues with the state of Texas, city and county of El Paso, state of Chihuahua Mexico and city of Juárez,

- o tourism, including identifiers as a tourist destination,

- o stormwater management, including general agreements on methods for managing arroyos and storm events,

- o smart growth and sustainable development, including land use compatibility,

- o regional development codes and standards,

- o planning and coordination on timing and design of regional roadways to avoid piecemeal roadway construction and inconsistent roadway design,

- o implementation of regional and comprehensive plans, and

- o economic development, including taxing and work-force training differences between New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico.

- Fragmentation of water, wastewater and stormwater management authorities creates challenges in regional planning and management, and adds to a lack of public awareness and implementation of existing plans, strategies, and policies.

### Accomplishments

- Doña Ana County includes many groups focused on intergovernmental activities. Table 5-18 and Table 5-19 list a few of these groups.

“Intergovernmental and inter-agency cooperation, in conjunction with the stakeholders affected by the decisions and actions of those bodies, is necessary to make a better future for all of us. Having this shared vision can mean stronger economic growth, recognition of the value of our unique environment and preservation of the rich historical and cultural heritage that is Doña Ana County.”

— William “Bill” Mattiace, Vision 2040 Advisory Committee Chairman and Charlie Scholz, Vision 2040 Advisory Committee Vice Chairman

Table 5-18

## Agencies for Intergovernmental Cooperation

### U.S. Government, State of New Mexico & Texas, Local Government

Anthony, New Mexico	Anthony, Texas	Doña Ana County, New Mexico
El Paso County, Texas	El Paso, Texas	Federal Aviation Administration
Hatch, New Mexico	International Boundary and-Water Commission	Juárez, Mexico
Las Cruces, New Mexico	Luna County, New Mexico	Mesilla, New Mexico
Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority	New Mexico Environment Department	NM and TX Departments of Transportation
Office of the State Engineer	Otero County, New Mexico	Sierra County, New Mexico
Sunland Park, New Mexico	Vinton, Texas	

# Chapter 5, Regional Snapshot

Table 5-18

## Agencies for Intergovernmental Cooperation

### School Districts and Educational Institutions K-12 Grade School Districts

Gadsden School District	Hatch School District	Las Cruces School District
-------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------------

### School Districts and Educational Institutions Higher Educational Institutions

Doña Ana Community College	Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU)	El Paso Community College (EPCC)
New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology	New Mexico Military Institute	New Mexico State University
Texas A&M Agri-Life Research Center (TAMU)	University of Juárez	University of New Mexico (UNM)
University of Phoenix	University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP)	Vista College
Western New Mexico University (WNMU)		

### Planning Organizations

El Paso MPO	Las Cruces MPO	NM South Central Regional Planning Organization
-------------	----------------	---

### Military

Fort Bliss	Holloman Air Force Base	White Sands Missile Range
------------	-------------------------	---------------------------

### Land Use and Quasi-Judicial Agencies

Bureau of Land Management	Elephant Butte Irrigation District	New Mexico State Land Office
---------------------------	------------------------------------	------------------------------

## Existing Intergovernmental Groups

Anthony Berino Economic Development	Anthony Berino Economic Development (ABED) was established in November 2003 for the purpose of working in partnership with the Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance (MVEDA) and the State of New Mexico Economic Development Department to promote industrial and economic growth.
Cross-Border Collaboration	<p>The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has a U.S.-Mexico Joint Working Committee (JWC) on Transportation Planning. The JWC is comprised of transportation professionals from FHWA and the Mexican Secretariat of Communication and Transportation (SCT).</p> <p>The U.S.-Mexico Binational Bridges &amp; Border Crossing Group (BBBXG) consisting of various federal departments and border authorities in the U.S. and Mexico to respond more effectively to the demand for new border crossings and to respond to the problem of bottlenecks that impede the efficiency of existing crossings.</p>
Doña Ana County Health & Human Services (HHS)	HHS provides several health-related services throughout the county such as drug use prevention, outreach and education at community resource centers, assistance with contracted health care providers, advancing health in the region's colonias, and leveraging funding and technical assistance.
Doña Ana County Legislative Coalition	In 2007, an alliance of elected officials, along with members of the education, economic development and the business communities of Doña Ana County, joined together to work on shared legislative efforts.
Doña Ana County Office of Emergency Management (OEM)	OEM includes updating the All-Hazard Emergency Operations Plan (AHEOP) for Doña Ana County, Las Cruces, Anthony, Mesilla, Hatch, and Sunland Park. It includes the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), a group of volunteers from all parts of the region.
Doña Ana Soil & Water Conservation District  Caballo Soil & Water Conservation District	DASWCD & CSWCD work in partnership with the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, other state and federal agencies, and various organizations to advance conservation or enhancement in Doña Ana County related to soil, water, agriculture, livestock, wildlife, recreation, riparian habitat, and rangeland resources; along with protection of these resources through flood and wildfire management.

# Existing Intergovernmental Groups

Table 5-19

<p>Extra-Territorial Zoning (ETZ)</p>	<p>In 1989, Las Cruces and Doña Ana County established the ETZ for joint city and county planning, zoning, and subdivision approval to address growth. The ETZ established map zoning for the first time in a five-mile buffer that surrounds Las Cruces.</p>
<p>Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization (LCMPO)</p>	<p>The LCMPO is responsible for multi-modal transportation planning in Las Cruces, Mesilla and part of Doña Ana County. These three entities work together to provide funding and staff. In June 2010, the Transport 2040 Plan was approved by the MPO policy committee.</p>
<p>Lower Rio Grande Public Water Works Authority</p>	<p>Formed in 2009, the Authority is made up of five water systems, Berino MDWC &amp; MSWA, Desert Sands MDWCA, La Mesa MDWCA, Mesquite MDWC &amp; MSWA and Vado MDWCA to provide the most efficient and cost effective alternatives in providing water services to its customers.</p>
<p>Lower Rio Grande Water Users Organization (LRGWUO)</p>	<p>LRGWUO was established in 1997 to guide regional water planning efforts in this region. Its members are Las Cruces, Doña Ana County, Doña Ana Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association, Mesilla, Anthony Water and Sanitation District, Hatch, New Mexico State University, and Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID). Efforts are underway to update the 2004 LRGWUO Regional Water Plan. Other water management groups include the Bureau of Reclamation, El Paso County Water Improvement District, New Mexico State Engineer, New Mexico-Texas Water Commission, and the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission. The South Central NM Stormwater Management Coalition is a new group working to form a legislative body to address regional stormwater and flood control.</p>
<p>Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance (MVEDA)</p>	<p>Incorporated in 1994, MVEDA is a public/private sector economic development partnership to grow the wealth of Doña Ana County through the creation of economic based job opportunities. MVEDA's public sector partners include Las Cruces, Doña Ana County, New Mexico State University, Doña Ana Community College, Las Cruces Public Schools Hatch, and the New Mexico Economic Development Department. MVEDA with the individual economic development departments within communities and local chamber of commerce entities work together for economic development.</p>

# Existing Intergovernmental Groups

Table 5-19

<p>Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority</p>	<p>Since 1961, the housing authorities of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County served the region. In 2011, these agencies merged to form the Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority. It administers various programs related to housing needs, including Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher and Conventional Housing Programs. It encourages public/private partnerships with local home builders/developers and community organizations like Tierra del Sol, Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity, Mesilla Valley Community of Hope, Community Action Agency of Southern New Mexico, New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness, and the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority.</p>
<p>Mesilla Valley Regional Dispatch Authority (MVRDA)</p>	<p>MVRDA was created in 1989 through a Joint Powers Agreement between the city of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County, becoming the first consolidated dispatch center in the State of New Mexico.</p>
<p>NM Military Base Planning Commission</p>	<p>Through the NM Military Base Planning Commission, the region holds regular military coordination meetings to address land use planning to avoid encroachment and establish bilateral working relationships. Participants include Alamogordo, BLM, Doña Ana County, Ft Bliss, Holloman, Las Cruces, Otero County, NASA, NMSLO, and WSMR.</p>
<p>South Central Council of Governments (SCCOG)</p>	<p>The South Central Council of Governments is a membership organization of local governments working together with local elected leaders to help solve common regional issues and to increase its leverage through combined planning and implementation.</p>
<p>South-Central New Mexico Stormwater Management Coalition</p>	<p>Formed in 2011, the South-Central New Mexico Stormwater Management Coalition is a joint agreement between the Caballo Soil and Water Conservation District (CSWCD) EBID, Doña Ana County, Doña Ana County Flood Commissioner, Doña Ana Soil and Water Conservation District (DASWCD), Las Cruces, Mesilla, and the Office of the Sierra County Flood Commissioner. The Coalition addresses areas of common concern with respect to stormwater management and flood control.</p>
<p>South Central Solid Waste Authority</p>	<p>The Authority was created in 1993 by a joint powers agreement between the city of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County. The South Central Solid Waste Authority provides integrated solid waste management solutions for area residents and businesses.</p>

# Chapter 6, Regional Goals & Strategies

This chapter lists goals and strategies that build off the issues presented in Chapter 5, “Regional Snapshot”, for each of the twelve resource topics. The goals represent common approaches to resources of regional significance within the Doña Ana County region. The strategies provide several ways a community might achieve the goal, as some strategies may be more appropriate than others may when applied at the local planning level.

## 6.1 Land Use

Well-planned communities and environments provide sustainable, effective living and working conditions, and compatible locations for commerce and industry. It is important for a community to explore sound land use regulations to encourage responsible and efficient development.

**Goal 6-1-1: Land use should serve as the element of the regional plan upon which all other elements of One Valley, One Vision 2040 are based.**

### Strategies

- Analyze the trend and alternative growth scenarios to determine the preferred pattern of growth.
- Ensure that the land use plan addresses the ability of the transportation system to maintain an acceptable level of mobility.

**Goal 6-1-2: Provide a general form or pattern for the location, distribution, and characteristics of future land use within Doña Ana County to the year 2040.**

### Strategies

- Update or consider adopting land use plans as part of the local comprehensive plan.
- Establish amendment procedures for local comprehensive plans that include determinants for when an amendment is necessary and what the level of public participation will be in the planning process.
- Provide for administration, implementation, and a complete review and updating of the comprehensive plan at least every ten years.
- Review rezoning and related development projects so they are consistent with comprehensive land use plans.
- Include adjoining communities, government agencies, business owners, residents, and other stakeholders in the decision-making process to develop consistency, coordination, and compatibility of land use plans and decisions.
- Evaluate the following: the use of zoning districts that achieve a more predictable physical result and certainty of future development such as Community Zoning Districts within unincorporated Doña Ana County; zoning that emphasizes incentives

rather than restrictions; and zoning that is simple, clear, intuitive, and simplifies the development approval process.

**Goal 6-1-3: Prepare a future land use plan that is fiscally resilient.**

**Strategies**

- Prepare fiscal-impact analyses and related studies to identify and analyze fiscal impacts of development patterns in the region.
- Consider implementing fund-balance reserve policies, application of best practices, and periodic review of alternative funding sources.
- Explore revenue-generating land uses for fiscal balance.

**Goal 6-1-4: Create and integrate Smart Growth principles in planning.**

**Strategies**

- Implement a comprehensive land use strategy designed to develop land use patterns.
- Implement a transportation system that focuses on creating multimodal opportunities, transit-oriented development, connectivity, and decreasing vehicle miles traveled.
- Explore ordinances, guidelines, and incentives that encourage a more energy efficient built environment.

- Promote design concepts and develop criteria for the mitigation of the heat island effect on development projects.

**Goal 6-1-5: Guide development in a manner that will both protect the rights of private landowners and the interests of the public.**

**Strategies**

- Work with property owners to determine the most appropriate means to balance public purposes with individual property rights that may include such means as providing design flexibility, easements, and purchase or transfer of development rights.
- Use incentives or public acquisition of property rights, as appropriate, instead of regulations.

**Goal 6-1-6: Encourage development where adequate facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.**

**Strategies**

- Allow for densities and land uses that are compatible with adopted plans where existing and planned community facilities and infrastructure can support them.
- Enhance the ability to provide water and wastewater treatment services in accordance with joint plans for urban services areas.



# Chapter 6, Regional Goals & Strategies

- Identify developable public land adjacent to urban areas and planned utility service areas.

**Goal 6-1-7: Encourage the development of communities with a mixture of land uses.**

## Strategies

- Encourage appropriate design and a compatible mix of land uses and locate community facilities where they can be focal points for the communities.

**Goal 6-1-8: Encourage retention of open space, scenic aspects of rural areas, entranceways to urban areas, and transition areas between urban areas.**

## Strategies

- Prepare an assessment of the open space, scenic aspects of rural areas, entranceways to urban areas, and transition areas between urban areas that significantly contribute to the region's character.
- Work with property owners to determine the most appropriate methods to balancing public purposes with individual property rights, which may include such means as providing design flexibility, easements, and purchase or transfer of development rights.
- Use incentives or public acquisition of property rights, as appropriate, instead of regulations.

- Offer zoning districts (e.g., cluster zoning) that encourage developers to provide open space, allow access to public areas, protect scenic elements, emphasize key entranceways, and are sensitive to transition areas.



Robledo Mountains

**Goal 6-1-9: Promote the region's status as one of New Mexico's most productive and economically important agricultural areas.**

## Strategies

- Assist in developing programs and incentives that help property owners maintain lands in agricultural production and possibly provide alternative sources of capital. These include, but are not limited to, voluntary programs of conservation easements and transfer or purchase of development rights.
- Educate the public on the value of

agriculture to the regional economy to foster understanding and tolerance between the farmer or rancher and nonagricultural neighbors.

- Continue to develop marketing tools to promote use of Doña Ana County-grown goods in local, regional and wider markets.
- Evaluate laws and ordinances for barriers or disadvantages to agricultural practices in order to facilitate agriculture in the best interests of the farmer or rancher, neighboring uses, and public interest.
- Encourage appropriate buffers between residential development and agricultural uses.
- Encourage and increase access to locally produced food.

## 6.2 Water

As we are living in a desert climate, water affects all aspects of daily activities. The following goals and strategies address water supply, demand, quality, and stormwater management from a regional perspective. The realization of these goals will require continued cooperation among the various communities in Doña Ana County, the people, and the agencies responsible for managing water resources.

**Goal 6-2-1: Ensure the availability of a safe, dependable, affordable, and sustainable water supply to meet or exceed the needs of all reasonable beneficial uses.**

### Strategies

- Regularly update 40-year water plans.
- Work toward compromise in resolving any remaining claims to service area boundaries and quantification of water rights.
- Extend existing water sources through water management measures including, but not limited to, public education, water conservation, and water reuse.
- Promote green infrastructure and low-impact development as part of a comprehensive stormwater and water-quality improvement strategy.
- Work with stakeholders to develop and implement reclaimed water strategies.
- Plan and create additional water supplies in ways that do not adversely affect existing water users or the environment. Some possible methods include thinning or removal of invasive plant species within water recharge areas; preservation and restoration of arroyos to assist in water recharge; using desalination, water reclamation, or other technologies to make lower quality water supplies usable; storing surface and stormwater for later use, expanding water lease/transfer programs, and importing water from other basins.
- Encourage installation of systems to help track water usage as a way to conserve water and prevent over-appropriation.

# Chapter 6, Regional Goals & Strategies

- Encourage low-water consuming businesses and industries.

**Goal 6-2-2: Protect existing surface and groundwater from pollution and ensure it meets or exceeds water quality standards.**

## Strategies

- Continue participation in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program to help control water pollution carried by stormwater runoff.
- Encourage connections of structures to public wastewater treatment facilities or use advanced/alternative on-site waste disposal systems instead of individual conventional septic systems where site conditions are unfavorable.
- Develop ways to better enforce and control illegal dumping through reasonable and equitable funding mechanisms, particularly within key arroyos and other sensitive water recharge areas.
- Identify and map sensitive water recharge areas.
- Coordinate with other local jurisdictions and state and federal agencies to ensure a safe water supply.
- Support ongoing programs (i.e., the Doña Ana County and city of Las Cruces program decommissioning older, undersized septic tanks and cesspools.)

- Include water-conserving stormwater management techniques such as green infrastructure and low-impact development as part of a comprehensive stormwater and water-quality improvement strategy by adopting them into land use development and building codes where appropriate.

- Support planning and analysis of the local Rio Grande watershed that will provide recommendations of best management practices in managing pollutant loads, such as E. coli bacteria, to meet state water quality standards.

## 6.3 Air Quality

Air quality is an important issue due to the potential impact of certain factors such as the population increase projected for Doña Ana County, air shed that extends beyond county boundaries, and proximity to the urban centers of El Paso, Texas, and Juárez, Mexico. As explained in Section 5.3, “Air Quality,” dust and ozone represent two of the largest contributors to poor air quality. Regulation lies mostly upon federal and state agencies.

**Goal 6-3-1: Support regional efforts to maintain and improve air quality by meeting or exceeding State and Federal Air Quality Standards.**

## Strategies

- Work closely with the regional authorities and communities in El Paso County and Chihuahua, Mexico in assessing and

mitigating negative air quality issues that affect the region.

- Promote development and transportation systems in the communities that improve signal timing, reduce roadway congestion, minimize the length and number of trips, and encourage other alternatives to single-occupant vehicles.
- Continue and increase the use of alternative fuel and fuel-efficient vehicles for local government fleets.
- Develop and implement local fugitive dust programs that may include paving material, erosion control, or other mitigation measures to reduce dust.

#### **6.4 Environmental Resources**

It is important to recognize that a healthy natural environment improves quality of life. Acknowledging that man-made activities may have a negative impact on the environment is a good reason to actively protect natural habitats and consciously preserve valued resources.

**Goal 6-4-1: Make land use decisions that protect and enhance the natural environment.**

##### **Strategies**

- Investigate the use of tools such as conservation easements, transfer or purchase of development rights, and other similar programs.

- Direct new development to already developed areas in order to protect critical wildlife habitat, help prevent erosion and flooding, reduce demand for water, and preserve open space.
- Work cooperatively with property owners to acquire property rights or provide incentives to establish a protective buffer along continuous portions of the Río Grande.
- Prohibit development in designated environmentally sensitive areas in a manner that reasonably compensates, provides incentives, maintains similar existing property rights, or in another similar manner balances the public and property owner interests.
- Work with landowners and stakeholders to develop a map of critical and sensitive natural areas in the county.

**Goal 6-4-2: Protect and maintain natural habitat and wildlife connectivity to the greatest extent possible and mitigate damage that may result from development.**

##### **Strategies**

- Work cooperatively with entities engaged in open-space conservation to enhance these valued resources as the region grows.
- Identify areas of natural, historical, architectural, or cultural significance and protect them by providing incentives for property owners to maintain them, or by acquiring an appropriate public interest in the property.

# Chapter 6, Regional Goals & Strategies

- Provide an adequate network of corridors for wildlife (e.g., buffer zones adjacent to arroyos or wildlife over/under passes) in a manner that reasonably compensates or incentivizes, maintains similar existing property rights, or in some way balances the public and property owner interests.
- Continue wetland and grassland restoration projects along the Rio Grande as a means to improve soil and vegetation conditions and habitat for avian and terrestrial species.

**Goal 6-4-3: Minimize impacts created by development and human activities to realize the full potential of the environmental resources as a community asset.**

## Strategies

- Develop plans that allow for low-impact and passive recreational uses along arroyo buffers where feasible.
- Assess the implementation of an environmental impact fee for development that encroaches upon sensitive areas based upon a comprehensive environmental or pollution control plan that would balance the public and property owner interests.
- Protect arroyos, open spaces and sensitive areas by adopting an Arroyo and Open Space Management Plan.
- Promote environmental stewardship and consider codes that will make alternative

energy and other emerging technologies easier to incorporate into development plans.

- Look into sustainability plans and programs within all of the communities in the county.
- Work with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, New Mexico State Engineer, EBID, agricultural water users, and applicable agencies to allocate and find ways for an adequate supply of year-round water in the Rio Grande for uses in addition to irrigation that may include recreation and municipal use.
- Work with the agricultural and ranching community when developing land use plans to come up with desirable methods and locations of agricultural and ranching activities for the long-term.

## 6.5 Hazards

Hazards are part of the environment. Local governing bodies have opportunity to mitigate their effect through planning for them.

**Goal 6-5-1: Protect people and property from hazards.**

## Strategies

- Develop funding strategies to cope with natural-hazard emergencies.
- Participate in regular updates of the All-Hazard Emergency Operations Plan.

- Enforce development standards in flood zones to limit construction in flood-prone areas.
- Improve stormwater management where development has already occurred in flood-prone areas through reasonable and equitable funding mechanisms.
- Increase public awareness of what to do in the event of an emergency through public service announcements in a variety of media.
- Install active smart signs along the region's Interstates and U.S. Highways that serve to inform travelers of where to go and what to do in case of highway shutdowns due to dust storms or flood events.
- Identify hazardous-cargo routes, consider hazardous by-pass ways, and install applicable signage within the county.
- Make provisions for management and access of protected critical and sensitive areas regarding public health, safety, and welfare (e.g., border control, stormwater management, fire protection).

**Goal 6-5-2: Protect people and property from the negative effects of stormwater.**

**Strategies**

- Coordinate stormwater management policies with water-management agencies to aid in better response, allow for improved funding opportunities, and have better protection of property from flooding erosion.

- Encourage communities to adopt and implement storm drainage master plans.
- Prepare an assessment of the arroyos and man-made stormwater systems of regional significance to develop policies for minimizing impact to natural arroyos, provide appropriate drainage, retention, and detention functions, and allow for regular maintenance.
- Develop regulations requiring adequate flood and drainage control systems and maintenance for new and redevelopment.
- Install weather stations and telemetry systems to aid in advanced warning of potential flood conditions.
- Implement existing stormwater management plans.
- Identify factors that increase the likelihood of flooding and develop mitigation plans accordingly. These plans would integrate wildlife protection and other goals found in Section 6.4, "Environmental Resources."

**6.6 Transportation**

An effective, efficient transportation system is vital to shaping communities and facilitating our lifestyles. While roads account for the majority of the region's transport options, equally important are transit services, railways, airports,

# Chapter 6, Regional Goals & Strategies

bicycle lanes, paths, trails, and pedestrian accommodations. Providing for a variety of practical and multi-modal transport options makes safer, healthier communities and reduces environmental impacts.

**Goal 6-6-1: Encourage the development of a safe, efficient, and effective intermodal transportation system for a variety of transportation choices.**

## Strategies

- Prepare system-wide or corridor management plans related to access, safety, parking, demand, asset, or other needs.
- Develop land use patterns and create a transportation system that focuses on expanding multimodal opportunities, connectivity, and decreasing vehicle miles traveled.
- Support intergovernmental collaboration toward funding, planning and implementation of regionally important transportation projects.
- Increase awareness of shared roadways.
- Plan access ways for agricultural business use.
- Incorporate new technologies and green infrastructure for new and redeveloped transportation projects.
- Consider alternate sources for

roadway-maintenance funding including: forming improvement districts, seeking grants, entering cost-sharing agreements, approving bonds, and developing impact fees.

- Ensure that the intensity and design of land uses maintain the ability of roads to carry traffic safely and effectively.
- Include road maintenance and construction planning as part of county and municipal capital improvement plans.
- Promote transit-oriented development along existing and planned transit corridors by encouraging appropriate design, mixed land uses and intensities.
- Jointly plan community, utility, and transportation facilities in relation to planned growth.

**Goal 6-6-2: Coordinate transportation planning with other functions, including land use planning.**

## Strategies

- Develop transportation systems based on the desired mix of land uses and density supported by the jurisdiction's master or comprehensive plan.
- Add performance and other measures into local policy to assess integrating land use and transportation.

- Coordinate future land use planning with regional transportation plans, including the Las Cruces and El Paso MPO Transportation Plans.

- Establish ways for stakeholders to participate in updates to master or comprehensive plans, MPO transportation plans, and other similar plans.

- Ensure that new developments include provisions for adequate transportation system improvements that coincide with the phasing of development.

- Ensure the transportation system provides timely access to all land uses including residential, jobs, services, education, and recreation.

- To the extent possible when making land use or transportation related planning decisions, to incorporate mobility options within a comfortable walking or bicycling distance to people's daily activities of live, work, and play.

- Plan transit corridors that connect activity centers and allow higher density for reduction of total housing/transportation costs.

**Goal 6-6-3: Increase access to non-motorized transportation options to promote healthy living and provide mobility alternatives.**



Solano Road Multi-Modal Access, Las Cruces

### Strategies

- Incorporate bicycle lanes, sidewalks, multi-use paths, and trails with roadways.

- Use alternative options for non-motorized transportation routes where necessary, including, but not limited to, areas adjacent to irrigation ditches or arroyo channels, connections between cul-de-sacs, and utility corridors.

- Coordinate non-motorized improvements to minimize or avoid discontinuous connections.

- Design safe, efficient non-motorized transportation systems and use educational programs to reduce or eliminate conflicts with motorized transportation systems.

- Develop non-motorized routes that maximize direct travel trips.

- Ensure non-motorized systems meet or exceed standards for use by persons with disabilities.



# Chapter 6, Regional Goals & Strategies

**Goal 6-6-4: Increase transit ridership, accessibility, and convenience.**

## Strategies

- Expand hours and frequency of service, service areas, rapid transit service, park-and-ride locations, and related bus-route characteristics.
- Share resources, increase partnerships, use intergovernmental agreements, and coordinate more effectively with other transit-focused entities.
- Consider the feasibility of other transit options, including high-speed rail corridors.
- Encourage higher density land uses in areas served by transit, and provide transit services to areas of higher density land uses and development.

## 6.7. Community Facilities & Services

Community facilities and services are important parts of a community's framework. They provide resources for occasions of enjoyment, and they provide aid in times of need. By applying the concept of sustainability to planning for community facilities and services, it is possible to enhance the community by providing services for each generation's needs in an equitable manner.

**Goal 6-7-1: Provide community facilities and services that are necessary or desirable to support the future land use plan.**



RoadRunner Transit

## Strategies

- Increase connectivity between community centers, schools, parks, and residential areas by situating new facilities within walking and biking distance of the neighborhoods they serve.
- Regularly inventory, describe, and map infrastructure to assist in the operation, maintenance, budgeting, prioritizing, and sharing of information of asset management.
- Provide educational and health-care satellite facilities in communities that lack such services.

**Goal 6-7-2: Meet the existing and projected needs of residents through location, access, extent and timing, staffing, and category of community facilities and services.**

## Strategies

- Establish levels of service for community facilities so they will meet the needs and requirements of local government and their residents.
- Prepare capital improvement plans consistent with this regional plan and local

comprehensive plans to aid in prioritizing community facility and service programs by outlining timeframe for completion, funding sources, and projected expenditures.

- Prepare asset management plans to better maintain existing community facilities and infrastructure at acceptable levels of service.
- Make technology, such as computers with Internet access, available in community centers for underserved populations, particularly in rural areas and colonias.
- Develop stormwater basins, stormwater management dams, and arroyos to serve multiple uses, including passive and active open spaces that provide habitat for plants and animals and recreational opportunities.
- Use existing facilities as an alternative to expansion or new construction.
- Provide better-funded parks and recreation projects by encouraging the pursuit of a dedicated revenue stream and/or cost-sharing opportunity among all local governments.
- Provide priority funding to upgrade utilities and infrastructure located in rural areas and colonias.

**Goal 6-7-3: Coordinate with other local governments, special districts, school districts, and state and federal agencies on the provision of community facilities that have multijurisdictional impacts.**

### Strategies

- Form intergovernmental partnerships to fund and operate regional community facilities.
- Promote awareness of the funding need for staffing and capital improvements.
- Improve communication among all local governments, school districts, and special districts regarding matters that may affect each entity's operational economy.
- Evaluate opportunities to share facilities, making them more community wide in orientation.
- Encourage any provider of a community facility located or proposed within the local jurisdiction to be included in the community facilities element of the local comprehensive or master plan.
- Encourage local governmental jurisdictions preparing comprehensive or master plans to coordinate with and include all providers of community facilities and utilities in the development of the plan.

**Goal 6-7-4: Ensure that local governments provide adequate, properly located recreational and leisure opportunities.**

### Strategies

- Enhance access to scenic and recreational opportunities where appropriate.

# Chapter 6, Regional Goals & Strategies

- Encourage local governments to acquire sufficient land in appropriate locations, and develop it to meet the park, recreation, leisure and open space needed.
- Ensure that regulations addressing recreational facilities in residential areas encourage developers to provide them as an amenity.
- Make sure that regulations addressing commercial recreational facilities do not discourage their construction.
- Provide public-recreational amenities at and along the river that are accessible by different modes of transportation.
- Increase the amount of parks and open spaces within walking and biking distance of the growing population through strategic planning for land acquisition in growing areas.
- Provide more arts and entertainment venues for youth and younger workers.

**Goal 6-7-5: Provide a variety of opportunities for outdoor recreation to utilize open spaces to a greater extent.**

## Strategies

- Develop future parks and open space through land acquisition.
- Provide recreation opportunities that

will enable existing and future residents to become more active within their environment.

- Create and expand multi-use trails.
- Support and enhance public access opportunities on state and federal lands throughout Doña Ana County for outdoor activities including shooting sports, hunting, hiking, camping, wildlife viewing, rock climbing, off-road mechanical sports, and similar activities in a way that does not adversely affect other resources.

## 6.8 Utilities & Infrastructure

By focusing on maintaining existing infrastructure facilities at adequate capacity and expanding strategically, this can provide adequate supply and distribution of open space and prevent undue burden to the taxpayer.

**Goal 6-8-1: Provide utilities and infrastructure that are necessary or desirable to support the future land use plan.**

## Strategies

- Assist in the operation, maintenance, budgeting, prioritizing, and information sharing of asset management by regularly cataloging infrastructure.
- Encourage new development in areas already serviced by utilities and other infrastructure as a means of maximizing private or public investment.

**Goal 6-8-2: Meet the projected needs of residents through location, access, character, extent and timing of public utilities and infrastructure.**

#### **Strategies**

- Establish performance standards for utilities to ensure they adequately meet the public's needs.
- Prepare capital improvement plans to aid in prioritizing utility and infrastructure improvements.
- Prepare asset management plans to better maintain existing utilities and infrastructure.
- Find ways to improve the utilization of existing infrastructure as an alternative to expansion or new construction.
- Support contiguous development and charge appropriate fees for new development.
- Preserve land and reduce costs by protecting undeveloped areas and prioritizing existing development.
- Provide services more efficiently to decrease public costs.
- Plan utilities in concurrence with road, building, pedestrian, and bicycle improvements.
- Provide priority funding to upgrade

utilities and infrastructure located within rural areas and colonias.

**Goal 6-8-3: Coordinate with other local governments, utility districts, and state and federal agencies on the provision of utilities that have multijurisdictional impacts.**

#### **Strategies**

- Form intergovernmental partnerships to fund and operate regional utilities.
- Seek financial assistance from state and federal sources for improvement and development on wastewater treatment, gas, water, sewer, telecommunication, and other utility needs.
- Work with regional partners to encourage state and federal funding and regulatory agencies to remove institutional obstacles to regionalization.

**Goal 6-8-4: Develop and implement comprehensive measures to maximize resource conservation.**

#### **Strategies**

- Integrate conservation measures into new and redeveloped public facilities and sites.
- Educate residents and businesses on conservation practices, technology, and related measures.
- Set and monitor standards for energy-use reduction in public facilities.

# Chapter 6, Regional Goals & Strategies

- Consider conservation ordinances, programs, and sustainability plans.
- Move toward the creation of a countywide recycling program to reduce pollution and waste in landfills.
- Evaluate energy consumption to look at conservation measures as well as affordable alternatives.
- Encourage rural areas to use self-sufficient and non-polluting technologies for energy, water and sewage services.
- Perform periodic emergency checks and prepare back-up procedures on utility infrastructure to ensure operability in the event of a real emergency.

## 6.9 Housing

The direction of regional housing efforts is to provide residents of all socioeconomic levels with safe, sanitary, and affordable living options. A related effort is to make these living spaces climate-appropriate, energy efficient, and accessible to transport options.

**Goal 6-9-1: Create livable mixed-use neighborhoods with increased mobility options and a strong sense of community.**

### Strategies

- Lower commuting costs by offering “live work” alternatives that reduce the overall commute time.

- When appropriate, facilitate the incorporation of mixed-land use arrangements in new and infill development proposals.
- Encourage mixed residential types and densities consistent with local zoning ordinances, growth patterns, economic development opportunities, transportation infrastructure, and overall livability.
- Accommodate housing options for a range of socioeconomic levels within neighborhoods.
- Encourage development that considers usage, fit within the neighborhood, and environmentally friendly design.
- Establish programs that provide utility assistance to those in need.

**Goal 6-9-2: Provide a range of housing alternatives that provides safe, clean, comfortable and affordable living environments.**

### Strategies

- Increase affordable housing units throughout the region through reasonable and equitable funding mechanisms.
- Consider recalibrating the affordability threshold of housing and transportation to 45 percent of annual income, instead of the present threshold of 30 percent.

- Improve opportunities for housing ownership through renovation or preservation of existing housing.
- Balance all impacts related to the cost of housing when implementing new policy and regulatory requirements.
- When appropriate, consider the redevelopment of existing underutilized and/or substandard developments as a means to incorporate sustainable, smart growth.
- Pursue opportunities to replace older, potentially unsafe housing with sound housing options.
- Improve infrastructure in colonias and other areas that have developed without proper building standards and services through reasonable and equitable funding mechanisms.
- Consider the adoption or modification of local zoning ordinances regarding the use of accessory dwelling units in being responsive to local housing needs such as increasing affordability options, supporting public infrastructure investments, and providing housing options in closer proximity to those that care for others.
- Encourage a variety of housing types to meet affordable housing needs, including manufactured homes, apartments, and single-family homes.

- Explore using incentives such as impact fee waivers, density bonuses, and performance measures to generate sustainable and efficient development practices.

- Have local governments examine their development review processes and regulatory requirements to eliminate unnecessary delay and cost.

#### **6.10 Economy**

Like the environment, economic vitality hinges on diversity and balance. It is important for a community to support a wide range of environmentally appropriate economic activities to foster employment and educational opportunities.

**Goal 6-10-1: Sustain and attract economic activities that play a vital role to the region in providing jobs, services, and adding to quality of life.**

#### **Strategies**

- Support economic development that does not adversely affect quality of life.
- Support White Sands Missile Range, and its mission as a military test range, by ensuring compatible land use along borders, military training routes, and special-use air space.
- Make financial, physical, or administrative assistance available to the business community by providing such things as direct investment of cash, land, infrastructure, or staffing services.

# Chapter 6, Regional Goals & Strategies

- Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of community incentive programs, taxes, regulations and other economic factors.
- Increase tourism opportunities and marketing to visitors and current residents.
- Develop a recognizable, positive image of the region by building upon the identified strengths and opportunities of this plan.
- Increase awareness of the area's industrial parks and promote utilization of the Foreign Trade Zone designation of the Las Cruces International and Doña Ana County International Airports.
- Encourage educational programs and training to improve workforce development.
- Encourage communities that enact the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) plan to enact a Local Options Gross Receipts Tax Act (LOGRA).
- Support the New Mexico Spaceport Authority and related aerospace development to increase related tourism, hospitality, and supply and support services.
- Support Economic Gardening strategies that create nurturing environments of small local companies.

**Goal 6-10-2: Diversify business communities to enhance economic vitality and workforce opportunities.**

## Strategies

- Support existing economic strengths such as White Sands Missile Range, NASA, Spaceport, Santa Teresa Port of Entry, agriculture, and NMSU.
- Support businesses that offer long-term growth potential and mid to upper level pay such as manufacturing, aerospace, alternative energy utility, health care, and professional-technical services.
- Create programs that help local entrepreneurs start businesses and small to medium-size businesses grow.
- Expand and establish regional commercial or tourist destinations to provide stable sources of gross-receipt tax revenues and mixed-use opportunities.
- Encourage renewable energy businesses and practices within the region.

**Goal 6-10-3: Establish communities that attract and retain a well-trained workforce.**

## Strategies

- Expand educational programs through colleges, workforce training centers, continuous learning programs, and educational partnerships.
- Locate places of employment where they will minimize commutes and are close to other transportation modes.
- Support local housing authorities that provide affordable workforce housing.

- Support programs that promote employment and volunteer opportunities of older-aged persons, persons with a disability, and other persons whose skills will strengthen the economic vitality of the region.

**Goal 6-10-4: Enhance the economic potential of the Rio Grande in a way that protects its environmental and agricultural functions.**

#### Strategies

- Promote ecotourism by developing small recreation businesses along portions of the river and marketing the river as a destination point.
- Encourage mixed-use, entertainment, dining, and related commercial uses at key locations adjacent to the river that do not adversely affect stormwater management, agricultural use, or other functions.
- Expand the 2004 City of Las Cruces Rio Grande Riparian Ecological Corridor Project to identify areas of the corridor to preserve, enhance or restore.

**Goal 6-10-5: Provide sustainable and efficient infrastructure to advance economic growth and revitalization.**

#### Strategies

- Plan for infrastructure projects that meet projected demands and support land use and growth plans.

- Adhere to local, state, and national regulations, standards, or best management practices.

- Coordinate infrastructure and development projects with other governmental agencies to increase efficiency and limit disruptions to the community.

- Stimulate economic opportunities for existing and emerging industries through transportation improvements including rail, air, and truck freight.

- Consider rail line extensions and spurs to industrial parks and airports like the West Mesa Industrial Park and Las Cruces International Airport.

#### **6.11 Community Character, Design, & Historic Preservation**

Effective community character, design, and historic preservation work in concert with public policy and social concerns to design the optimal physical layout of the community. Design elements that may be considered are street configuration; placement of public institutions; arrangements of neighborhoods, manufacturing plants, and retail-trade centers; massing of buildings, and the enhancement or preservation of views.



# Chapter 6, Regional Goals & Strategies

**Goal 6-11-1: Preserve and respect scenic views, sites, and corridors in a manner that reasonably compensates, provides incentives, maintains similar existing property rights, or in another similar manner that balances the public and property owner interests.**

## **Strategies**

- Consider hillside ordinances that minimize disturbance, are sensitive to natural topography, and protect views of important mountain features.
- Encourage development that incorporates open space features.
- Remove excess and inappropriate signage, and place utility lines underground.
- Incentivize development that maintains natural topography.

**Goal 6-11-2: Encourage innovative design that is compatible with the surrounding character.**

## **Strategies**

- Explore design review ordinances for new and remodeled buildings.
- Encourage innovative site and architectural design using incentives.
- Establish community design goals and policies for facilities and transportation services.

- Develop policies to provide transition zones between mixed and different uses to screen and buffer undesirable elements and effects.

- Incorporate flexible zoning categories like Planned Unit Developments or Performance Districts to facilitate innovative development.

- Engage communities and neighborhoods in the development of the character and sense of place of their own adopted plans.

**Goal 6-11-3: Support a visually cohesive region respecting the character of communities that makes them unique.**

## **Strategies**

- Highlight important areas through development review procedures and allowance of features such as public art, special street lighting, street furniture, and fountains.

- Establish streetscape design criteria that incorporate aesthetic considerations and enhance the area's identity and character while maintaining safety.

- Ensure that the character of infill development is compatible with the desired attributes of surrounding areas.

- Start educational programs in local public schools, New Mexico State University, and Doña Ana Community College that

build pride and a sense of place spotlighting the rich history of Doña Ana County.

- Promote development that reflects the region’s vision, which generally relates to a territorial agricultural, historic, and rural character.

**Goal 6-11-4: Identify, preserve, and enhance the historic and cultural resources of Doña Ana County.**

**Strategies**

- Prepare catalogs of historic structures, sites, and other points of interest.
- Develop a sign program for historic sites and other points of notable interest throughout Doña Ana County.
- Consider adoption of comprehensive historic preservation ordinances.
- Participate in preservation programs such as the Certified Local Government Program jointly administered by the National Park Service and the State Historic Preservation Office.

**6.12 Intergovernmental Cooperation**

Local government is most effective when it includes citizen participation and incorporates transparent cooperation at every level. To achieve successful regional planning, government entities should continuously seek to implement regularly updated comprehensive plans based on collaborative efforts.

**Goal 6-12-1: Improve effective intergovernmental cooperation in addressing regional matters and guiding quality growth.**

**Strategies**

- Establish task forces and other joint committees to combine and work on solutions of regional issues.
- Continue and encourage joint meetings between governmental agencies, especially the County Commission and the Las Cruces City Council.
- Cooperate with other governments, special purpose districts, and related agencies in the county when developing services and facilities.
- Decisions regarding new school locations and major improvements should involve officials from the County, relevant municipality, and the respective school district.
- Where appropriate, move toward regionalizing the transportation, stormwater, water, wastewater, and other utilities through a single entity to promote the coordination of public services, increased management efficiency, and funding opportunities.
- Collaborate with adjacent municipalities, counties, and agencies on ways to improve air and water quality.

# Chapter 6, Regional Goals & Strategies

- Engage chambers of commerce, convention and visitors centers, and related agencies to enhance the identity of the region to increase tourism.
- Work with developers and building organizations to increase opportunities for “green” development and alternative energy options.
- Work with land management, government, and other applicable groups to minimize habitat disturbance.
- Evaluate existing intergovernmental cooperation arrangements for their effectiveness and seek continuous improvement.
- Coordinate among governing agencies in effective ways to generate, store, process, analyze, manipulate, and use spatial data and related technology.
- Improve the coordination of local, state, and federal regulations and administration
- Develop a process of joint planning with municipal, state, and federal agencies to draft local comprehensive plans.
- Educate the public about proposed planning and utility service area boundaries.
- Develop public participation methods to give the public adequate opportunities to address issues related to proposed development projects before approval.
- Make all important documents available for review by the public.
- Ensure all proceedings follow the required publication and hearing process.
- Develop clear and understandable procedures for changes and amendments to adopted codes and regulations.

**Goal 6-12-2: Engage a diverse group of residents in the process of local government and intergovernmental cooperation.**

## Strategies

- Develop a task force of community members to monitor the application and implementation of the actions of One Valley, One Vision 2040 and to review and update it.
- Promote private and public sector partnerships for educational research programs and agricultural development opportunities.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

# Chapter 7, Types of Communities

This chapter lists the general types of communities in Doña Ana County defined for the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan. These types of communities represent distinct areas with their own administrative or planning functions to develop future comprehensive or master plans, have appointed or elected bodies that address the physical developmental pattern for a defined area, or are a recognized community type by New Mexico State Statute.

Current comprehensive or master plans are the basis for many of the future characteristics for the communities listed below. The adoption for some of these comprehensive or master plans are more than ten years ago and/or have a planning horizon before 2040. As such, the intention for the identified characteristics in this chapter was to use characteristics that may apply in 2040. To obtain specific information and updates on individual comprehensive, master, and other long-range plans, it is best to contact the community directly.

## 7.1 Municipalities

New Mexico State Statute defines a municipality as an incorporated city, town, or village. The typical planning definition of a city is an urban area with a high population density and a particular administrative, legal, or historical status. Usually, a city is larger than a town and a town larger than a village. The following identifies some future characteristics of the particular cities, towns, and villages in Doña Ana County.

### City of Anthony

- The 2010 Draft Master Plan for the Community of Anthony<sup>47</sup> and any subsequent updates guide development.
- Development encourages growth while preserving farmland and its rural character.
- Generally, most residential growth occurs in two areas north of Acosta Road. Growth of most commercial, medical, and government services occurs within a half-mile radius of the intersection of Anthony Drive and Acosta Road and downtown. Employment, entertainment, and related highway businesses occur at the interchange of I-10 and Ohara Road (State Route 404). Limited industrial growth occurs in existing zoned areas.
- Downtown is a pedestrian-friendly area with mixed-use shopping and residential areas that highlight the historic nature of the area with multi-modal transportation options to regional areas outside the city.
- Regional access into Anthony is via I-10, State Route 478/20, and State Route 404.

### Village of Hatch

- The 2003 Comprehensive Plan<sup>46</sup> and any subsequent updates guide development.
- The identity of the village centers on its agriculture, particularly the chile, and its small town main street, known as the "Chile Capital of the World."

- Agricultural uses exist around the village, predominantly on the north and east perimeter. Most residential growth occurs northwest of the existing village center, north of Hall Street and south of State Route 154. Commercial uses infill and develop around the Village center along Hall Street (State Route 185) and Franklin Street (State Route 26). Industrial development occurs in existing zoned areas like the Hatch Municipal Airport and Hatch Industrial Park, located approximately seven miles southwest of the main part of the village, along with light industrial growth in specific areas around the village center and railroad tracks.

- Regional access into Hatch remains along State Route 26 (Franklin Street) off I-25, accessing the village center through a designated “Chile Corridor” that crosses the Rio Grande and irrigation canals and passes through chile fields as they enter Hatch from the north. State Routes 154, 185 and 187 provide parallel access to I-25.

### **City of Las Cruces**

- The 1999 Las Cruces comprehensive plan<sup>7</sup> and any subsequent updates guide development.

- Las Cruces remains the largest incorporated municipality in the County.

- Generally, most residential growth occurs east of I-25 toward Weisner Road. Growth occurs on undeveloped and underutilized land within the designated infill area between I-10 and I-25. Commercial

growth occurs throughout the city. Industrial growth occurs in the west near the airport.

- The downtown area consists of a government district, an arts/entertainment and specialty shops district, and a residential corridor. The area allows for higher gross densities and building height than other portions of the city.

- Mixed-use development exists within designated areas and incorporate sustainability or smart growth principles. They achieve greater utilization of land with higher gross densities and height compared to areas located outside these designated mixed-use areas as provided for by adopted plans and codes.

- Multi-modal transportation options allow easy access to regional activity centers and corridors like downtown, NMSU-University Avenue District, Lohman Avenue Overlay Corridor, retail and businesses along the Telshor Drive Corridor, Avenida de Mesilla Gateway Corridor, West Mesa Industrial Park Overlay Zone District, Las Cruces International Airport, and other identified regional areas of the city comprehensive plan.

### **Town of Mesilla**

- The 2004 Comprehensive Plan<sup>11</sup> and any subsequent updates guide development.

- The identity of the town centers on its historic plaza and rural way of life. Its architectural character emphasizes Spanish Pueblo Revival and Territorial styles.

# Chapter 7, Types of Communities

- Generally, the present zoning captures the future land use development. Agricultural uses exist around the town center. Most residential growth occurs west of the Rio Grande or in newly annexed areas. General commercial uses develop and infill along Avenida de Mesilla. Specialty retail, entertainment, and dining opportunities strengthen the Historic District/Plaza area. Limited industrial growth occurs in existing zoned or annexed areas.

- The Town Center is the Mesilla Plaza within the Historic District. Mesilla Plaza remains a recognized National Historic Landmark with specialty retail, galleries, dining, and drinking establishments surrounding historical residential and commercial buildings. This area has the highest gross density of the town.

- Regional access into Mesilla remains along Avenida de Mesilla via State Route 28. Its close proximity to I-10 and to Las Cruces makes Mesilla accessible via several local routes.

## City of Sunland Park

- The 2004 Sunland Park comprehensive plan<sup>39</sup> and any subsequent updates guide development.

- The identity of the city builds upon its proximity to the borders of Texas and Mexico. It aims to focus on ensuring a healthy environment, preserving its Hispanic and religious culture along with its historical buildings, being progressive toward

economic development, and promoting its entertainment district.

- There is a mix of residential and commercial growth planned west and northwest of its existing entertainment district, which includes an amusement park, racetrack, and casino.

- Short-range planning efforts include developing parks, schools, health care services, and government services.

- There are plans to enhance development of its entertainment district with improved connections to the Rio Grande, connection with a new port of entry, and ties to Mt. Cristo Rey.

- Plans include the provision of industrial uses particularly along the Mexican border to benefit from the existing Santa Teresa Port of Entry.

- Regional access into Sunland Park occurs via I-10 to Sunland Park Drive, State Route 273 (McNutt Road), Racetrack Drive, and Country Club Drive. Future development of the city will provide new roadway connections, including to the Columbus Highway and Pete V. Domenici Highway.

## 7.2 Colonias

New Mexico State Statute (NMSA 6-30-3) defines a colonia as a rural community with a population of 25,000 or less, located within 150 miles of the United States-Mexico

border, that lacks a potable water supply, adequate sewage systems, or decent, safe, sanitary housing. To fit this definition, the community must have existed as a colonia prior to November 1990 and submitted appropriate documentation to substantiate designation as a colonia. Many local agencies in Doña Ana County use the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definition for colonias, which is “rural communities and neighborhoods located within 150 miles of the U.S.-Mexican border that lack adequate infrastructure and frequently also lack other basic services.” The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also have specific definitions of colonias.

Doña Ana County is home to 37 colonias designated by HUD. These are Anthony, Berino, Brazito, Butterfield Park, Cattleland, Chamberino, Chaparral, Del Cerro, Doña Ana, El Milagro, Fair Acres, Fort Seldon, Garfield, Hill, Joy Drive, La Mesa, La Union, Las Palmeras, Leasburg, Mesquite, Montana Vista, Moongate, Mountain View, Old Picacho, Organ, Placitas, Radium Springs, Rincon, Rodey, Salem, San Isidro, San Miguel, San Pablo, Sunland Park, Tortugas, Vado, and Winterhaven. Of these, only Anthony and Sunland Park incorporated under New Mexico State Statute to become municipalities.

Colonias typically have high poverty rates, making it difficult for residents to pay for roads, sanitary-water and sewer systems, minimum standard housing, street lighting,

and other basic services. In addition, residents of colonias have traditionally struggled to gain access to a level of public services similar to that available in nearby incorporated municipalities.

Despite the lack of basic services and infrastructure in colonias, these communities offer rich culture and history. Colonias are not all new subdivisions or settlements, nor are they communities for new immigrants. They are long-standing historic communities where U.S.-born citizens have lived since the 1800’s. Residents regularly come together to develop innovative and practical solutions to the challenges they face living in these communities. Chapter 5, “Regional Snapshot”, provides several examples of innovative infrastructure and housing development, as well as adaptive reuse of historic structures in colonias.

Colonias contribute to regional economic development and tourism, and they often boast many cultural sites and historic structures. In addition, many colonias are included in the State of New Mexico Historic Preservation Division’s list of historic places in Doña Ana County. These include the Doña Ana Village Historic District, Newberry Farm in Fair Acres, Fort Seldon in Radium Springs, and several churches in other colonias. Many families find affordable housing options in colonias. Most of these communities are home to small populations outside urban areas and offer residents a quiet, peaceful lifestyle.

Federal, state, and local government



# Chapter 7, Types of Communities

agencies including HUD, EPA, USDA, the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration, and local governments recognize and provide funding for projects in colonias. These resources allow individual communities to make significant annual strides toward moving off the federal colonias list, thereby improving the overall standard of living countywide.

Doña Ana County operates the Colonias Initiative through its Health and Human Services Department (HHS). Established in 2003, the Colonias Initiative is the region's multi-agency collaborative effort to raise the standard of living in all 37 of Doña Ana County's federally recognized colonias.

To carry out the work of the Colonias Initiative, Doña Ana County government has developed a colonias task force comprised of staff from utilities, engineering, community planning, roads, fire, health and human services, and flood control. This task force established an infrastructure ranking mechanism to assess colonias in four areas:

1. Wastewater/Water
2. Drainage
3. Public Water
4. Roads

This infrastructure ranking process allows HHS and community representatives to identify, prioritize, and act on areas of critical need in colonias. As of 2010, 19 colonias had been

improved through this process. Community meetings are held regularly to keep residents informed and to gather input. Infrastructure improvements have been pursued through collaboration with local, state, and federal governing bodies. HHS uses a rating system to track improvements on paved roadways, drainage, water, zoned land, and code enforcement.

Ultimately, Doña Ana County's goal is to transform all colonias into viable communities. Thus, infrastructure improvements must be accompanied by social and economic development. Social development is addressed through health-care programs provided by contracted non-profit providers, as well as health promotion and community outreach staff. Educational outreach is provided via six community resource centers in Chaparral, Doña Ana, Organ, Radium Springs, Rincon, Organ, and Vado/Del Cerro.

In addition, many advocacy groups, private entities, and individuals also provide services for residents in colonias. The mission of the non-profit New Mexico Colonias Development Council is to improve the quality of life in colonias through the promotion, development and preservation of decent and affordable housing in colonia communities in southern New Mexico while creating the space for social, economic, and environmental justice initiatives. The Tierra Del Sol Corporation is a regional housing and community development corporation. Its purpose is to improve the quality of life through the construction of

affordable housing and through housing construction activities, thus promoting community development. Various water and sanitation entities, such as the Anthony Water and Sanitation District and the Lower Rio Grande Public Water Works Authority, help create economies of scale making water and sewer service available to more people at lower rates.

Through these combined efforts, vast improvements are being made in the physical, social, and economic status of colonias in Doña Ana County. The following identifies some future characteristics for colonias:

- The applicable master plan, or the Doña Ana County Comprehensive Plan, or any subsequent update guide development.
- Economic development is vibrant and growing.
- Infrastructure improvement and enhancement is in pace with demand.
- Water and wastewater systems are the primary method used to get water and dispose of waste at homes and businesses.
- Assessments related to stormwater management and related improvements are in place to mitigate flooding on roadways and damage to structures.
- The majority of sites comply with zoning, building, and related codes.

- Affordable housing options exist for a range of socioeconomic levels.

More information is available at [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov), [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov), [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov), [www.nmdfa.state.nm.us](http://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us), [www.donaanacounty.org](http://www.donaanacounty.org).

### **7.3 Extra-Territorial Zone**

New Mexico State Statute, Section 3-21, allows for joint planning in areas outside incorporated cities, villages, and towns to address growth outside municipal limits. Statute references these areas as Extra-Territorial Zones (ETZ), when the municipal boundary limits change the ETZ boundary changes. Doña Ana County includes one designated ETZ and preliminary recommendation for a second ETZ through two separate Joint Powers Agreements.

The Las Cruces ETZ, created in 1989, is a five-mile planning and platting boundary with its own subdivision, zoning, and comprehensive plan. County staff primarily reviews development within this ETZ, except for new subdivisions. Similar to a municipal planning and zoning commission and council or a board of trustees, the ETZ has its own body of members through the ETZ Commission and Extra-Territorial Zoning Authority (ETA) for coordination and administration of growth management, zoning, land use, and subdivisions.

In 2009, Doña Ana County and Sunland Park created the foundation for an ETZ on an approximate eight-mile area west of

# Chapter 7, Types of Communities

Sunland Park. It has a separate service area for water and wastewater overseen by the Camino Real Regional Utility Authority (CRRUA). Existing Doña Ana County and Sunland Park plans, ordinances, and processes are in place until the CRRUA develops its own.

The following identifies some future characteristics for the ETZ:

- The 2000-2020 Comprehensive Plan<sup>18</sup> and any subsequent updates guide development.
- The identity of the ETZ subdivides into five unique and distinct sub-areas, requiring their own individualized and targeted growth management, zoning, and infrastructure solutions. These five areas are the North Valley, East Mesa, Tortugas Mountain East Mesa, South Valley, and West Mesa.
- Residential and commercial development with improved roadway connections continues and focuses in the East Mesa both north and south of U.S. 70. Infill and mixed-developments at relatively low densities occur in the North and South Valley. Limited growth occurs for the Tortugas Mountain East Mesa. Mostly light-industrial development occurs in the West Mesa near the airport, with commercial and residential development occurring close to Las Cruces.
- Regional access to the ETZ is similar to Las Cruces, with future roadway development connections planned.

## 7.4 County

New Mexico State Statute does not define what characteristics make up a county but does define the physical boundaries of Doña Ana County. As used here, Doña Ana County covers the planning jurisdiction of the county excepting all incorporated villages, towns, and cities.

The following identifies some of the future characteristics for the county:

- The 1994 Doña Ana County Comprehensive Plan<sup>15</sup> and any subsequent updates guide development.
- There are large tracts of undeveloped private and public lands that provide open space, with many tracts set aside exclusively for open space as noted in Section 5.4, “Environmental Resources”.
- Large industrial developments not appropriate to more densely populated areas exist or are appropriately located here (e.g., power plants, solar fields, feed lots).
- Residential development occurs at low densities, in planned unit developments, or through community and performance zoning.
- Non-residential uses generally serve agricultural, rural, identified tourist destinations, and related services for those passing through the area.

- Development is of a type, scale, size, or intensity compatible with the existing development and appropriate to the rural character.
- Growth has a limited affect on increased need for public expenditures such as roads and fire protection, although improvements to serve existing needs may be necessary.
- Residents are generally self-sufficient and accept a lifestyle with low levels of government services.
- Water, sewer, and related basic utilities are unavailable or mostly provided through small distribution systems or on-site.
- Average lot sizes are more than one acre.
- Arterials and other major roadways are improved, but many local roads are unpaved or in need of improvement.
- Annexation occurs adjacent to incorporated cities, towns, and villages. Existing plans and utility service areas support annexation. These areas are transitioning to something more urbanized, with property owners having an interest in, or the area showing, the potential for growth.

# Chapter 8, Regional Growth Strategies

This chapter describes the Regional Growth Strategies: Housing, Development, and Jobs Methodology used to develop the Consensus Growth Strategy and Consensus Employment Strategy.

## 8.1 Housing & Development

The plan identifies three largely conceptual growth strategy alternatives in view of the identified issues in Chapter 5, “Regional Snapshot,” and goals in Chapter 6, “Regional Goals & Strategies.” One Valley, One Vision 2040 is an instrument to guide growth for all communities within Doña Ana County, New Mexico.

The set of alternatives considered in a regional plan focusing on housing is an essential element of the analysis. The structure of the population/housing and jobs forecasts and land use concept alternatives provide municipal and county elected officials with the necessary information to identify a preferred course of action in the growth area.

It is important to define these alternatives in terms of their design concept, clearly distinguished from the detailed design alternatives that are appropriate for analysis during implementation phase (i.e., metropolitan reorganization, memorandums of agreement, and joint use of regional community facilities). Design concept refers to the amount of growth contemplated (i.e., population forecasts) and land use characteristics (i.e., location, density, type, and amount). The process

included three different land use concepts for consideration: Trend Growth Strategy, Satellite Growth Strategy, and Compact Growth Strategy.

### Housing & Development Assumptions

Assumptions in planning are concepts taken as true without proof or support based on current research and planning practices. In some cases, the application of the assumptions among the growth strategies is different. The planning assumptions for the strategies are as follows:

#### *Developed Land*

- Refer to Section 5.1, “Land Use.”

#### *Critical and Sensitive*

- Refer to Section 5.1, “Land Use.”

#### *Government Retention*

- Refer to Section 5.1, “Land Use.”

#### *Undeveloped Land*

- Refer to Section 5.1, “Land Use.”

#### *Existing Population Density*

- Each dot on Map 2, “Existing Development – 2011,” represents three residents.

### *2040 Population*

- For planning purposes, this plan uses a population of 325,000 to represent a likely mid-range forecast for the year 2040 with an increase of approximately 115,000 residents from the 2010 population estimate of 210,000 people as described in Section 3.4, "Population." All three of the growth strategies use the 325,000 population forecast.

### *2040 Land Use Demand*

- A conversion of population growth to land area resulted in a demand for 5.39 square miles of land in the year 2040. The three housing and development alternatives and consensus growth strategy maps (Maps 8, 9, 10, and 11) graphically illustrate this land area, with this growth distributed according to the concepts described in the key assumptions in Table 8-1, "Regional Growth Strategies Comparison."

### *Population Distribution*

- The trend growth strategy used a county-to-municipalities ratio of 46-percent residing in the county and 54-percent residing in the municipalities. The other growth strategies used a county-to-municipalities ratio as shown in the key assumptions in Table 8-1, "Regional Growth Strategies Comparison."

### *Infrastructure*

- Map 10, "Compact Growth Strategy - 2040" is the only alternative considering

the location of existing and planned infrastructure. Growth for this alternative depended on where available plans shown existing or proposed major utility lines (i.e., sewer and water).

### *Density*

- Population density differed based on the key assumptions in Table 8-1, "Regional Growth Strategies Comparison."

### *Growth Pattern*

- The pattern of population growth differed based on the key assumptions in Table 8-1, "Regional Growth Strategies Comparison."

### *Building Envelopes*

- Depending on the urban to rural setting, the assumption was the building footprint and height will complement the surrounding development.

## **Housing & Development Strategy Alternatives**

### *Trend Growth Strategy*

The regional growth distribution is similar to the distribution experienced throughout the county between the years of 2000-2010. Growth continues to occur mainly in Las Cruces' expanding centers while rural, historic, platted town sites continue to grow in small increments. This strategy intentionally leaves out community design, assuming

# Chapter 8, Regional Growth Strategies

appearance largely unchanged from 2010 through 2040.

The key assumptions of Table 8-1, “Regional Growth Strategies Comparison” illustrate the basis for population distribution. The conversion of the quantitative population projections to land area projections basis are population growth and density. These projections support the land use concept for Map 8, “Trend Growth Strategy – 2040,” that shows 54-percent of the growth in municipalities and 46-percent of growth in unincorporated Doña Ana County. In contrast with the information shown in Map 9, “Satellite Growth Strategy - 2040,” urban growth will continue in traditional subdivisions while rural growth will continue largely in colonias.

## *Satellite Growth Strategy*

More of the growth distributes among satellite communities. Existing urban growth centers are in the cities of Las Cruces and Sunland Park. Future urban growth areas are Santa Teresa, Verde, and West Mesa. Future developing rural centers are Hatch, Chaparral, Anthony, and Vado. The growth centers dramatically change from 2010 through 2040 with commercial centers being multi-storied while surrounding residential is relatively dense.

The key assumptions of Table 8-1, “Regional Growth Strategies Comparison” illustrate the basis for population distribution. The conversion of the quantitative population projections to land area projections basis

are population growth and density. These projections support the land use concept for Map 9, “Satellite Growth Strategy – 2040,” that shows 20-percent of the growth in municipalities and 80-percent of growth in unincorporated Doña Ana County. Growth direction is toward emerging growth centers throughout the county.

## *Compact Growth Strategy*

The regional growth distribution is similar to today’s, with most occurring within the Las Cruces corporate limits and Extra-Territorial Zoning District. However, development is more compact and growth is mostly concentrated at higher housing and employment densities. Incentives exist for smart growth areas while critical and sensitive areas remain in their natural state.

In the colonias and other villages, preservation of historic platted town sites continues, although the infrastructure and public services dramatically improve. The basis of the appearance of the settlements continues along a continuum of design that has slowly evolved over the past 1,000 years from a variety of cultural influences (Native, Hispanic and Anglo) and physical and economic situations.

The key assumptions of Table 8-1, “Regional Growth Strategies Comparison” illustrate the basis for population distribution. The conversion of the quantitative population projections to land area projections basis are population growth and density. These projections support the land use concept

for Map 10, “Compact Growth Strategy,” that shows 80-percent of the growth in municipalities and 20-percent of growth in unincorporated Doña Ana County.

### **Consensus Growth Strategy**

Map 11, “Consensus Growth Strategy – 2040,” is a hybrid that contains elements from all three of the above strategies. It encourages 70-percent of new population distribution to occur within existing municipalities and the remaining 30-percent of new population distribution to occur within the unincorporated portions of Doña Ana County. Table 8-1, “Regional Growth Strategies Comparison,” provides the recommended assumptions determined through the public engagement process described in Section 3.2, “Public Engagement.” It uses key assumptions from Map 9, “Satellite Growth Strategy - 2040,” and Map 10, “Compact Growth Strategy - 2040,” with emphasis on the use of existing infrastructure. This strategy illustrates most growth occurring within existing municipalities, adjacent ETZ areas, and satellite communities up and down the Rio Grande Valley adjacent to I-10 and I-25. Figures 8-1, “Urban Illustration of Downtown Las Cruces, NM 2040,” and 8-2, “Rural Illustration Small Community Central Square,” provide 3-D illustrations of this strategy.



# Chapter 8, Regional Growth Strategies

Table 8-1

## Regional Growth Strategies Comparison Doña Ana County Region

Key Assumptions	Trend Growth Strategy	Satellite Growth Strategy	Compact Growth Strategy	Consensus Growth Strategy
2010 Land Use Supply (Undeveloped)	397 sq. mi.	397 sq. mi.	397 sq. mi.	397 sq. mi.
2040 Land Use Demand	5.39 sq. mi.	5.39 sq. mi.	5.39 sq. mi.	5.39 sq. mi.
Population Distribution	54% Municipalities 46% County	20% Municipalities 80% County	80% Municipalities 20% County	70% Municipalities 30% County
Infrastructure	Not a factor in determining location of growth	New infrastructure required in new areas	Growth encouraged toward existing infrastructure.	Growth incentivized impact fee infrastructure.
Density	Not a factor in determining location of growth	Small municipalities & colonias become more dense	Central city Las Cruces becomes more dense	Central city & small community cores more dense
Growth Pattern	Spread community, leapfrog development	Concentrated in outlying communities	Concentrated in central city Las Cruces	Concentrated in central city & small planned communities
Building Envelopes	Low rise buildings predominate region	Three story commercial buildings major cross roads	Potential for high rise buildings in central city Las Cruces only	Mid-hi rise central city & low rise small communities

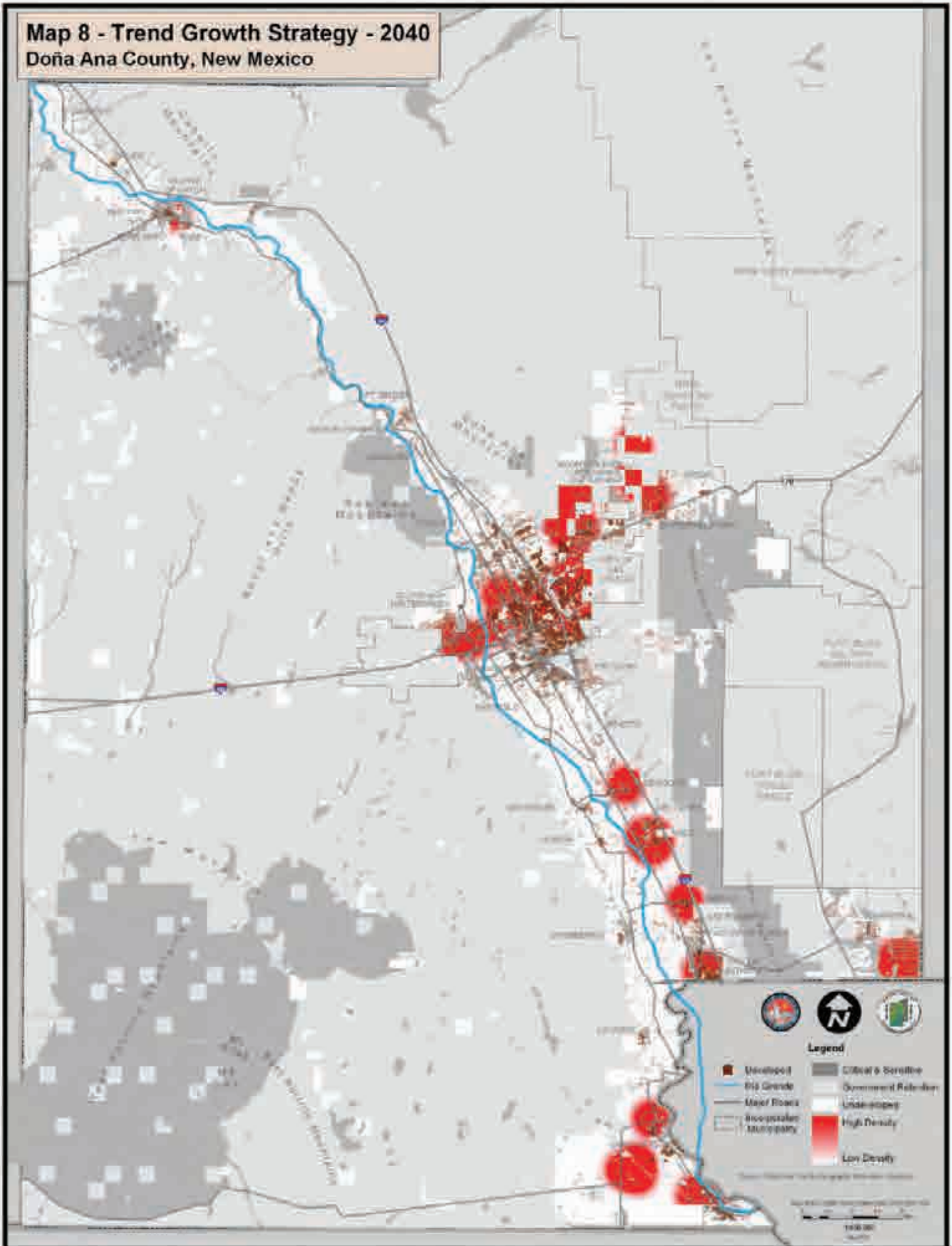


Figure 8-1: Urban Illustration of Downtown Las Cruces, NM 2040

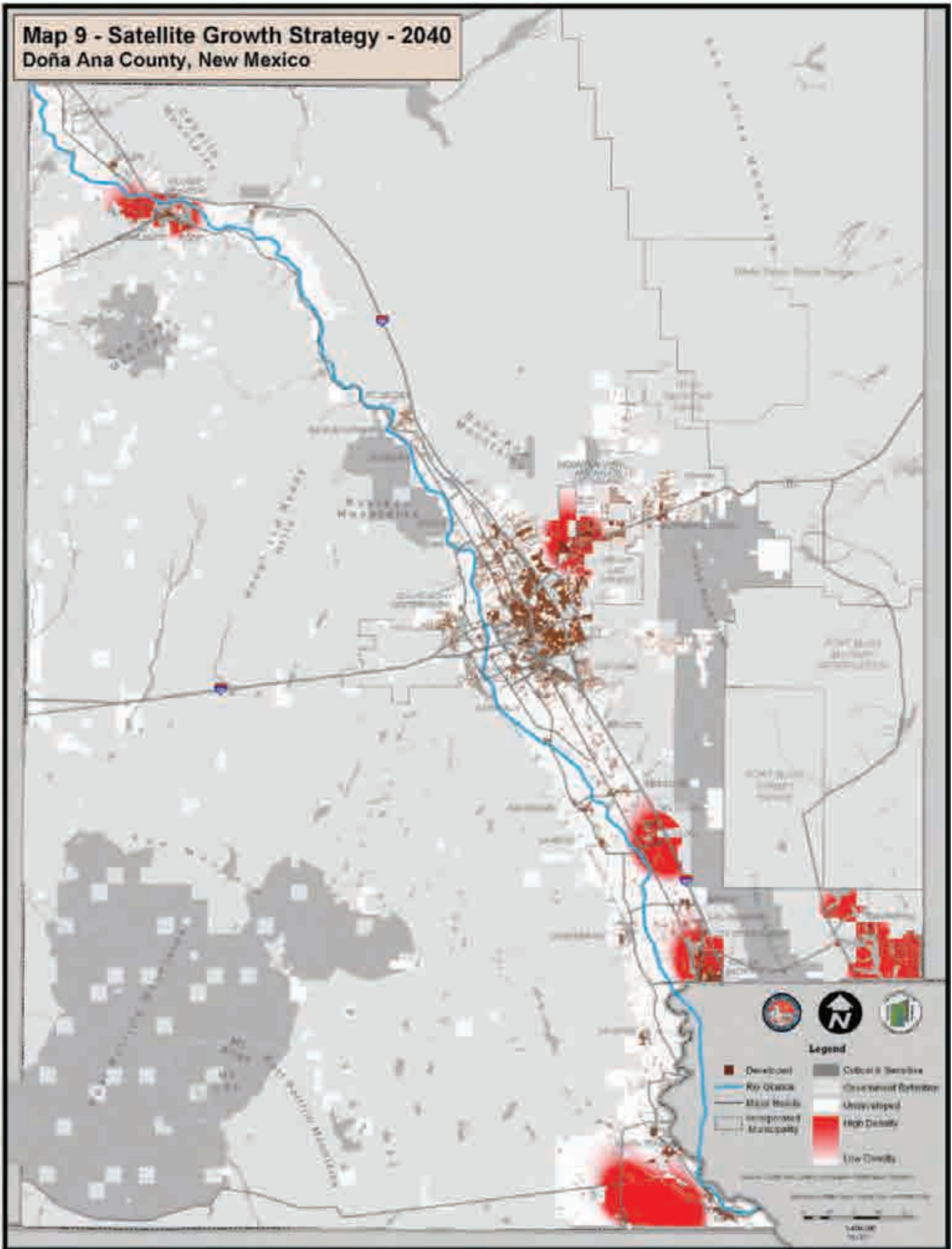


Figure 8-2: Rural Illustration Small Community Central Square

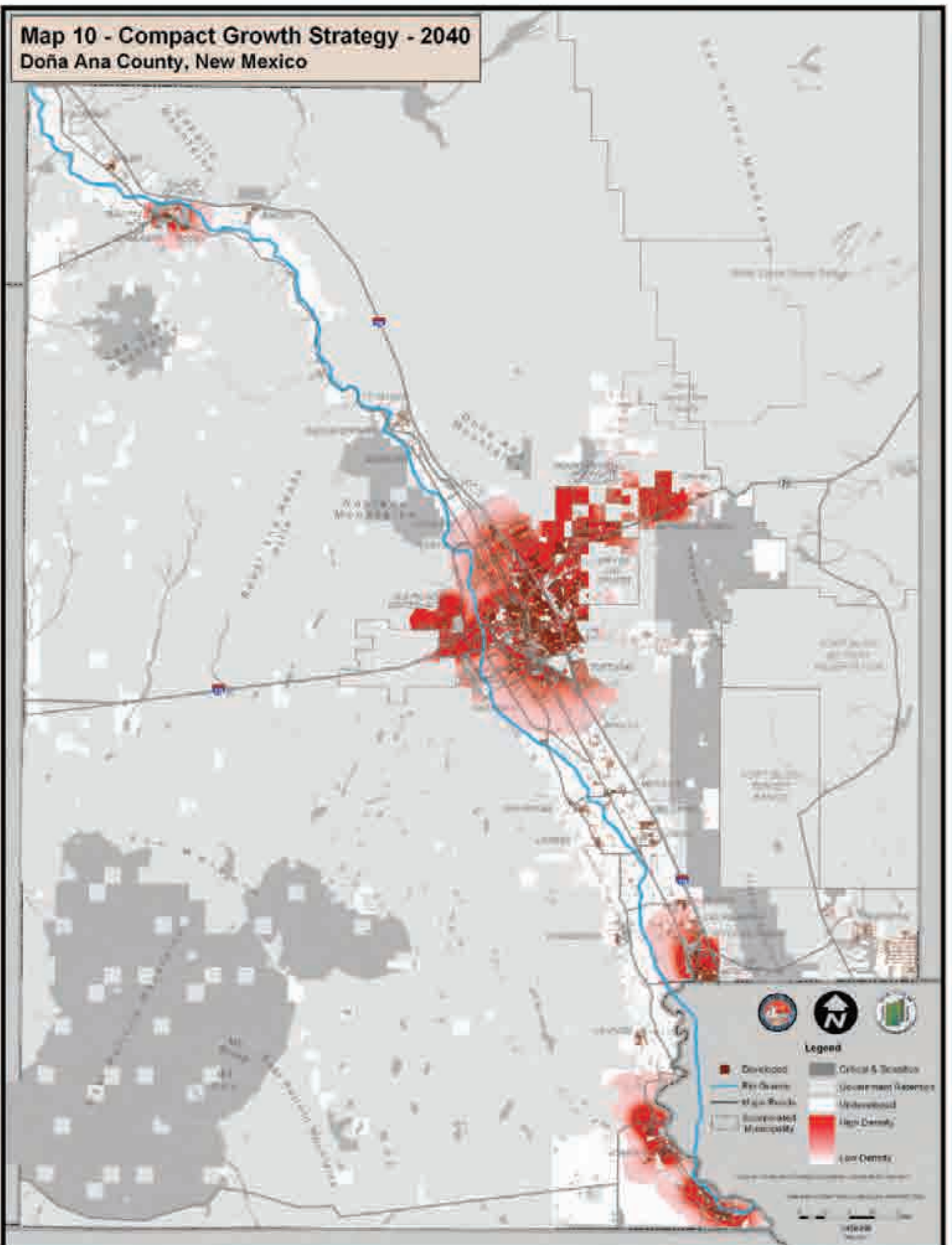
**Map 8 - Trend Growth Strategy - 2040**  
Doña Ana County, New Mexico



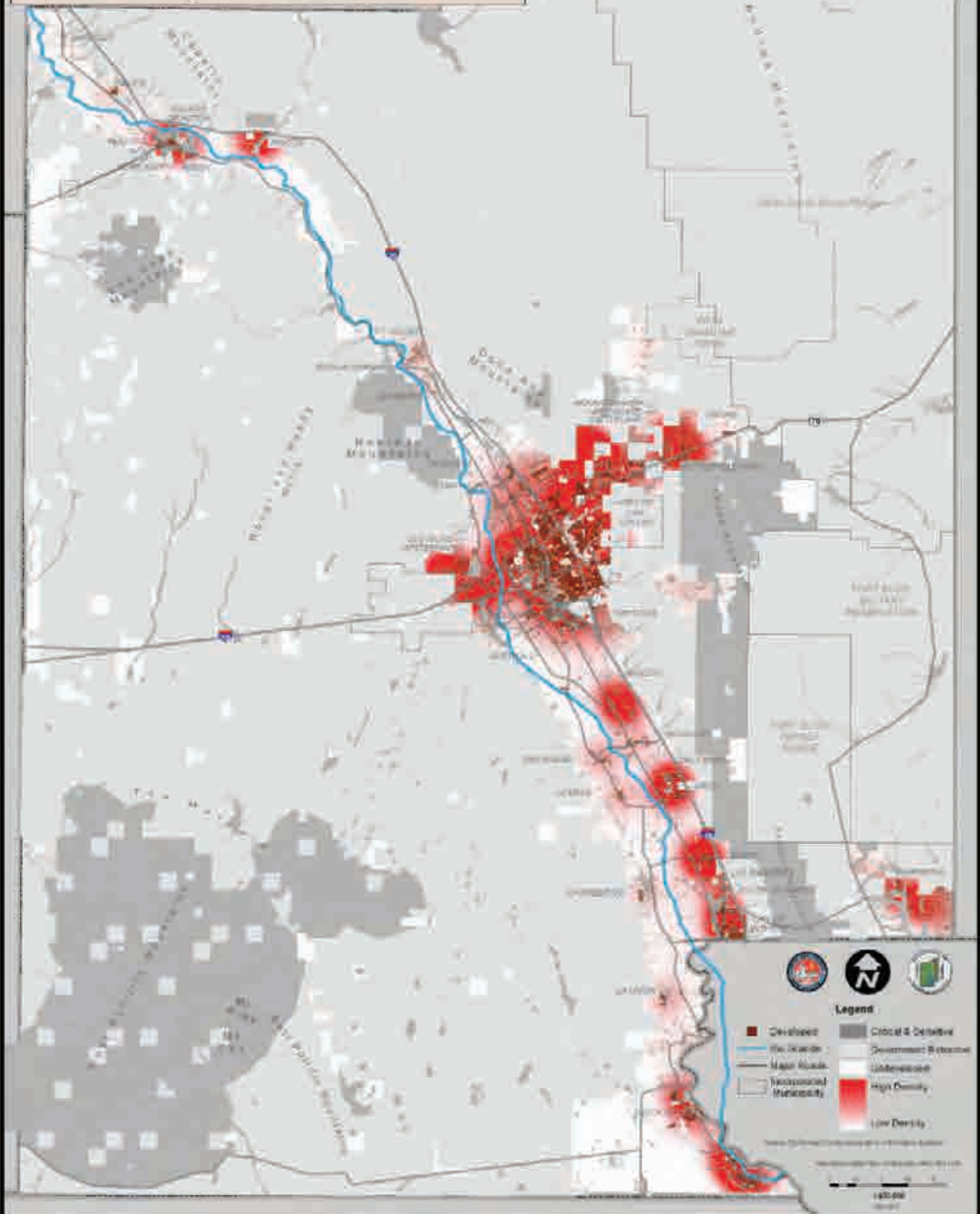
**Map 9 - Satellite Growth Strategy - 2040**  
**Doña Ana County, New Mexico**



**Map 10 - Compact Growth Strategy - 2040**  
**Doña Ana County, New Mexico**



**Map 11 - Consensus Growth Strategy - 2040**  
**Doña Ana County, New Mexico**



# Chapter 8, Regional Growth Strategies

## 8.2 Jobs

Increasingly, economic development experts are abandoning traditional approaches to economic development that relies solely on recruiting large enterprises with tax breaks, financial incentives, and other inducements. Instead, they are relying on building businesses from the ground up and supporting the growth of existing enterprises. This approach has three complementary features.

- The first is to develop and support entrepreneurs and small businesses.
- The second is to expand and improve infrastructure.
- The third is to develop or recruit a highly skilled and educated workforce. All efforts depend in large part on improving the quality of life in the community and creating an attractive business climate.

There are several reasons for this shift. Experience suggests that economic development strategies aimed at attracting large firms are unlikely to be successful, or successful only at great cost, if they generate competition for firms among jurisdictions. Further, because of the purported job creation role and innovative prowess of entrepreneurs and small businesses, creating an environment conducive to many small businesses may produce more jobs than trying to lure one or two large enterprises. The hope is not only that new businesses will create jobs in the local community, but

through innovation, some new business may grow into rapid growth “gazelle” firms, which may spawn perhaps hundreds of jobs and become industry leaders of tomorrow.<sup>17</sup>

There are two additional appropriate concepts when evaluating the Consensus Employment Strategy 2040, Jobs/Housing Balance and Economic Gardening.

### *Jobs/Housing Balance*

While all the elements in the One Valley, One Vision 2040 are to be coordinated, the linkage between housing and economic development (referred to as the “jobs-housing balance”) is particularly important. The jobs-housing balance concept looks to create a relatively even ratio of jobs and housing at price ranges that economically match the range of jobs within a reasonable commute time.

Application of this concept mitigates spill-over housing demand in small outlying communities that experience population growth without the benefit of jobs and a sales tax base – often colonias in Doña Ana County, not due to job growth and housing price increases in urban areas like Las Cruces. It helps reduce transportation costs, lessen traffic congestion, and increase affordable housing. To achieve the vision statement of One Valley, One Vision 2040 and its consensus growth strategies, complementary decisions about the distribution and allocation of employment and jobs must occur. Alignment of the Consensus Employment and Growth

Strategies is important. Then, local, state and federal governments must provide incentives including utility infrastructure, supporting systems for vehicles and mass transit, community facilities to service the land uses, and they must generally make the area more attractive.<sup>3</sup>

### *Economic Gardening*

This concept embraces the idea that small local companies are the source of jobs and wealth, and economic developers should create nurturing environments for these companies. While it originated in Littleton, Colorado, over the years many communities used and adapted Economic Gardening to better fit their local situation including: the state of Wyoming; Lancaster County, Pennsylvania; and Santa Fe, New Mexico. In December 2010, the Las Cruces City Council held a workshop to discuss Economic Gardening.<sup>4, 19</sup>

This concept is compatible with the One Valley, One Vision 2040 consensus growth strategies. It can serve as the foundation or an addition to the existing mix of job and employment strategies in Doña Ana County. However, modification or tailoring to fit the Doña Ana County region as it has less wealth and fewer financial resources (e.g., venture and angel capital), lower graduation rates (human capital), and higher income inequality (social capital) than many communities outside the region is necessary. Application of this concept should focus on capital accumulation and expand metrics to measure human, cultural,

and social capital (not just jobs and Gross Domestic Product).<sup>42</sup>

### **Jobs Assumptions**

Assumptions in planning are concepts taken as true without proof or support based on current research and planning practices. The following assumptions parallel the housing and development assumptions.

#### *Jobs Supply 2011*

- Based on an InfoUSA dataset for Doña Ana County, the job assumption established a 2011 total employment projection cap of 95,000 jobs for the region. Using this cap and the Doña Ana County GIS Extension Spatial Analyst program resulted in the jobs density layer represented by the color gradient on Map 7, “Jobs Supply – 2011.”

#### *Jobs Demand 2040*

- The estimated 2040 total employment projection cap for Doña Ana County is 180,000 jobs. Map 10, “Consensus Growth Strategy – 2040.” depicts the distribution of the increased jobs amongst the population growth centers for the county. Using the Doña Ana County GIS Extension Spatial Analyst program resulted in the jobs density layer represented by the color gradient on Map 12, “Consensus Jobs Strategy – 2040.”

#### *Jobs Distribution*

- Map 12, “Consensus Jobs Strategy – 2040,” illustrates the desired location and



# Chapter 8, Regional Growth Strategies

quantity of 180,000 estimated jobs in the year 2040. The recommendation of this plan is for the concepts of jobs/housing balance and economic gardening in evaluating jobs distribution.

## *Infrastructure*

- Growth for this alternative depended on where available plans shown existing or proposed major utility lines (i.e., sewer and water).

## *Density*

- Job density paralleled and supported the location of housing and development.

## *Growth Pattern*

- The pattern of job location paralleled and complemented the location of housing and development. Most planned job growth followed the consensus growth strategy.

## *Building Envelopes*

- Depending on the urban to rural setting, the assumption was the building footprint and height will complement the surrounding development.

## **Consensus Jobs Strategy**

Map 12, "Consensus Jobs Strategy – 2040," mirrors and supplements Map 11, "Consensus Growth Strategy – 2040." Table 8-2, "Regional Jobs Growth Strategy," provides the recommended assumptions

determined through the public engagement process described in Section 3.2, "Public Engagement."

## **8.3 Regional Plan - 2040**

Map 13, "Regional Plan – 2040," is the composite of the consensus growth and employment strategies. This plan recognizes that growth will and can continue outside growth areas, with incentives to guide growth toward the identified growth areas.

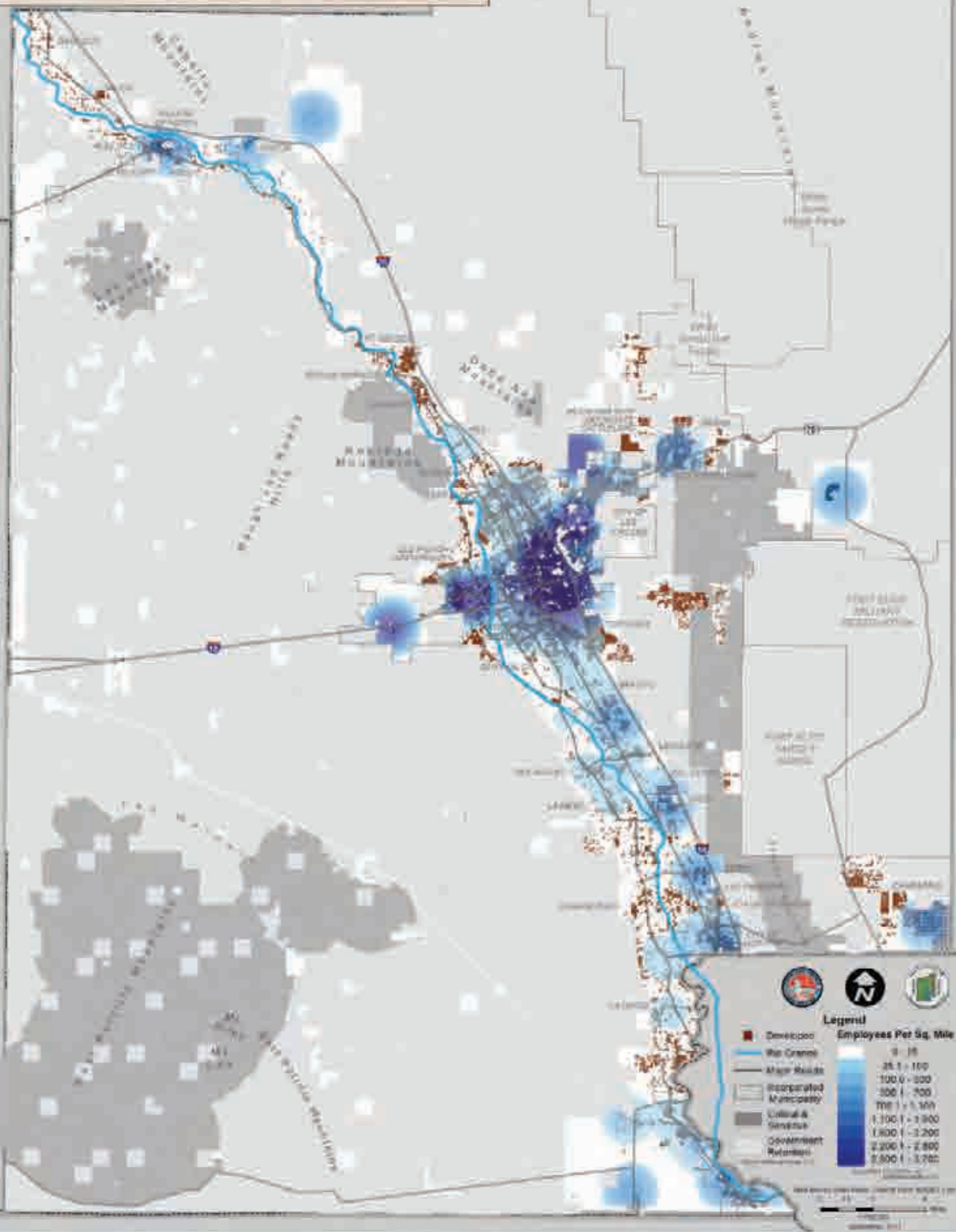
Table 8-2

# Regional Jobs Growth Strategy

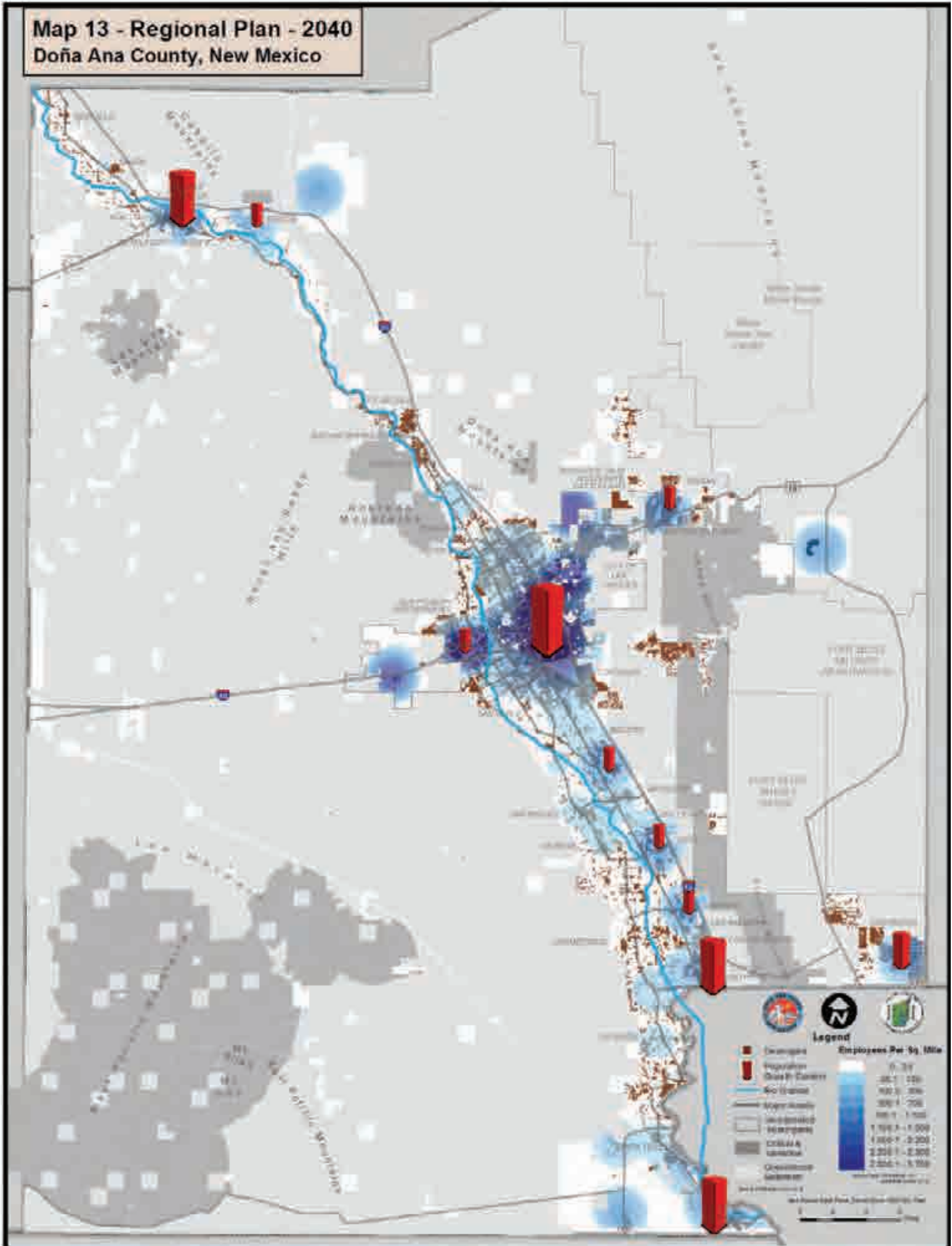
## Doña Ana County Region

Key Assumptions	Jobs Growth Strategy
2011 Jobs Supply	95,000 Jobs total
2040 Jobs Demand	180,000 Jobs total
Jobs Distribution	Jobs housing balance & economic gardening
Infrastructure	Growth incentivized impact fee infrastructure
Density	Central city & small community more dense
Growth Pattern	Concentrated in central city & small planned communities
Building Envelopes	Mid-hi rise central city & low rise small communities

**Map 12 - Consensus Jobs Strategy - 2040**  
**Doña Ana County, New Mexico**



**Map 13 - Regional Plan - 2040**  
**Doña Ana County, New Mexico**



# Chapter 9, Implementation

This chapter describes who will monitor the plan, the amendment process, the application of this plan in the planning decision-making process, and a preliminary list of actions for consideration by Doña Ana County, Las Cruces, and the other elected governing bodies that adopt this plan.

The One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan is a voluntary plan that addresses regional long-range planning in both the unincorporated and incorporated communities of Doña Ana County. This plan was possible through the leadership commitment of the local governing bodies of Doña Ana County, Las Cruces, and others in embracing the benefits of regional long-range planning for better intergovernmental cooperation, greater efficiency in analysis and public involvement, and a more effective response to regional issues. Exemplifying the New Mexico planning legislation for comprehensive plans, this plan outlines ways local administrative and governing bodies may act in implementing the plan after its adoption.

## 9.1 Monitoring

Every plan should have a means to track both its accomplishments and shortcomings. Tracking these accomplishments and shortcomings will allow the plan to keep up with any shifts in values, unanticipated events, new technologies, and other factors that may change the use or applicability of the plan. This in turn, will provide guidance in how best to pursue future actions in the plan's use or the need to update the plan.

The One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan is not a permanent document. It can be changed and revised over time as necessary to keep pace with the region.

Based on the close tie of the regional plan to individual comprehensive plans throughout Doña Ana County and its look at growth from various perspectives over a 30-year period, local governing bodies that adopt the plan should consider a major update to the plan every ten years. Updates could occur sooner, as may be necessary upon completion of updates to comprehensive plans, and may be unnecessary at ten years.

Monitoring of this plan will occur at two levels. The first level is by using the plan as listed under Section 9.2, "Application". In this level, monitoring of the plan is the responsibility of the particular administrative and governing bodies whose authority it is to prepare, update, amend, revise, or review the planning decisions outlined.

The second level of monitoring will occur after the end of the three-year waiting period described under Section 9.2, "Amendments". Extension of this review may be necessary under certain circumstances. This may include if updates of local comprehensive plans are not completed or the need to first address certain aspects of such updates. This level of monitoring will provide the elected governing bodies that adopt this plan opportunity to review the application of this plan over the first three years of its adoption to determine

the necessity for any amendments. This review may include consideration of a task force to monitor the plan, identifying the representation for the task force and its purpose. For this review, the community development director or designee from each participating governing body that adopted this plan will prepare a summary for the elected governing bodies outlining its use of this plan, positive aspects, and proposed areas to consider any amendments.

## **9.2 Amendments**

Amendments to this plan will require a simple majority of each of the elected governing bodies that adopt this plan. To provide adequate time to monitor the plan, there will be no consideration of amendments for at least three years from the date of the elected governing body to first adopt this plan. Thereafter, it is encouraged consideration of amendments to the plan occur not more than once a calendar year at a public hearing.

Adequate notification to the public of the elected governing bodies considering amendment to this plan is important. At a minimum, this notification shall follow posting policies for comprehensive or similar long-range plans of the governing body. Other notification may include publication in a newspaper of general circulation, press releases, internet outreach tools (e.g., website, social media), visual media (e.g., radio, television), or printed material (e.g., signs, flyers, brochures).

Public involvement may not be required to the same extent for all proposed amendments to this plan. Minor amendments (e.g., updates to data, stakeholder information, accomplishments) may require only administrative, task force, or planning and zoning commission review in advance of consideration by the elected governing bodies that adopt this plan. Substantial amendments (e.g., change of intent to the vision, a goal, or a consensus growth strategy map) will likely include more public involvement in the form of a larger advisory committee, as the one used to develop this plan, consisting of a variety of stakeholders throughout Doña Ana County. It may include public forums, focus group sessions, stakeholder meetings, or surveys. For substantial amendments, this plan encourages recommendation by each of the planning and zoning commissions of the elected governing bodies in advance of consideration by the elected governing bodies that adopt this plan.

## **9.3 Application**

To address concerns that the plan not sit on the shelf, it is encouraged that administrative and local governing bodies use the plan in making planning decisions that are under their authority related to the twelve resource topics of this plan. To the extent possible, these planning decisions should be consistent with the vision, goals, and consensus growth strategies of this plan. Since this plan is broad, those referencing this plan in other planning decisions should use this plan in a similar manner. Administrative

# Chapter 9, Implementation

and local governing bodies may reference this plan in the following instances:

- The preparation, update, or amendment of local comprehensive or master plans,
- In conjunction with the use of local comprehensive or master plans in the review of land use and development decisions (i.e., annexation, rezoning, platting, variances, use permits, etc.),
- The preparation or update in strategic, financing and location of capital improvements, or related plans, and
- The preparation or revision of zoning code, subdivision, and related development standards.

This plan will not apply in the following instance:

- The approval of building permits.

## **9.4 Regional Actions**

Through the community-driven efforts of One Valley, One Vision 2040, the community identified many regional goals and strategies to help achieve the principles of the vision statement over the next 30 years. The regional action plan below presents a preliminary list of actions for consideration by the elected governing bodies within Doña Ana County and the local municipalities. This is not an exhaustive list, as other additions or changes to this list may be appropriate based on future conditions. Any one action

may require completion over a number of years. The “primary responsible entities” are a preliminary list of known governmental or quasi-governmental groups for possible involvement to accomplish these actions. Further engagement of the public, residents, property owners, and other affected stakeholders will occur through appropriate public processes for a particular action.

The actions in Table 9-1, “Regional Action Plan, 2012-2016,” will require greater detailed incorporation in both the municipal and county comprehensive plans, and require mechanisms in place to further joint collaboration and identify appropriate tools for implementation. The following action plan is a means in providing guidance for elected and administrative officials in making policy, programming, and capital improvement decisions.

# Regional Action Plan

Table 9-1

2012 - 2016

	Associated Goal(s)	High Priority 2012-2013 [Use √]	Primary Responsible Entities
<b>Land Use Actions</b>			
1. Create an individual master plan for each identified growth area in the comprehensive plan.	6-1-1 6-1-2 6-1-3 6-1-4 6-1-5		ETA, DAC and municipalities
2. Establish a regional future service boundary to delineate the maximum extent for municipal provision of public water and wastewater services. Developers could be granted infrastructure provisions when developing within the future service boundary, but would be restricted under certain circumstances in their ability to tap into the public system if their plans are located outside this boundary.	6-1-6 6-7-2	√	CLC, LRGPWWA, and other water providers
3. <b>Preserve BLM and State Land outside the proposed future service boundary through actions, including and not limited to:</b>  Maintaining and enhancing dialogue with the BLM and State Land Trust  Expressing that land located outside the proposed future service boundary should be given priority for preservation as disposal plans are prepared and released.	6-1-8	√	ETA, DAC and municipalities, BLM, NMSLD



# Regional Action Plan

Table 9-1

2012 - 2016

	Associated Goal(s)	High Priority 2012-2013 [Use √]	Primary Responsible Entities
4. Evaluate and incorporate within the County and municipal codes consistent mechanisms that protects the presence of agriculture and the financial livelihood of agricultural landowners by considering tools such as conservation easements, purchase or transfer of development rights, or other similar programs. as conservation easements, purchase or transfer of development rights, or other similar programs.	6-1-8 6-1-9		ETA, DAC and municipalities
5. Modify existing zoning codes and/ or policies to provide incentives for appropriately-placed mixed-use developments.	6-1-7		ETA, DAC and municipalities
<b>Water Actions</b>			
6. Revisit, update, and adopt water conservation policies and programs in the County and incorporated municipalities.	6-2-1 6-4-1 6-8-4		ETA, DAC and municipalities, EBID, other water providers.
7. Pursue securing surface water rights for other uses in addition to agriculture.	6-2-1		ETA, DAC and municipalities, EBID, other water providers.
8. Update policies and implementation documents to best address events and localized conditions that can negatively affect water quality.	6-2-1 6-2-2 6-12-1		ETA, DAC and municipalities, EBID, other water providers, industrial businesses, agricultural businesses

# Regional Action Plan

Table 9-1

2012 - 2016

	Associated Goal(s)	High Priority 2012-2013 [Use √]	Primary Responsible Entities
9. Complete groundwater remediation of the Superfund site in Las Cruces.	6-2-1 6-2-2 6-12-1	√	DAC, CLC, EPA, Department of Justice, National Guard, NM Armory Board
10. Incorporate enhanced measures to capture, store, and release stormwater for later use as part of the region's water management practices.	6-2-1 6-12-1		ETA, DAC and municipalities, EBID, other water providers
11. Identify, prioritize, and fund new and rehabilitation of existing regional flood-protection infrastructure.	6-2-2 6-5-2 6-10-5 6-12-1		ETA, DAC and municipalities, DASWCD, CSWCD, EBID, NMSU, DAC Flood Commission
<b>Air Quality Actions</b>			
12. Revisit the EPA Natural Events Action Plan last updated in 2000 to ensure it still meets the needs of the region.	6-3-1	√	ETA, DAC and municipalities, LEPC
<b>Environmental Resources Actions</b>			
13. Identify properties where development rights may be acquired and secure funding to do so, in order to establish protective buffers along continuous portions of the Rio Grande.	6-4-1 6-4-2		ETA, DAC and municipalities
14. Work to identify critical and sensitive natural areas and wildlife corridors, and protect these areas from development in a manner that reasonably compensates, provides incentives, maintains similar existing property rights, or in another similar manner that balances the public and property owner interests.	6-1-8 6-4-1 6-4-2 6-4-3 6-10-4 6-11-1		ETA, DAC and municipalities, BLM, NMSU, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, NM Department of Game & Fish, NMSLO, WSMR, and USDA

# Regional Action Plan

Table 9-1

2012 - 2016

	Associated Goal(s)	High Priority 2012-2013 [Use √]	Primary Responsible Entities
15. Create a task force to discuss ways that technical and administrative resources can be used most effectively in open-space conservation and management in a manner that balances the public and property owner interests.	6-1-8 6-4-1 6-4-2 6-4-3 6-7-2 6-7-5		ETA, DAC and municipalities, BLM, NMSLO, WSMR, USDA, and NMSU
16. Draft and adopt arroyo, trail, and open-space management plans which balance the public and property owner interests.	6-4-2 6-4-3 6-5-2 6-6-3 6-7-2 6-7-5		ETA, DAC and municipalities, BLM, NMSLO, WSMR, USDA, and NMSU
17. Evaluate the possibility of environmental impact fees for development that encroaches on sensitive environmental areas.	6-4-3		ETA, DAC and municipalities
18. Develop options for utilizing surface water to a broader degree for the benefit of people, plants and animals.	6-4-3 6-7-2		DAC and municipalities, ETA, EBID, and the BOR
<b>Hazard Actions</b>			
19. Evaluate the formation of a state-approved authority to identify and address regional stormwater management	6-5-1 6-5-2 6-12-1		ETA, DAC and municipalities, DASWCD, CSWCD, EBID, NMSU, DAC Flood Commission
20. Identify and install signage of hazardous cargo routes within the county.	6-5-1		NMDOT, LEPC, ETA, DAC and municipalities
21. Monitor the science of climate change and trends in weather patterns affecting the region to remain current and strategically plan for unexpected occurrences.	6-5-1 6-5-2		ETA, DAC and municipalities

# Regional Action Plan

Table 9-1

2012 - 2016

	Associated Goal(s)	High Priority 2012-2013 [Use √]	Primary Responsible Entities
<b>Transportation Actions</b>			
22. Refine and develop policies for regional roads that may include: NM 404 as part of El Paso's Northeast Parkway Southern access road from Doña Ana County into Spaceport.	6-6-1		ETA, DAC and municipalities, LCMPO, EPMPO, SCRPO, CRRMA, NMDOT, TxDOT, and RoadRUNNER Transit
23. Continued involvement in South Central Regional Transit District.	6-6-1 6-6-2 6-6-3 6-6-4 6-12-1		ETA, DAC and municipalities, RoadRUNNER Transit
24. Develop a Long Range Transit Plan for RoadRUNNER Transit that integrates transit corridors with land use coordination.	6-6-2		ETA, DAC and municipalities, RoadRUNNER Transit
25. Prepare an Alternatives Analysis for passenger rail between Las Cruces and El Paso.	6-6-4 6-10-5		ETA, DAC and municipalities, BNSF
26. Implement Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) as part of the regular maintenance of the transportation system.	6-6-1 6-6-2		ETA, DAC and municipalities, LCMPO, EPMPO, and SCRPO
27. Coordinate transportation management plans among transportation agencies.	6-6-1 6-12-1		ETA, DAC and municipalities, LCMPO, EPMPO, SCRPO, CRRMA, NMDOT, TxDOT, and RoadRUNNER Transit

# Regional Action Plan

Table 9-1

2012 - 2016

	Associated Goal(s)	High Priority 2012-2013 [Use √]	Primary Responsible Entities
28. Work to find funding sources for necessary improvements to the Doña Ana County airport and Santa Teresa Port of Entry that support Foreign Trade Zone efforts. Improvements may include accommodation of large passenger and cargo aircraft, dedicated truck lanes, expansion of commercial rail services, and a rail transfer station.	6-6-1 6-10-1		DAC, City of Sunland Park, Union Pacific, CRRUA, and New Mexico Border Authority
29. Study the designation of NM State Route 28 as a Scenic By-Way.	6-6-2 6-11-1		ETA, DAC and municipalities, NMDOT, and FHA
<b>Community Facilities &amp; Services Actions</b>			
30. Update county and municipal Parks and Recreation Master Plans; coordinate a regional parks and recreation master plan.	6-7-1 6-7-2 6-7-3 6-7-4 6-7-5		ETA, DAC and municipalities
31. Modify regulations that require the development or contribution of parks for new development within unincorporated Doña Ana County.	6-7-1 6-7-2 6-7-3 6-7-4 6-7-5		ETA, DAC and municipalities
32. Construct a mental health correctional triage center in Doña Ana County.	6-7-1 6-7-2 6-7-3		ETA, DAC and municipalities
33. Construct a new facility for the Mesilla Valley Regional Dispatch Authority.	6-7-1 6-7-2 6-7-3		ETA, DAC and municipalities, Mesilla Valley Regional Dispatch Authority

# Regional Action Plan

Table 9-1

2012 - 2016

	Associated Goal(s)	High Priority 2012-2013 [Use √]	Primary Responsible Entities
34. Construct a regional public safety facility that may include law enforcement training and fire academy training.	6-7-1 6-7-2 6-7-3		ETA, DAC and municipalities
<b>Utilities &amp; Infrastructure Actions</b>			
35. Increase the number of residential and business sites that incorporate renewable energy through grants, programs, and alternative financing mechanisms. Focus on governmental facilities, sites, and community facilities.	6-8-1 6-8-2 6-8-3 6-8-4		ETA, DAC and municipalities
<b>Housing Actions</b>			
36. Strengthen housing policies for mixed-use and mixed income housing opportunities in local comprehensive plans.	6-6-1 6-9-1 6-10-4 6-11-2		ETA, DAC and municipalities
37. Develop a Strategic Housing Strategy for Doña Ana County.	6-9-1 6-9-2		ETA, DAC and municipalities, Colonias Initiative
38. Develop a variety of housing programs and incentives to make housing affordable to purchase or rent.	6-9-2 6-10-3		ETA, DAC and municipalities, Colonias Initiative
39. Identify ways to develop more attractive, livable site-built dwellings to reduce the total percentage of manufactured housing for new development.	6-9-1 6-11-3		ETA, DAC and municipalities

# Regional Action Plan

Table 9-1

2012 - 2016

	Associated Goal(s)	High Priority 2012-2013 [Use √]	Primary Responsible Entities
<b>Economy Actions</b>			
40. Promote and make necessary improvements for business opportunities around the Spaceport, existing industrial parks, and airports within Doña Ana County.	6-10-1 6-10-2 6-10-3 6-10-5		ETA, DAC and municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, and MVEDA
41. Develop benchmarks to assess the regional economy (e.g., establish benchmark number of new jobs annually, benchmark percentage to increase average annual salary, workforce training etc.).	6-10-1		ETA, DAC and municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, and MVEDA
42. Continue implementation of the master plan in downtown Las Cruces.	6-10-1		CLC, Chambers of Commerce, MVEDA
43. Promote renewable energy businesses and facilities to Doña Ana County, including solar, biofuel, geothermal, and wind.	6-10-2		ETA, DAC and municipalities
44. Analyze pertinent county and municipal codes to evaluate ways that best mitigate negative impacts and bolster positive impacts related to the mission of primary employers, and balance that assessment with the public interest.	6-6-2 6-6-4 6-9-1 6-10-1 6-10-2 6-10-3 6-10-5		ETA, DAC and municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, and MVEDA
<b>Community Character, Design, &amp; Historic Preservation Actions</b>			
45. Prepare a comprehensive survey of the region's historic structures, sites, and neighborhoods.	6-11-4		ETA, DAC and municipalities
46. Revisit and prioritize the implementation actions of local comprehensive plans.	6-11-1 6-11-2 6-11-3 6-11-4		ETA, DAC and municipalities

# Regional Action Plan

Table 9-1

2012 - 2016

	Associated Goal(s)	High Priority 2012-2013 [Use √]	Primary Responsible Entities
<b>Intergovernmental Actions</b>			
47. Hold more frequent meetings between the Doña Ana County Commission and local elected officials to discuss regional issues.	6-12-1 6-12-2		ETA, DAC and municipalities
48. Prepare and/or implement regional feasibility studies for water, utilities, and transportation.	6-3-1 6-5-4 6-6-2 6-6-4 6-8-2 6-12-1 6-12-2		ETA, DAC and municipalities
49. Engage in a feasibility analysis regarding the future of the Las Cruces ETZ, including its purpose, boundaries, and compatibility and streamlining of its plans and regulations.	6-12-1 6-12-2		ETA, ETZ, DAC, CLC, Mesilla, and LCMPO



# Chapter 10, Acronyms & Glossary of Terms

## 10.1 Acronyms

**BBER:** Bureau of Business and Economic Research

**BLM:** Bureau of Land Management

**BLS:** Bureau of Labor Statistics

**BNSF:** Burlington Northern Santa Fe

**BOR:** Bureau of Reclamation

**CLC:** City of Las Cruces

**CRRMA:** Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority

**CRRUA:** Camino Real Regional Utility Authority

**CSWCD:** Caballo Soil & Water Conservation District

**DAC:** Doña Ana County

**DACC:** Doña Ana Community College

**DAMDWCA:** Doña Ana Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association

**DASWCD:** Doña Ana Soil & Water Conservation District

**EBID:** Elephant Butte Irrigation District

**ENMU:** Eastern New Mexico University

**EPMPO:** El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization

**EPA:** Environmental Protection Agency

**EPCC:** El Paso Community College

**ETA:** Extra-Territorial Zoning Authority

**ETZ:** Extra-Territorial Zoning

**FEMA:** Federal Emergency Management Agency

**FHA:** Federal Highway Administration

**HUD:** U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

**LEPC:** Local Emergency Planning Committee of Doña Ana County

**LCMPO:** Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization

**LRGPWWA:** Lower Rio Grande Public Water Works Authority

**LRGWUO:** Lower Rio Grande Water Users Organization

**MPO:** Metropolitan Planning Organization

**MTP:** Metropolitan Transportation Plan by MPO

**MVEDA:** Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance

**NASA:** National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**NMDOT:** New Mexico Department of Transportation

**NMED:** New Mexico Environment  
Department

**NMHU:** New Mexico Highlands University

**NMMI:** New Mexico Military Institute

**NMSLO:** New Mexico State Land Office

**NMSU:** New Mexico State University

**NMT:** New Mexico Institute of Mining and  
Technology

**OSE:** Office of the State Engineer for New  
Mexico

**PdNWC:** Paso del Norte Watershed Council

**SCCOG:** South Central Council of  
Governments

**SCRPO:** South Central Rural Planning  
Organization

**SCSWA:** South Central Solid Waste Authority

**SWOT:** Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities  
& Threats

**TAMU:** Texas A&M University Agri-Life  
Research Center

**TxDOT:** Texas Department of Transportation

**USGS:** United States Geologic Survey

**USIBWC:** United States Section of the  
International Boundary and Water  
Commission

**UNM:** University of New Mexico

**USDA:** U.S. Department of Agriculture

**UTEP:** University of Texas, El Paso

**WNMU:** Western New Mexico University

**WQCC:** Water Quality Control Commission

**WSMR:** White Sands Missile Range

# Chapter 10, Acronyms & Glossary of Terms

## 10.2 Glossary

**Actions:** Specific ways, procedures, programs, or techniques to accomplish goals or strategies telling the how, who, when, how much it may cost, or what progress is made to date.

**Affordable Housing:** Residential housing primarily for persons or households of low- or moderate-income consistent with minimum rent and/or income limitations. These limitations may vary based on agency requirements and guidelines.

**Colonia:** Refer to Chapter 7, “Types of Communities”.

**Complete Streets:** Planning, designing, constructing, operating, and maintaining transportation systems that promote safe and convenient multi-modal travel options for people of all ages and abilities.

**Comprehensive Plan:** A long-range plan adopted as a policy guide related to decisions about the physical development of municipality, county, or jurisdiction in accordance with New Mexico Statutes and local ordinances.

**Doctrine of Prior Appropriation:** This is the concept that allows the first users in time of water the right to use the water against subsequent junior users during periods of drought.

**Economic Gardening:** Refer to Chapter 8, “Regional Growth Strategies”.

**Green Infrastructure:** Refers to stormwater management techniques that conserve water. It focuses on control techniques that slow, capture, treat, infiltrate and/or store runoff at its source. It can be applied at the site (e.g., vegetated roofs, porous pavement, and cisterns), neighborhood (e.g., narrow street widths, vegetated retention areas, porous pavement, and street trees), or regional scale (e.g., management of tree populations in urban settings and open space preservation).

**Goals:** General statements of ideal future conditions that include values and cannot be measured.

**Intelligent Transportation Technology:** Refers to incorporating information and communication technology with transportation infrastructure as a means to improve safety, reliability, efficiency, and other benefits.

**Low-Impact Development:** Refers to stormwater management techniques that conserve water. It focuses on techniques during development and construction (e.g., minimizing land disturbance, incorporating and preserving natural features, decentralizing stormwater management and treating it at the source through green infrastructure and other techniques, reducing impervious surfaces, and mimicking pre-development hydrology).

**Metropolitan Planning Organization:** This is a federally-mandated entity required for urban areas over 50,000 people and federally-funded transportation policy-making organizations made up of representatives from local government and governmental transportation authorities.

**Regional Planning:** Regional planning is planning for a geographic area that extends beyond defined boundaries and shares common social, economic, political, cultural, natural resources, land use, and/or transportation characteristics. One of the main purposes of regional planning is to identify facilities and resources that affect more than one jurisdiction.

**Smart Growth:** Refer to Chapter 4, "Concepts".

**Strategies:** Mix of policies and objectives that identify preferred ways to carry out goals or include measurable ways to meet goals.

**Sustainability:** Refer to Chapter 4, "Concepts".

**Vision Statement:** An overarching, inspirational image of the future for Doña Ana County and its communities.

# Chapter 11, Bibliography

1. American Planning Association. Policy Guide on Sustainability. Chicago, IL: 2000.
2. American Planning Association. Policy Guide on Smart Growth. Chicago, IL: 2002.
3. American Planning Association. The Jobs/Housing Balance. Growing Smart Legislative Guidebook. American Planning Association, Chicago, IL: 2002.
4. Angelou Economics. Cultivating Santa Fe's Future Economy. Santa Fe, NM: 2003.
5. Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) at the University of New Mexico, Real New Mexico Gross Domestic Product by Industry, 2005-2009.
6. Cabrera Victor E. and Robert Hagevoort. Importance of the New Mexico Dairy Industry. Las Cruces, NM: New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service Circular 613, May 2007.
7. City of Las Cruces. City of Las Cruces Comprehensive Plan 1999. Las Cruces, NM: City of Las Cruces, 1999.
8. City of Las Cruces. City of Las Cruces Affordable Housing Strategies Plan. Las Cruces, NM: City of Las Cruces, 2009.
9. City of Las Cruces. Strategic Plan Public Report 2010. Las Cruces, NM: City of Las Cruces, 2010.
10. City of Las Cruces. City of Las Cruces 40-Year Water Development Plan, John Shoemaker & Associates, November 2008.
11. Consensus Planning and Molzen-Corbin and Associates. Town of Mesilla 2004 Comprehensive Plan. Mesilla, NM: Town of Mesilla, 2004.
12. Daniel B. Stephens & Associates, Inc. Southwest New Mexico Regional Water Plan. Deming, NM: Southwest New Mexico Regional Water Plan Steering Committee City of Deming, NM, Fiscal Agent, May 2005.
13. DeVol, Bedroussian, Klowden and Hynet, Milken, Best-Performing Cities 2009 Where America's Jobs Are Created and Sustained, Institute and Greenstreet Real Estate Partners, 2009, p.44
14. Doña Ana County, City of Las Cruces Office of Emergency Management (DAC/CLC OEM) with the City of Las Cruces, Town of Mesilla, City of Sunland Park, and the Village of Hatch officials, and the Local Emergency Planning Committee. All-Hazard Emergency Operations Plan. Las Cruces, NM: Doña Ana County et al, 2005.
15. Doña Ana County. 1994 Doña Ana County Comprehensive Plan. Doña Ana County, NM: Doña Ana County, 1994.
16. Don E. Albrecht. "The State of New Mexico." In Population Brief: Trends in the Western U.S. Retrieved March 16, 2010 from [www.wrdc.usu.edu/files/uploads/Population/NewMexico\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.wrdc.usu.edu/files/uploads/Population/NewMexico_WEB.pdf)

17. Edmiston, K. (2007). The Role of Small and Large Businesses in Economic Development. Economic Review, Second Quarter. Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.
18. Extra-Territorial Zoning Authority (ETA) of the City of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County. 2000-2020 Comprehensive Plan for the Las Cruces Extra-Territorial Zone. Las Cruces, NM: ETA, 2000.
19. Gibbons, C. (2011). Economic Gardening. Business/Industry Affairs. City of Littleton, Colorado. Downloaded on March 18, 2011 from [www.littletongov.org/bia/economicgardening/default.asp](http://www.littletongov.org/bia/economicgardening/default.asp)
20. King, J. Phillip. Historical Water Management in the Lower Rio Grande. Lower Rio Grande Water Users Organization. Presentation. 19 August 2005.
21. Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization. Transport 2040. Las Cruces, NM: Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization, 2010.
22. Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization. 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Rec November 23, 2009.
23. Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization. Committee Bylaws and Operating Procedures. Las Cruces, NM: Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization, 2010.
24. Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization, New Mexico Department of Transportation, WilburSmith Associates, and Southwest Planning & Marketing. Las Cruces MPO Location & Structure Study. Las Cruces, NM: Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization, New Mexico Department of Transportation, the City of Las Cruces, Doña Ana County, the Town of Mesilla and the El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization, 2009.
25. Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization. Public Participation Plan. Las Cruces, NM: Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization, 2010.
26. Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization. Unified Planning Work Program. Las Cruces, NM: Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization, 2010.
27. Livingston Associates, P.C. and John Shomaker and Associates, Inc. Tularosa Basin and Salt Basin Regional Water Plan 2000-2040. Carrizozo, NM: South Central Mountain RC&D Council, Inc, May 2002.
28. Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance (MVEDA). Regional Profile Las Cruces, NM MSA, 3rd Quarter 2009. Las Cruces, NM: MVEDA, 2009.
29. Moule & Polyzoides Architects and Urbanists. Downtown District, McNutt Corridor, and Border Crossing Master Plan. Pasadena, CA: City of Sunland Park, 2007.

# Chapter 11, Bibliography

30. New Mexico Border Authority website [www.nmborder.com](http://www.nmborder.com)
31. New Mexico Environment Department. Exceptional Event Demonstration for Particulate Matter Exceedances in New Mexico January 2008 to December 2008. Las Cruces, NM: New Mexico Environment Department Air Quality Bureau, 2008.
32. New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs. Preserving the Enchantment: A Plan for New Mexico, 2007-2011. Santa Fe, NM: New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, 2007.
33. New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for New Mexico. Santa Fe, NM: New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, 2005.
34. New Mexico Environmental Law Center. Issues – Water in New Mexico. Retrieved March 16, 2010 from [www.nmenvirolaw.org/index.php/site/issues-water](http://www.nmenvirolaw.org/index.php/site/issues-water).
35. New Mexico Historic Preservation Commission. New Mexico's Rich Cultural Heritage. Santa Fe, NM: New Mexico Historic Preservation Commission, December 2007.
36. New Mexico Department of Transportation. Statewide Transportation Improvement Program FY2010 – FY 2013 Amendment 0. Albuquerque, NM: New Mexico Department of Transportation, 2009.
37. New Mexico Office of the State Engineer/Interstate Stream Commission. The Impact of Climate Change on New Mexico's Water Supply and Ability to Manage Water Resources. New Mexico OSE. July 2006.
38. New Mexico State University and University of Arizona. Colonias in Texas, New Mexico and Arizona: Economic and Business Development Strategies. Las Cruces, NM: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2004.
39. Perspectiva. City of Sunland Park, NM Master Plan. El Paso, TX: City of Sunland Park, 2004.
40. Peter j. smith & company, inc. Appendix (Vision 2040). Buffalo, NY: City of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County, 2010.
41. Peter j. smith & company, inc. Inventory (Vision 2040). Buffalo, NY: City of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County, 2010.
42. Peter j. smith & company, inc. Vision 2040 Regional Planning Project (Draft). Buffalo, NY: City of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County, 2010.
43. Population Health Institute, University of Wisconsin, County Health Rankings: 2010 New Mexico, Retrieved March 16, 2010 from [www.countyhealthrankings.org/new-mexico](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/new-mexico).

44. Research & Polling, Inc and Arrowhead Research Center of NMSU. Doña Ana/Las Cruces Attitude Questionnaire (Vision 2040 Phone Survey). Albuquerque, NM: City of Las Cruces, October 2008.
45. Roemer, Gary of Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Conservation Ecology NMSU. Various information on climate change, including Climate Change 2007 Synthesis Report by Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Rec. August 12, 2010.
46. Sites Southwest. Village of Hatch 2003 Comprehensive Plan. Hatch, NM: Village of Hatch, 2003.
47. Sites Southwest. Draft Master Plan for the Community of Anthony New Mexico. Anthony, NM: Anthony Water and Sanitation District, 2010.
48. Southwest Energy Efficiency Project, ETC Group, LLC, American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy. New Mexico Energy Efficiency Strategy: Policy Options. November 2008.
49. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. "What is Smart Growth?" EPA 231-F-01-001A. April 2001.
50. South Central Council of Governments. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2010. Elephant Butte, NM: South Central Council of Governments, 2010.
51. Terracon Consultants, Inc, Zia Engineering & Environmental Consultants, Inc, Livingston Associates P.C., John Shomaker & Associates, Inc, and Sites Southwest, LLC. New Mexico Lower Grande Regional Water Plan. Las Cruces, NM: Lower Rio Grande Water Users Association et al, 2004.
52. Train, A. (2010). A Plan for Holistic Economic Development in Doña Ana County, New Mexico. NMSU. Presentation to at City Council Work Session (December). Las Cruces, New Mexico.
53. USDA Census of Agriculture, 2007 Census of Agriculture County Profiles, released February 4, 2009 and updated in December 2009.
54. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Agricultural Statistics Service ([www.quickstats.nass.usda.gov](http://www.quickstats.nass.usda.gov)) and New Mexico Department of Agriculture ([www.nmdaweb.nmsu.edu/](http://www.nmdaweb.nmsu.edu/)).
55. World Commission on Environment and Development. Our Common Future." Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.