

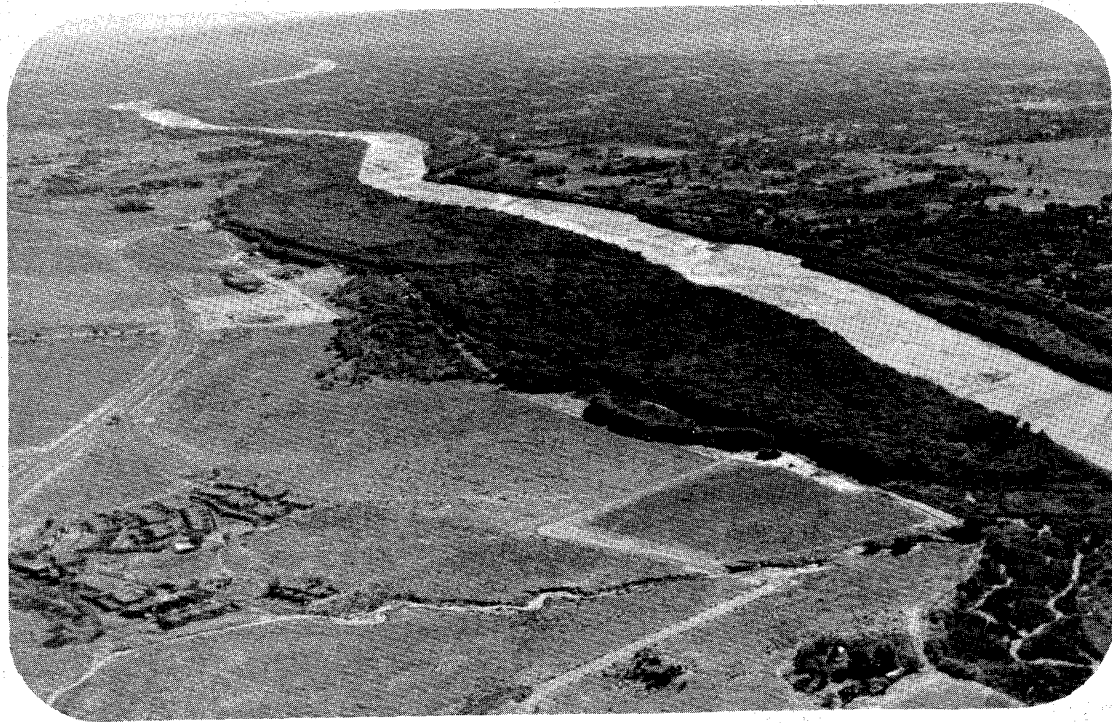
ISSUE 2

environmental concerns and related improvements

Public officials have a responsibility to preserve and protect the unique land features in the Northwest Mesa area, such as the volcanoes, the escarpment, the arroyos and the river valley. These areas have important scenic, recreational, environmental and cultural values to the community as a whole.

Policies in this plan address major environmental concerns such as preservation of the River Bosque and Oxbow Marsh areas, the floodplain, and the protection of significant archeological sites on the Northwest Mesa.

Other environmental considerations concern related improvements such as grading, drainage, sewer and water services, and power distribution lines.



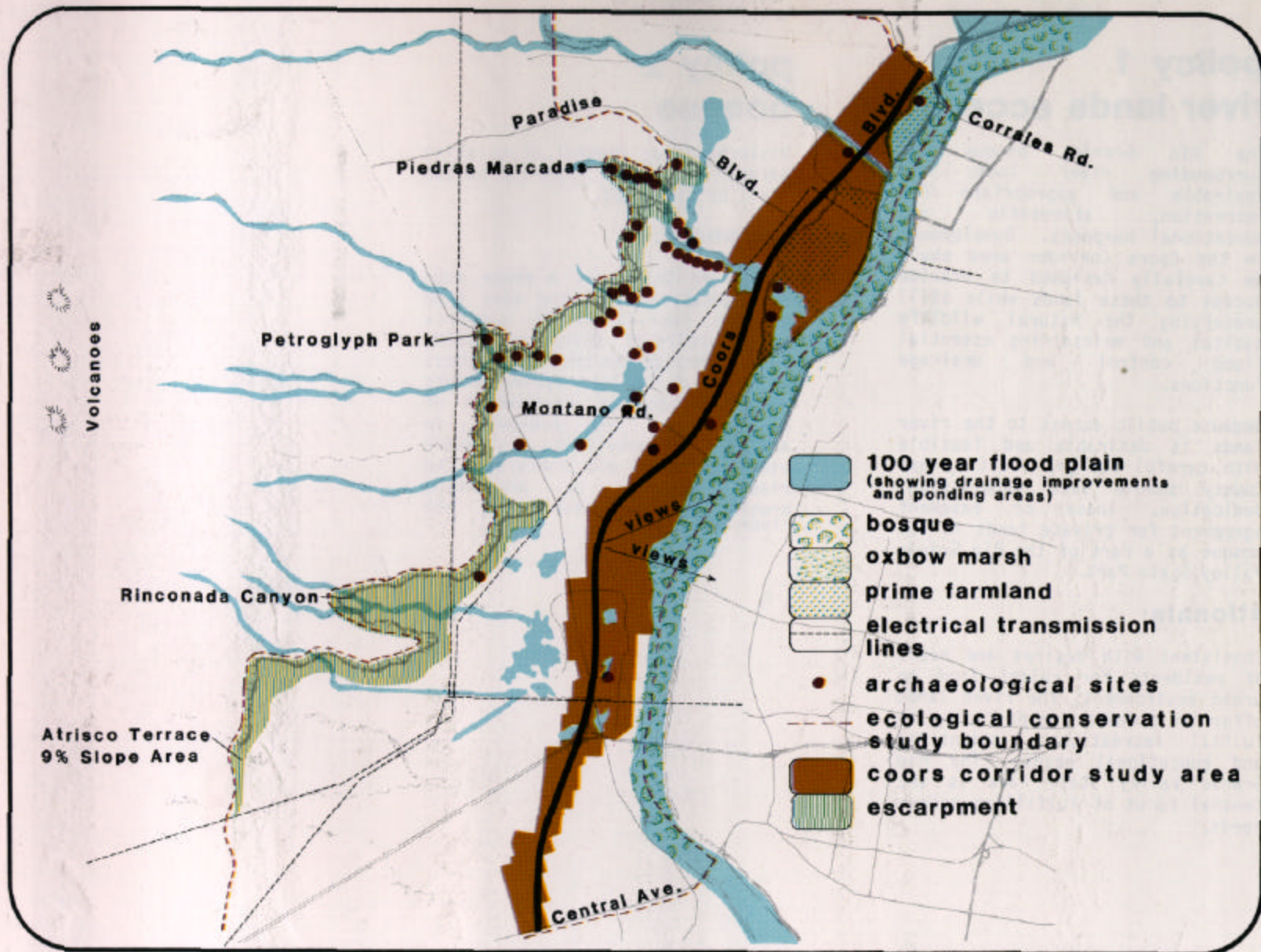


figure 21 environmental concerns

policy 1 river lands access

The Rio Grande, bosque and surrounding river lands are desirable and appropriate for recreation, scientific and educational purposes. Development in the Coors Corridor area shall be carefully designed to provide access to these lands while still preserving the natural wildlife habitat and maintaining essential flood control and drainage functions.

Because public access to the river lands is desirable and feasible with careful design, the City and County should seek acquisition, dedication, lease or easement agreement for private lands in the bosque as a part of the Rio Grande Valley State Park.

rationale:

Consistent with desires and needs of residents for relief from an urban environment, the river lands offer an excellent opportunity to fulfill recreational, scientific and educational needs. The Rio Grande Valley State Park is the central focus of fulfilling access needs.

policy 2 bosque

Disturbance or removal of existing natural vegetation from the bosque shall be minimized.

rationale:

The River Bosque is a dense edge of vegetation along the east side of the corridor which supports many species of plants and wildlife. Through the chemical process in their daily life cycle, plants contribute to the improvement of air quality. The greenbelt, in addition to providing a pleasant view, protects and conserves the river floodway by preventing erosion and by stabilizing the river bank.

policy 3

oxbow marsh

The Oxbow Marsh and the bluff which overlooks it shall be protected and preserved through designation of this area as a wildlife refuge with limited access for scientific and educational purposes. A minimum 100-foot-wide setback along the top of the bluff shall be obtained through purchase, public easement or open space dedication, or through transfer of development rights. Alternative outfalls for development runoff shall be developed to prohibit flows directly into the Oxbow area. Alternative outfall concepts should be coordinated with the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, the Parks and Recreation Department and the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area Flood Control Authority.

rationale:

The Oxbow Marsh is located along the Rio Grande immediately below the bluff which borders the University of Albuquerque on the east. This 37-acre wetland area provides the only marshland/aquatic habitat in the urban area. It is a unique feature of the bosque and Rio Grande floodplain whose fragile environment must be protected.



policy 4 floodplain

All development in the corridor area shall comply with all adopted drainage policies, including restrictions on development in the 100-year-floodplain. Cluster development on land above the flood level shall be encouraged and the floodplain shall be utilized as open space area.

rationale:

Development in the floodplain is not only dangerous to people and dwellings located there, but contributes to long-term, public cost incurred through damage and disaster.





policy 5 farmland

Prime agricultural farmland which lies between the Corrales Main Canal and the Corrales Drain shall be preserved. Cluster development on nonagricultural land shall be encouraged and prime agricultural land shall be utilized as open space area.

Rationale:

The Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan recommends protection of high-quality, agricultural lands so they are not used for residential, commercial, or industrial sites at the expense of the farm potential of those lands.



policy 6

archeological sites

Any person planning a development within an identified archeological site shall obtain clearance and guidance from the State Historic Preservation Office, Santa Fe, New Mexico before actual development begins.

rationale:

Such protective measures will allow time for scientific investigation before grading and construction disturb unspoiled sites and artifacts. Archeological sites are ideal open space sites, providing both public education and recreational value.

policy 7 grading

Changes to natural topography shall be kept to a minimum. In general, grading shall be minimized. If grading is necessary, contour grading shall be encouraged to preserve natural features and vegetation. On slopes of ten percent or greater, no grading shall take place until a specific development plan has been approved for construction. The development plan shall retain the sense of the natural features and vegetation. Reconstruction and revegetation to a natural setting shall be encouraged.

rationale:

Grading may disturb plant roots, upset existing drainage patterns, and contribute to erosion, especially on steep slopes. On slopes of ten percent or greater, development is difficult and required services are costly.



policy 8 storm drainage

Requirements for storm drainage shall be in accordance with Article 7-9 R. O. 1974.

The topography and soil conditions in the Coors Corridor are generally suitable for development, except for areas in the floodplain and on slopes of ten percent or greater. Discharge requirements per adopted drainage policies for development along Coors will ensure safe driving conditions along the boulevard.

policy 9 assessment

Benefitting properties in the Coors Corridor area shall be assessed to fund public infrastructure improvements in accordance with City and County policies and with State Statutes.

rationale:

Assessing owners of benefitting properties for improvements has proven to be an appropriate and fair funding method.

policy 10 public services

Extension and provision of public sewer and water services in the Coors Corridor area shall be based on the capability to provide adequate service and to encourage development in accordance with approved plans and policies. Assessment or other means to share extension and service costs shall be based on a fair and equitable procedure.

rationale:

Public sewer and water services are essential for a developing area such as the Coors Corridor. Planned extensions and connections for services should be coordinated with appropriate land use planning and capital improvement funding.

policy 11 distribution lines

The City and County shall work with the utility companies to encourage and support recommendations to place existing power distribution lines and existing telephone lines underground, as they need to be replaced. New power and telephone distribution lines shall be installed under-

ground in accordance with existing regulations.

rationale:

Undergrounding of utility lines reduces visual clutter, lessens the frequency of power outages, and contributes to public safety.

