

WEST SIDE STRATEGIC PLAN



SECTION A BACKGROUND

1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Intent of Plan

The purpose and intent of the West Side Strategic Plan is to provide a framework of strategic policies within which to manage future growth and development on Albuquerque's West Side. This framework responds to the regional issues affecting the West Side within the larger metropolitan area. The strategic framework has been, and will continue to be, developed within a public process intentionally designed to be as broadly inclusive as possible. The strategies of this Plan recognize that the West Side is a significant portion of the future expansion area for a young and growing population in Albuquerque. Growth in the area will continue, and it must be necessary to manage change and implement the community's vision for its County to embark upon a pathway of systematically planning and implementing growth policies which will affect all future development on the West Side.

The challenge of this Plan has always been how to develop strategies that achieve a sensible balance between a desired land use pattern and the preservation of the sensitive environmental characteristics of the area. The intent of this Plan is to achieve this balance.

The West Side Strategic Plan area is bounded by the Sandoval County line and the north, the Rio Puerco Escarpment on the east, a line south of Gun Club Road (the Atrisco Grant line) on the south, and the Rio Grande on the east for areas north of Central, and Coors Boulevard on the east for areas south of Central. It encompasses over 96,000 acres of land, or approximately 150 square miles (roughly equivalent to developed Albuquerque today). It includes all of the Northwest Mesa and most of the Southwest Mesa, but excludes the North and South Valleys (Plan boundary map).

The policies in this Plan are intended to guide growth and development on the West Side. In many instances, more detailed planning efforts are required as follow-up steps in order to fully implement the policies of this Plan. The policies contained herein shall be used to guide decision-makers during the interim period until the more detailed work is completed, and afterward as a strategic framework for the detailed work. These policies shall be interpreted to provide the greatest degree of protection of the community assets and values as expressed in this Plan.

This Plan provides pro-active tools to manage change and implement the community's vision.

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Approval of this Plan does not negate or alter zoning, subdivision, or site development approvals already granted prior to this Plan's adoption or under the auspices of other plans in existence at the time of development approval. All new requests for West Side development approvals will be evaluated against this Plan's policies after this Plan has been approved by the governing bodies of Bernalillo County and the City of Albuquerque. Until that time, new development will be evaluated on the basis of existing approved plans.

The West Side Strategic Plan is derived from the people for the people. It has risen upwards from a grass-roots effort of local citizens planning their future, rather than from an administratively dictated viewpoint. As such, it is inclusive of the diverse needs and desires of the many people involved in the process, and includes the following:

- The West Side is a place where people can work, play, live and learn together, regardless of their ages, cultures, economic status, inclinations, or abilities.
- The West Side is a place that will always stir the soul through its vast beauty, its views, its history, and its landforms. There is only one place between escarpments, volcanoes, and the river, with such sweeping skies and mountain vistas, and vast open spaces - the West Side includes many of Albuquerque's major natural treasures, as well as one of the nation's cultural and natural treasures.
- The West Side is simply home a safe haven, a place to share, a place to join together, the heart and soul of Albuquerque for the thousands who live west of the river. The West Side Strategic Plan intends to protect these values for future generations.
- The West Side will develop in concentrated centers rather than in strip developments. Open spaces will provide scenic buffers between new planned communities, and major landforms (arroyos, rivers, and escarpments) provide the framework for existing communities.

Planning Process

The West Side Strategic Plan was initiated by City Council Bill R-121-1992, cosponsored by Councilor Alan Armijo. The plan was prepared during 1994, and reviewed by both the City and County Planning Commission in 1995. It responds to significant amounts of previous work on the West Side, and to an acknowledged need for a framework from which to evaluate and guide new

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growth. It has been one of the most publicly open planning processes of any City or County plan to date, with input being provided by every viewpoint and from people of all ages and cultures throughout the process. While it will not provide everything to everybody, it will provide something for everyone, as it has been derived from a broad consensus-based process.

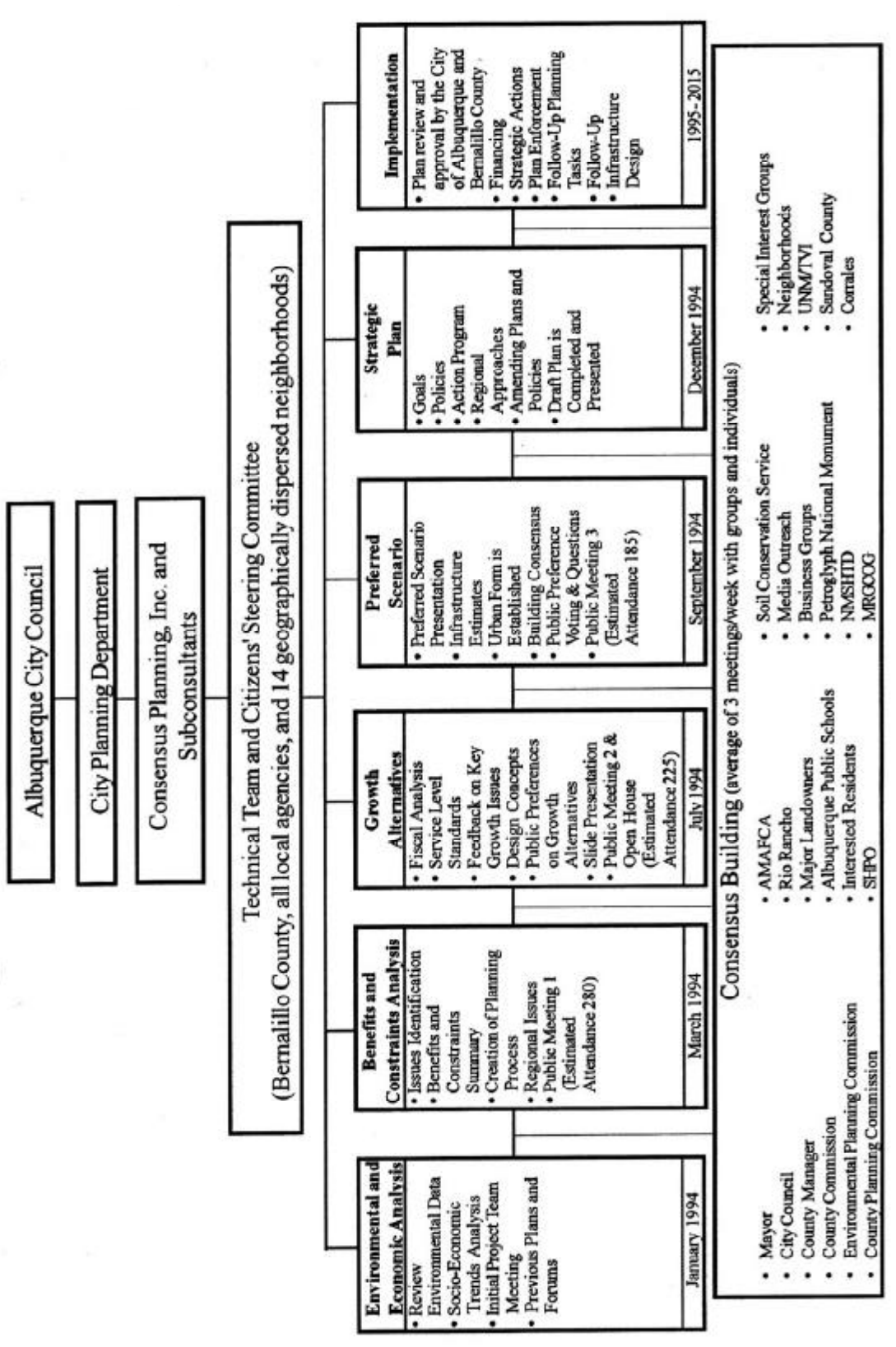
Hundreds of meetings have been held on West Side planning issues, hundreds of square miles have been explored, and hundreds of papers have been read. This Plan is the synthesis of the best of the ideas generated during this process. It has been an evolutionary process, and future changes should be expected. This Plan provides the strategic framework for a starting point, a way to start looking at West Side growth and development in more holistic ways.



Vast amounts of background information from this planning process exist. Alternative scenarios have been prepared, citizens have "voted" on preferred Plan options, lists of key issues have been generated by the public, and both fiscal and physical impacts of development have been examined. There were two committees integral to the review process of this Plan: the Technical Team, made up of local agency staff members; and the Citizens educators, and three area Indian Pueblo residents. These two committees met throughout 1994 to review the Strategic Plan at key points.

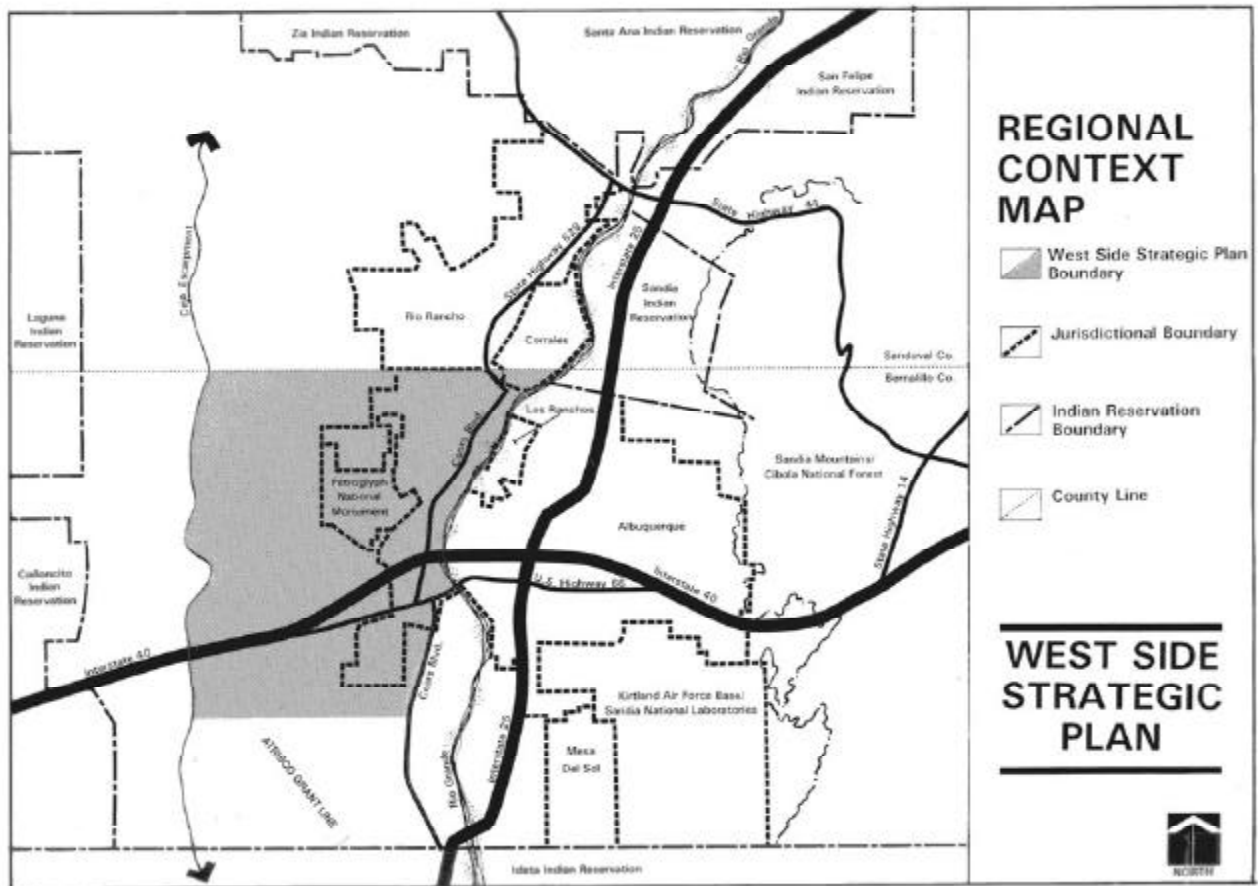
The chart on the following page illustrates the key steps in this planning process. What it cannot show, however, are the many faces and voices of Albuquerque citizens who have participated in this process, demonstrating time and again how much they care about the future of the West Side. This Plan is for them.

Planning Process for the West Side Strategic Plan



2. PLAN FRAMEWORK AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

Regional Context and Agency Framework



Regional Context Map

The West Side Strategic Plan has been created within a regional context. The West Side is an integral part of the metropolitan region, and regional activities greatly affect the West Side. While the adopted Plan policies apply only to the City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County, the impacts of decisions made and implemented by other agencies and jurisdictions greatly influence the quality of life on the West Side. This is especially true of the State of New Mexico, the City of Rio Rancho, the Petroglyph National Monument, Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority (AMAFCA), Albuquerque Public Schools (APS), and the Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments (MRGCOG). Other agencies also have impacts on the area, including the University of New Mexico (UNM), Albuquerque Technical-Vocational Institute

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The West Side is an integral part of the metropolitan fabric.

The West Side can provide leadership to the community as a whole in learning new ways to work together for the common good.

(T-VI), Sandoval County, Village of Los Ranchos, Village of Corrales, adjacent Indian Pueblos, stakeholders, and others.

It is not intended for the West Side to be a bedroom community, nor an isolated stand-alone series of neighborhoods. It is an integral part of the metropolitan fabric, and as it passes from the initial mostly-residential phases of development into the later mixed-use phase of its growth, its relevance to the entire Albuquerque area will become increasingly apparent. The West Side is at this cusp of change today, as new businesses, a new regional mall, and many more services become established. The Strategic Plan recognizes the regional impacts on the West Side from a regional perspective, recognizes the regional impacts on the West Side, and recognizes that the West Side represents Albuquerque's future. It holds space for a growing community, recreational and environmental features unique to the area, and a future population, employment, and tax base to keep the local economy strong.

Many of the strategies introduced in the Plan would serve the entire metropolitan area well. The West Side can provide leadership to the community as a whole in learning new ways to work together for the common good. The Albuquerque area is entering a new era where cooperation among agencies and jurisdictions is critical to keep the community functioning and protect the environment and quality of life. Anything less than everyone's collective problem-solving skills will result in mediocre solutions. The metropolitan area cannot afford to fall apart into self-protecting special interests. It must be knitted together for economic, cultural, and environmental survival. The West Side is a microcosm of the greater community, and an indicator of what the future is to be. New interagency cooperation and regional approaches to problem-solving on the West Side will set the stage for the entire metropolitan area. It must happen for the West Side's future, and the West Side's future is Albuquerque's future.

History of Albuquerque's West Side

On the vast expanse of the windswept west mesa archaeologists have found remains of campfires and stone chips from tool making left by ancient hunters. Over 10,000 years ago, near the shallow lakes which once dotted the grassy mesa west of the volcanoes, they pursued the animals which roamed the area. As the climate grew warmer the lakes disappeared and so did the large animals. Other peoples came into the area, and over thousands of years later they learned to tend food crops, reducing their dependence on wild plants and small game; thousand-year old pithouses and primitive farming sites have been found along the volcanic escarpment and farther west. By 1300 the descendants of builders of pithouses and small rock dams were building large adobe villages near their fields along the flood plain of the Rio Grande.

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In the 1500s and 1600s the Pueblo dwellers confronted the Spanish employers and colonists coming into the area from Mexico. Eventually they yielded much of the agricultural land to the new settlers. For over 200 years the west mesa was predominantly grazing country for the cattle and sheep belonging to residents of two early 18th century farming villages, Atrisco to the south and Alameda in the north. One of the many trails comprising the Camino Rael traversed the hills on the West Side of the river. To reach the Villa of Albuquerque on the east side of the Rio Grande, Atrisquenos usually crossed the river bed on foot since the Rio Grande was "nowhere navigable and everywhere fordable," according to one 19th century writer. After New Mexico became territory of the United States in 1846, several attempts were made to establish a road across the mesa to the west. None was successful, defeated by the steep slopes and sandy soil. Even the railroad, which reached Albuquerque in 1880, could not deal with the physical barrier presented by the western sand hills and routed their tracks south to Los Lunas, where they turned west through a break in the sand hills.

Community Activity Centers provide focus, identity, and a sense of character.

The railroad created a new town east of the old Villa de Alburquerque and the new town grew, outstripping Santa Fe by 1910. The growing use of the automobile gave Albuquerque residents more mobility, but for the most part the City grew east and north. At the end of the 19th century, the first bridge across the river at Barelvas connected the communities of Albuquerque and Atrisco. Like an earlier bridge near Old Town bridge, the Barelvas bridge was soon rebuilt; it was a crucial link in the State's first north-south highway. In the 1920s a few newcomers bought and ranched large holdings on the mesa north of Atrisco but it was not until bridges were built across the Rio Grande at Central in 1931 and across the Rio Puerco in 1933 that a usable highway led west from the City and people began to move west in significant numbers.

After World War II the pace of development increased. The College of St. Joseph was built on the bluffs above the river in 1951; Coors Boulevard was extended south of Central in the 1940s and north of St. Joseph's after 1957. The construction of Interstate 40 in the 1960s accelerated housing construction. Large residential communities were platted and lots sold: Paradise Hills (1962), Rio Rancho (1963), Snow Vista-Westgate (1963), College Heights (later Taylor Ranch) (1964), Volcano Cliffs (1964), La Luz (1968). Limited development occurred on the old Atrisco Grant lands. The grant had been patented in 1905 and grant officials had begun leasing grant land in the 1920s (the first Westland Development Company became the owner of the old Atrisco Grant and began more systematic development to their lands. In the 1970s concerned citizens began the drive to save the volcano area from development which eventually led to establishment of Petroglyph National Monument.

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Growth Issues

West Side growth is already significant and is increasing. A 1994 *Socio-Economic Trends Analysis* was prepared for the Plan area a part of the strategic planning effort. Readers interested in more detail about West Side socio-economic trends are referred to that document, which is available from the City of Albuquerque Planning Department.

Albuquerque can continue to expect growth as a community.

Albuquerque is surrounded on three sides by Indian lands and National Forest. The West Side will continue to provide a majority of Albuquerque's future expansion area. Other growth areas for Albuquerque also exist including North Albuquerque Acres, Mesa del Sol, High Desert, and infill to existing sectors of the City. Additional growth occurs in the County in the East Mountain Area, and in the North and South Valleys. Some people have expressed an interest in stopping new growth altogether during this planning process. This is unrealistic. Some demographers have estimated that seventy-three percent (73%) of Albuquerque's growth between 1980 and 1990 was a result of natural increase (births minus deaths), and a majority of the net migration to the West Side has come from other parts of Bernalillo County. Additionally, West Side residents are younger than the City as a whole (West Side median age 27.6 years vs 31.4 for the City), and there are more families with more children living on the West Side (78.73% family households on West Side vs. 64.69% in whole City, and 2.95 persons per households on West Side vs. 2.46 persons Citywide). With a young and expanding population base, Albuquerque can continue to expect growth as a community, even without net migration from other areas. However, some demographers have estimated that twenty-seven percent (27%) of the growth Citywide is from in-migration, which is still a significant number. This new population locates in many different parts of the metropolitan area, although West Side residents are slightly more likely to have recently lived in another county or state.

The intent of this Plan is to manage growth so that infrastructure and services catch up to existing development and keep up in the future.

The most effective urban growth planning policy includes regional cooperation. An unintended consequence of restricting growth in one community of a multi-jurisdictional area is to encourage sprawl on a larger regional scale.

Rather than attempt to stop growth, an attempt has been made in this Plan to manage growth, and to keep up with future growth by guiding where and how it occurs. There is broad community support for this approach as noted during the public meetings held on this issue during 1994. Techniques which will be utilized to manage growth include: imposing an urban form which requires defined areas of concentrated densities to discourage sprawl; phasing development in key areas through the timing of infrastructure; requiring particular

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types of development through performance-based development review systems and design guidelines; and requiring local governments to address annexation and concurrency (timely delivery of services) issues.

How much growth is there? A few statistics from the 1994 Socio-Economic Trends Analysis for the West Side follow:

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>
Population	38,523	62,677	24,154	63%
Housing Units	12,444	22,552	10,108	81%
Employment	5,498	10,789	5,141	90%

- Between 1980 and 1990, Albuquerque's population grew by 51,816 (or 16%). During the same 10 years, the West Side grew by 24,154 people, or 46% of the total growth in Albuquerque.

New Housing Units 1980-1993

	<u>West Side</u>	<u>Bern. Co.</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Rio Rancho</u>
Population	38,523	62,677	24,154	63%
Housing Units	12,444	22,552	10,108	81%
Employment	5,498	10,789	5,141	90%

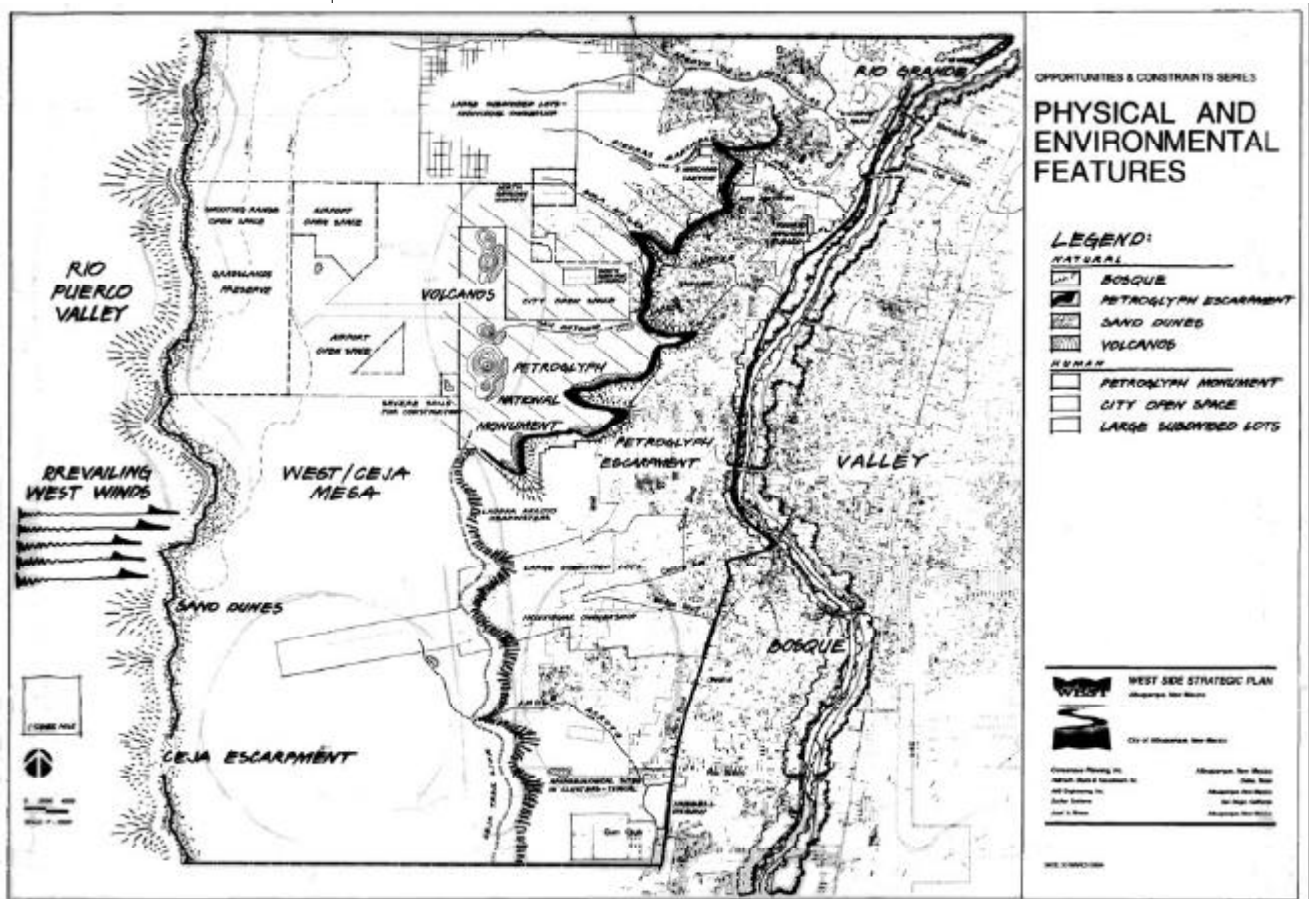
- The West Side captured 13,290 (32.5%) of the Bernalillo County building permits between 1980 and 1993. The West Side and Rio Rancho combined received 21,283 new single-family houses during this period - 41% of all single family homes built in Bernalillo County and Rio Rancho.
- West Side building permits for new single family housing units jumped from 500 in 1991 to 1,276 in 1993, an increase of 2.5 times. The number of West Side single family housing permits increased to 1,561 in 1994. An additional 1,561 homes is equivalent to approximately 4,527 new residents in the area in one year (1994).
- West Side single family building permits represented approximately 46% of all permits within Bernalillo County in 1993. This number was 50% in 1994 and is expected to reach 60% in 1995 based on new subdivision activity.
- The West side has fewer apartments and townhouses than the City as a whole. 13% of the West Side housing units were multi-family, compared to

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It is up to the community to manage future growth and implement the Plan.

33% in Albuquerque in 1993. This percentage is expected to increase during 1995 and 1996 when planned apartments are constructed.

Managing future growth in the area is a task of community leadership. While this Plan outlines strategies or tools that can be utilized, it is really up to the community to decide how much enforcement and future implementation there should be on growth policies. *The people attending the West Side Strategic Plan public meetings have stated their preferences loud and clear. They want a Plan with real tools for change, and they want local leadership to stand by it and implement it on a daily basis.* The City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County have a unique window of opportunity to direct and manage the area's future, and the citizens want local leaders to seize this opportunity and move forward with all due speed to achieve their goals as described in this Plan.

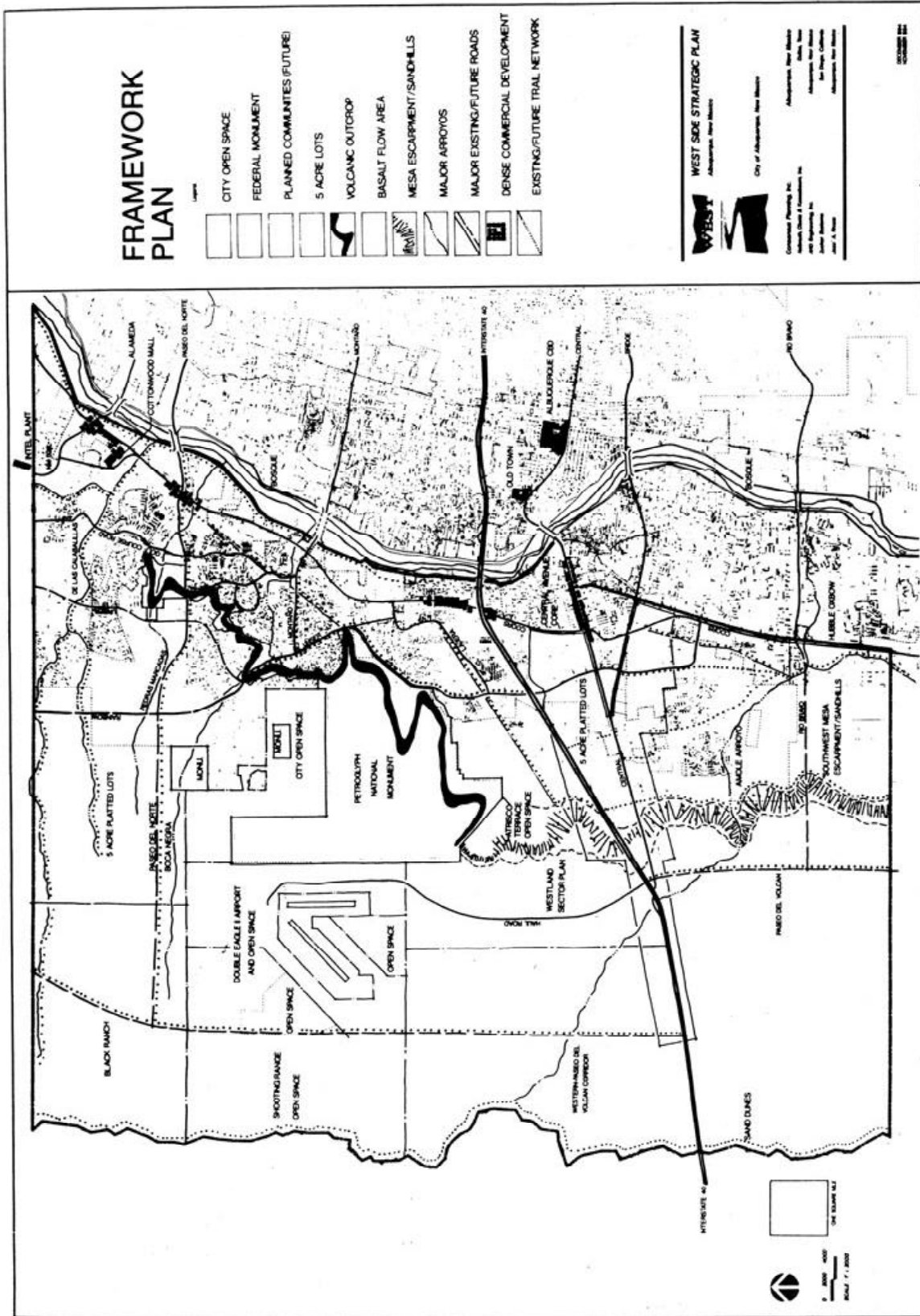


Physical and Environmental Features

Inventory Information/Resources and Topics Explored

There were 36 existing plans on the West Side in 1994. Some of them were out-of-date, many of them covered only a limited area, and policy conflicts were common. One characteristic these plans had in common, however, is that they provided a great deal of descriptive information about the West Side. There have been many studies of unique West Side features: geologic mapping of basalt outcrops, known archaeological site inventories, prevailing wind studies, soil conditions, arroyo and drainage plans, utility extension policies and plans, ethnographic studies, traffic and corridor studies, marketing surveys, and public opinion polls to name a few. Many resources exist for the serious student of West Side characteristics. The City of Albuquerque Planning and Public Works Departments, and the Bernalillo County Public Works and Building, and Zoning Departments are the repositories of much of this information.

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Framework Plan

Summaries of all of these features will not be described in detail in this Plan, which focuses more on strategy and less on description than previous plans. Key elements of those factors affecting strategic growth actions are described when applicable. The reader should be assured, however, that all available background information was reviewed for this Plan, and these data influence the Plan objectives greatly. For example, the physical features of the West Side such as the east-west trending arroyos, the north-south trending escarpments and the river edges provide a framework for the Plan. Existing development and platting patterns are another example of a framework issue affecting Plan development. The source list at the end of this Plan is a good first step for acquiring additional information on any of the technical background information utilized by the Project Team.

Plan Ranking System

The City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County utilize a three-tiered approach to plan ranking. A Rank 1 Plan, the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan covers the entire City and County. Rank 2 Plans cover large subareas of the City, such as the East Mountain Area, the West Side, or Citywide facilities such as arroyos or electric transmission lines. This Strategic Plan is a Rank 2 Plan. Rank 3 Plans cover specific neighborhoods, corridors, or sectors of the City. Most of the 36 existing plans on the West Side are Rank 3 plan.

Rank 3 plans must be consistent with Rank 2 plans, which in turn, must be consistent with Rank 1 plans. Part of the Strategic Planning process is to identify those elements from the Rank 3 plans, and other Rank 2 plans, which must be brought into conformance with this new Rank 2 plan. The process must also ensure compatibility (or amendment to create compatibility) with the Comprehensive Plan. This ranking method of plans may change in the future, but the basic premise of consistency among plans will remain. In terms of the West Side Strategic Plan, it should be acknowledged that compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan will be sought or created, and existing Rank 3 plans will be brought into conformance with this Plan, or rescinded altogether. Parallel Rank 2 plans will be amended for consistency, rescinded, or absorbed into this Plan. It also means that many of the future planning efforts that will be needed as a result of this Plan will also need to be compatible with it. Most of the future plans recommended as part of the Action Program of this Strategic Plan will be Rank 3 (or equivalent) plans.

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City Amendment and Enforcement Procedures

The public has repeatedly asked for a West Side Strategic Plan which "has teeth", is enforced, and cannot be easily ignored. To ensure that the policies of this Plan are not ignored or arbitrarily changed in a piecemeal fashion, which would be a detriment to the overall intent of the document, readers of the Plan are reminded that current City Ordinances require very specific procedures for amendment to adopted City plans. It is the responsibility of the Environmental Planning Commission, the County Commissioners to adhere to the policies contained in the West Side Strategic Plan as it is adopted unless formal amendments have been made.

The West Side Strategic Plan is a Rank Two Area Plan which is specifically included in the City's Planning Ordinance in Article 13, Sections 14-13-1-1 and 14-13-1-2. Any amendments to plans adopted by the City which are included in the Planning Ordinance must be amended only according to the procedure described in the Planning Ordinance Section 14-13-1-4, "Procedure for Plan Adoption or Amendment". This section describes the public hearing process, timing, and fees required to initiate a Plan amendment.

Additional Rank 3 Sector Plan amendment procedures are spelled out in the City's Zone Code Ordinance, Article 16, Part 4 "Administration and Enforcement" of the City's Code. This section is important to the administration and enforcement of the West Side Strategic since Rank 3 plans often contain more land use and design guideline detail that will carry out the intent behind the broader policies of Rank 2 plans. According to Article 13, Section 14-13-1-2 of the City's Planning Ordinance, lower ranking plans should be consistent with higher ranking plans, and when this is indisputably not the case, the conflicting provision of the lower ranking plan is null and void.

The West side Strategic Plan cannot be amended without adherence to these existing ordinances. The Planning Department, Environmental Planning Commission, and the City Council are the primary enforcement bodies in the City with regard to policies in adopted plans.

County Amendment and Enforcement Procedures

The County administers the same plan amendment policies as the City on all Rank One and Rank Two plans. Therefore, a public hearing, application fee, and other plan amendment policies will also apply in the County. On jointly approved Plans such as the Comprehensive Plan and Rank Two plans like the West Side Strategic Plan, amendments must be approved by both the City and

County. This would require hearing through both Planning Commissions, and if required, through both the City Council and Board of County Commissioners. The County Zoning, Building and Planning Department, the County Planning Commission, and the Board of County Commissioners are the primary enforcement bodies in the County with regard to policies in adoption plans.

City/County Staff Enforcement

In addition to formal amendment procedures and ordinance requirements for Plan enforcement, the City and County staff have day-to-day authority to monitor consistency with adopted Plan policies through implementation and review of sector development plans, site plans, subdivisions, variance requests, etc. Additionally, the West Side Strategic Plan recommends the designation of specific staff members at both the City and County to follow-up on proposed actions, and monitor and carry out existing policies of this Plan. Periodic updates of the Plan are also recommended, and can help to enforce the intent of the policies and refine the specific implementation techniques suggested.

The City Council has appropriated funds for community-based planning services in different sub-areas of Albuquerque. The enforcement and implementation of the West Side Strategic Plan will be required to be coordinated with this overall community-oriented effort, including the City's Community Identity Program.

3. PLANNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following Goals and Objectives have been completed from previous West Side planning efforts, and reaffirmed during the Strategic Plan public involvement process. The participants at public meetings have shared concerns and goals in a cooperative manner at many meetings which have set the stage for this Plan. The combined summary statements from the West Side meetings provide the following basic goals for the Plan:

Plan Goals

1. Establish specific boundaries for the Plan area which include and integrate both the Northwest Mesa and a major portion of the Southwest Mesa.
2. The Plan will be implementation oriented, completed within a definite time limit, and should build upon existing adopted plans and policies.

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3. The Plan will involve multiple agencies and jurisdictions and focus on West Side needs from a regional perspective (an opportunity to think "metro-wise").
4. Land use considerations and overall growth and development concerns should be tied to infrastructure and funding considerations for realistic implementation.
5. The Plan should recommend solutions for design and development issues, as well as cultural and environmental concerns. Ways to achieve better design should be examined and included in the Plan.
6. Protecting significant natural assets of the West Side (escarpment, bosque, open space, views, clean air and water) is a primary goal of long-range planning efforts in the area.
7. The planning effort must be broadly inclusive, sensitive to many ideas and cultures, and give the West Side a greater role in determining its own destiny and establishing its own vision of the future.
8. The Plan should develop and use a balanced, integrated, flexible, action program and planning process which targets funding and revenue sources and the agencies responsible for addressing regional problem solving.
9. The preservation, protection, responsibilities, and opportunities of the Petroglyph National Monument must be recognized as a important part of the West Side's future. The growth and development pressures on the West Side must be recognized as an important part other Petroglyph National Monument's future. Other special places on the West Side (existing neighborhoods and natural features) must also be preserved and protected.
10. The Plan should create a framework to build a community where its citizens can live, work, shop, play, and learn together while protecting the unique quality of life and natural and cultural resources for West Side residents.
11. The Plan should provide ways to knit the metropolitan region together as one community, sharing one set of natural resources, and protecting these unique areas for future generations. The metropolitan area must come together across the river, north and south, across the County lines, and

between cultures and interest groups to achieve a common good for the community. Diversity is a strength and should be recognized and incorporated into all phases of Plan implementation.

12. The Plan should provide for long-term sustainable development on the West Side.

Plan Objectives

Many of the goals and objectives of previous West Side plans and the Comprehensive Plan apply to the West Side Strategic Plan. These will not be repeated individually here. They are described in the West Side Forum Summary of March, 1993, the West Side Plan Summary of December, 1992, and in all other descriptive plans (available from the Albuquerque Planning Department). A few of the summarized objectives from many previous planning studies and public meetings are included below for additional explanation of the Plan goals listed above. These objectives are the cornerstone from which the Strategic Action Plan (see page) are derived:

1. Provide for a complete mix of land uses on the West Side, including opportunities for large-scale employment, in order to minimize the needs for cross-metro trips. Employment opportunities are encouraged on the West Side.
2. Provide the opportunity for creative and innovative solutions to housing, utility, and transportation problems. Improve upon methodologies employed elsewhere in the region in order to eliminate repetition of previous mistakes. Provide incentives for "good" development, not just deterrents for "bad" development, through design requirements specifically geared toward the West Side environment.
3. Plan for the ability to manage and preserve unique West Side resources (scenic, natural, cultural, historical, and spiritual) within the context of a growing metropolitan area.
4. Preserve a sense of community and quality of life for all residents based on wise, long-term decision-making.
5. Evaluate funding needs, infrastructure costs, development revenues, and "fair share" means of sharing community-wide benefits and constraints. Recognize that the metropolitan area is tied together economically, as well as culturally and physically.

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6. Conserve and protect natural resources, and minimize environmental impacts. Densities of development and efficient utilization of all transportation and utility corridors are a part of this objective.
7. Plan for and incorporate the educational needs of the West Side in the development process. The provision of quality education is tied to all other social and economic aspects of the community.
8. Promote job opportunities and business growth in appropriate areas of the West Side.
9. Promote accountability in the public sector to provide timely services and completion of implementation steps in order to build public trust.
10. Promote community building on the West Side, and in the metropolitan region as a whole. Celebrate successes and provide ways for creating effective communication and consensus-building. Involve citizens of all ages in determining the future of the West Side.
11. Implement an efficient, effective, multi-modal transportation system with supporting land uses (the community concept including pedestrian, bicycle, vehicle and HOV transit) to serve the West Side and connect it with the rest of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County as well as outlying areas such as Rio Rancho. This might require the establishment of a Transportation Management Organization for West Side employers, maximizing internally captured trips in mixed use areas or PUDs.

This Plan embraces the City of Albuquerque Five Year Goals adopted by the City Council in the fall of 1994, and strives to meet and exceed the expectations of the Administration and Council.

City Council Goals

I. RANK ONE GOALS

Opportunities for Families, Youth, Senior, Neighborhood Vitality

1. Enhance lives of seniors, youths, and family, foster affordable housing and maintain

Provision of High Quality Customer Service

2. Improve public safety services.
3. Equitable balance of new construction; maintenance and repair of infrastructure.

II. RANK TWO GOALS

Encourage Regional Planning Cooperation

4. Achieve sustainable development, balance development, redevelopment, redevelopment, and infill development.
5. Increase environmental protection and resource conservation.

Achieve Economic Vitality and Sustainability

6. Adopt and pursue implementation of an economic utility strategy.

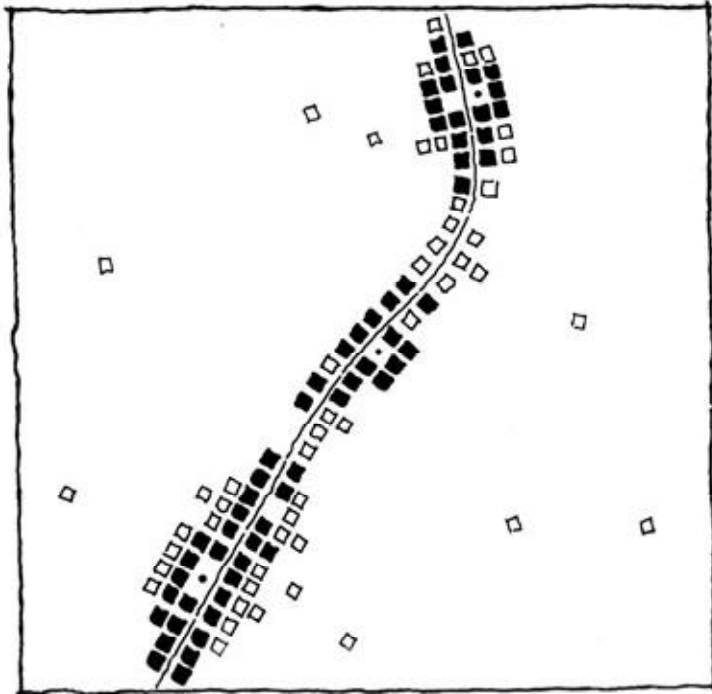
III. RANK THREE GOALS

7. Foster the expression and appreciation of Albuquerque's cultures.

4. TYPES OF URBAN FORM

There are many types of urban form that develop both intentionally and unintentionally in cities across the country. Linear towns exist along highways and rivers, highly dense compact cities (such as New York City and many European and Asian cities) form where land availability and infrastructure costs create them, and low-density sprawl cities occur over much of the United States, especially in the West and Midwest. Albuquerque is currently an automobile-oriented, low density city with several existing nodes of higher density, typical of the Southwest. The importance of the automobile may be as critical as land availability and infrastructure costs in determining form.

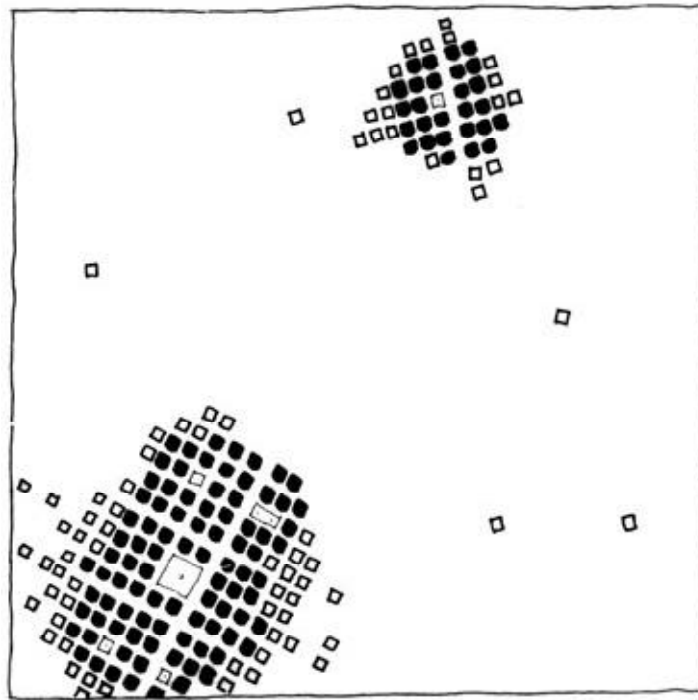
The various types of urban form were studied for applicability to the West Side and the greater Albuquerque community. A brief summary of the advantage and disadvantages is provided on the following pages.



Linear Community Form

Linear Cities

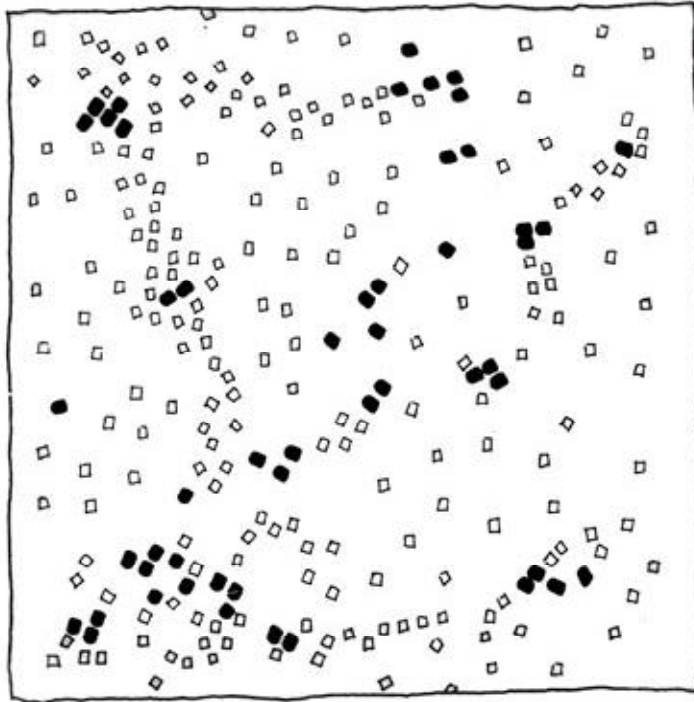
Linear cities develop along rivers and highways where development occurs in a long strip of land with limited width. Linear cities are well suited for transit, and moderately well suited for utility service efficiency, but do not respond well to landforms, broad views, and community aesthetics. They are not pedestrian friendly due to the long distance between the linear ends of the development. Strip commercial development becomes the primary form for services. It is difficult for a sense of community to develop when the ends of development are separated by great distance with little depth (width) to the neighborhoods along the way. The West Side landforms, existing neighborhoods clusters, and the public's desire for aesthetically-pleasing development outside of the strip mall format preclude linear city urban form for the area.



High Density Compact Community Form

High Density Compact Cities

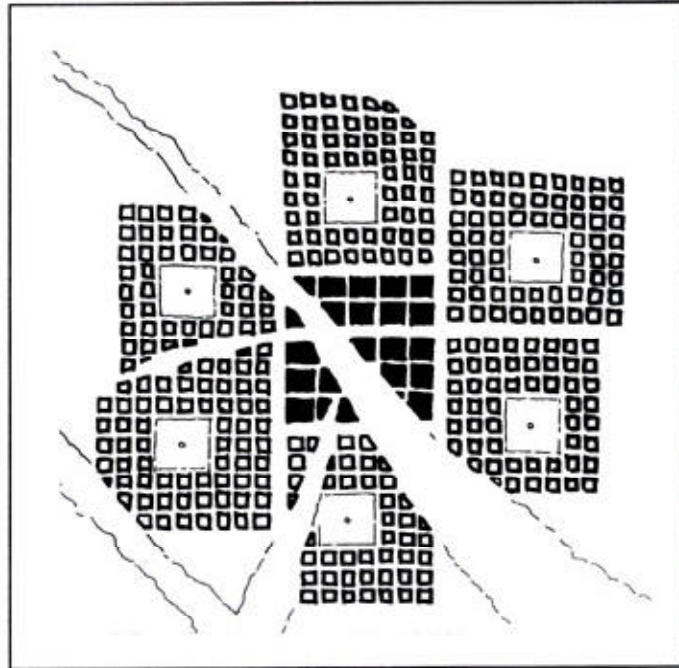
Compact cities such as Boston or San Francisco use less land per person than other forms. They are efficient for transit, utility services, and pedestrian access. Their density results in the proliferation of tall buildings with public open spaces generally restricted to small hardscape plazas and pocket parks. The high density, noise, obliteration of views, and public preferences for single family homes on private lots renders the social form of a compact city undesirable in Albuquerque. Compare this to the Nodal/Clustered Urban Form described later.



Low Density Community Form

Low Density Rural Towns

Rural agricultural areas typify the low density urban form. In these areas, the lot sizes are very large, there are no tall buildings, and vast undeveloped areas remain. This development pattern protects views and open spaces, but inhibits pedestrian/bicycle access and any form of community scale utility service due to the population today already exceeds a low density rural form, and while some rural areas are appropriate on the West Side, the inefficiencies of service delivery precludes this form for the region as a whole.



Nodal/Clustered Cities

Nodal development is common to the Southwest and typical of Albuquerque's form today. In these cities, nodes or clusters of higher density occur central to a surrounding area of lower density. This pattern repeats itself to form a city with several higher-density nodes with low density development spreading outwards from the center in a radial fashion. Both Old Town and Downtown Albuquerque typify a higher density node or nucleus of activity surrounded on the West Side, and will be reinforced by the policies of this Plan. Services (including transit) can still be delivered relatively efficiently in corridors connecting the nodes, yet the outermost areas still preserve the open spaces, views, and personal space desired by area residents. The nodal areas are designed to be pedestrian friendly.

5. COMMUNITY IDENTITY PLANNING AREA

Simultaneously to this Plan, the City of Albuquerque has undertaken a Community Identity Program to identify unique Community Planning Areas within the City, each with its own character, history, and physical attributes. Ten unique Planning Areas have been identified throughout the City: North Albuquerque, Foothills, East Gateway, Mid-Heights, Near Heights, North Valley, Central Albuquerque, South Valley, Northwest Area, And Southwest Mesa. Two of these areas, the Northwest Mesa and Southwest Mesa are included in the West Side Strategic Plan area.

The Northwest and Southwest Mesa Planning Areas are quite large at this point in time, representative of the relatively lower West Side population clusters as compared to existing East Side areas. As the West Side builds out, additional Planning Areas will be designated to amend the Community Identity Program. This Plan creates a framework for this process.

The Planning Areas will be used by City staff to assess the delivery of services and enforcement of policies by region. Interdepartmental City teams will be assigned to each Planning Area. These teams will become experts in the issues of their Area and will systematically address public inquiries, policy implementation, and service delivery tasks in that Area. The teams will work with Community Action Partnerships to understand and solve problems at the community level, as well as provide a forum for discussion and resolution of major community issues among all key interests. This community-based planning approach should significantly improve services all over the City.

The West Side Strategic Plan is consistent with the Community Identity Program. However, it includes considerably greater detail for the West Side than the Community Identity Program. The two Planning Areas from the Community Identity Program have been further subdivided into 13 communities in the West Side Strategic Plan. This is consistent with The Planned Communities Guidelines, and with the size of the West Side Strategic Plan area.

6. FUTURE URBAN GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The City of Albuquerque, at the time of the adoption of the West Side Strategic Plan, has initiated investigations of a number of issues directly related to this Plan. This work covers such topics as urban service delivery zones; a project specific Capital Improvement Program; resources to address growth-related infrastructure needs and infrastructure rehabilitation and deficiency needs in existing neighborhoods; the compatibility of development impact fees and revenues obtained

WEST SIDE STRATEGIC PLAN

through development agreements with the growth management strategy; annexation policies; and policies, projects and rates to insure a sustainable supply of water. The issue arose as to whether the adoption of the West Side Strategic Plan should be delayed to follow the adoption of policies resulting from these investigations. It was determined that, rather than delay the Plan, it should be noted that future adopted City policies with regard to these issues should take precedence over the related policies contained in the West Side Strategic Plan, and shall be subject to the City's public review process for land use matters.

Furthermore, it is recognized that the South Valley portion of the metropolitan area is unique and now is engaged in an area planning effort led by the County of Bernalillo. It is recognized that the future adopted South Valley Area Plan shall take precedence over the West Side Strategic Plan.

Policy A-1: Future adopted City policies applicable to the entire City and adopted interim policies concerning urban service delivery zones; a project specific Capital Improvement Program; resources to address growth-related infrastructure needs and infrastructure rehabilitation and deficiency needs in existing neighborhoods; the compatibility of development impact fees and revenues obtained through development agreements with the growth management strategy; annexation policies; and policies, projects and rates to insure a sustainable supply of water shall take precedence over any incompatible policies in the West Side Strategic Plan.

Policy A-2: In order to insure compatibility with future adopted City policies and programs, the West Side Strategic Plan shall be reviewed by the Mayor and City Council one year from its adoption.

Policy A-3: The boundaries of the West Side Strategic Plan and the Southwest Area Plan overlap in an area south of Central Avenue and west of Coors Boulevard. The policies contained in the Southwest Area Plan shall apply in the "overlap area" to the properties situated in the unincorporated area of the County, and the West Side Strategic Plan policies shall apply to the areas in the "overlap area" that are located within the municipal boundaries, as the boundaries are amended.