

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Santa Fe/Santa Fe County Regional Planning Authority (RPA) was formally established in May of 2000 in order to develop and recommend a future land use plan for the five-mile extraterritorial zone (EZ) surrounding the city. The future land use plan and corresponding land use map were intended to serve as the basis for future zoning within the EZ.

With the onset of the drought and related water shortages in 2001, the RPA expanded the plan's purpose to include some form of growth allocation measure. In concept, land use and water were to become linked through planning. Several alternate methods for building a land use-to-water relationship were explored during the plan's evolution—this eventually resulted in the *Santa Fe Regional Future Land Use and Growth Management Plan*.

The regional plan is comprised of two principle elements—the technical summary of conditions and the policy framework. The plan's technical components include the analysis of existing and future conditions and potential development capacity and expected needs. The analysis of conditions has provided the necessary background information used to formulate regional policies and strategies.

The policy framework includes the regional principles and policies, the future land use designations and corresponding map and the growth management strategy. The policy elements provide the plan's core structure and are to serve as the basis for future implementation. The following is an overview of the regional policy framework:

1. Regional Principles and Policies. There are five overarching principles that provide the context for future growth. These are strongly held beliefs in what must be accomplished in order to create the desired regional future. These principles include:

- **Principle #1: Affordable Housing.** *The region should contain a diversity of housing choices to enable residents within a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live within its boundaries. Housing opportunity should be an integral component of a coherent plan for future regional growth.*
- **Principle #2: Water.** *The amount and type of growth shall relate to future water supply. The regional water supply remains a limited resource; therefore, growth should occur in accordance with available, sustainable sources.*
- **Principle #3: Infrastructure and Services.** *The extension of infrastructure and services should occur in a logical, responsible and efficient manner. Development should also be responsible for its fair and equitable share of the costs associated with growth.*
- **Principle #4: Character.** *The region's character should express and reflect the highly unique sense of place and the desirable qualities of Santa Fe through innovative new development and preservation of historic communities. There should be definable distinctions between the traditional and modern - the rural and urban - through sensitive scale and design.*
- **Principle #5: Employment and Economic Development.** *Land use decisions should support a healthy, diverse and adaptable-to-resources regional economy as an essential component for the region's ability to provide a high quality of life and a high level of community services and amenities.*

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With each of these principles, there are a series of related policies that describe the actions necessary to achieve the larger goal. Together, the principles and policies formulate the critical building blocks for the land use and growth management policies set forth in Chapters 4 and 6.

Also within the principle and policy section of the plan are guidelines for preferred development patterns and their allocations to future development. Patterns that are believed to most effectively meet the desired principles and policies are considered “encouraged” patterns. These generally include compact development patterns that provide for a mixing of housing types and land uses with public open space amenity. Because these patterns are to be encouraged, the plan suggests that three-quarters of new development occur within this prototype.

2. **Future Land Use Designations and Future Land Use Map.** The regional future land use policies are intended to guide and direct future land use decisions within the EZ. The thirteen future land use designations represent a consolidation of over thirty different land use classifications contained within several underlying general, community and district plans. Each of the designations generally describe a land use class according to a) density, intensity, service requirements and potential impacts and b) its potential in meeting the principles as a measure of desirability. The thirteen land use designations are grouped according to three classifications which include:

- *Residential Classifications*
 - Urban Residential
 - Rural Residential
 - Traditional Residential
 - Multi-unit Residential
- *Commercial Classifications*
 - Low Intensity Commercial
 - High Intensity Commercial
 - Employment Center
- *General Classifications*
 - Rural
 - Public Lands, Open Space/Parks
 - Protection Corridors
 - Heavy Industry, Mining, Utility, Transportation
 - Institutional/Places of Assembly
 - Mixed-Use Center

These designations have been applied to lands contained within the RPA Planning Area according to existing land uses and patterns, uses indicated by other plans, use compatibility and other sources that may influence land use decisions. Where there were conflicts within overlapping planning boundaries, the land use that most aptly satisfied the regional principles was applied.

- 3. Choices for Growth and the Growth Management Strategy.** The linkage between land use and water occurs by directing the timing and phasing of development. In order to build a relationship between development and water supply, the plan recommends a “directed” choice for future growth. The plan suggests that growth be directed to those areas that potentially provide the greatest community benefit according to regional principles. This is meant to encourage orderly and timely development as well as direct future water to areas of preferred development.

The growth management strategy suggests a process for directing growth. The strategy builds on several planning techniques in order to first single out the areas where regional policies and principles are most likely to occur. This process identifies common areas of overlapping frequency where the regional goals may be achieved according to underlying land uses and infrastructure. These common areas are then set apart from the underlying uses as independent boundaries to form the conceptual growth priority areas.

In order to direct growth to these growth priority areas, water delivery areas have to be determined according to potential water sources. Identification of those sources is to be in accordance with related water service delivery agreements or contracts, or other water utility plans, which identify known water sources. These areas then serve as the basis for cooperative water delivery/service areas in accordance with those agreements. The plan recommends the strategy for directing growth; however, implementation is to occur within a post-plan process referred to as the *Growth Prioritization Program*. The program is intended to provide the operational details and the mechanics for carrying out the strategy and the agreements that are linked to the plan.

Future implementation of the plan is expected to occur in a two-pronged approach. Implementation of future land use policies would occur through a translation to zoning. The plan recommends that jurisdictional issues associated with zoning be addressed in order to ensure code uniformity. Implementation of the growth management strategy would occur according to the *Growth Prioritization Program*, which would include water extension policies and procedures, growth priority area water allocations and recommendations on code revisions related to platting and subdivisions.

The regional plan represents more than just future land use and growth policy. It is more about process. The greatest value that has come from building a plan of this magnitude is the gained common understanding that has come from the dialogue of the parties involved. The plan’s most important contribution is that the City and County have done it together. This process has clearly demonstrated an ability to work together now and in the future to overcome regional challenges and achieve common goals.